

TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM**1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE AND NEED**

a. Project Information:

Project Name: I-275/Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (HFB) ReplacementProject Limits: From 1 mile south of the bridge to ½ mile north of the 3-mile bridge – Figure 1County: Pinellas and Hillsborough CountiesETDM Number (if applicable): 12539Financial Management Number: WPI Segment No. 422799-1Federal-Aid Project Number: Not yet assignedProject Manager: Kirk Bogen, P.E.

b. Proposed Improvements:

The Recommended Build Alternative included the construction of a new bridge to the west side of the existing southbound bridge (Option B). The proposed bridge will include four 12-foot general use lanes (same as the existing bridges), two 12-foot tolled express lane in each direction and a 12-foot shared use path (“trail”), generally located within the project area.

Evaluated Alignments – Build alternatives considered for replacement of the northbound bridge with a structure similar to the existing southbound bridge, were originally evaluated for the following three alignments:

- A centered alignment between the two existing bridges (“Option A”),
- A new bridge on the west side of the existing southbound bridge (“Option B”), and
- A new bridge on the east side of the existing northbound bridge (“Option C”).

The proposed replacement of the northbound HFB will be constructed within the existing Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) I-275 right of way. The bridge was originally proposed to be slightly wider (75-foot) than the existing 71-foot wide southbound bridge due to current design standards and the expected need to convert the inside lane to an express lane in the future.

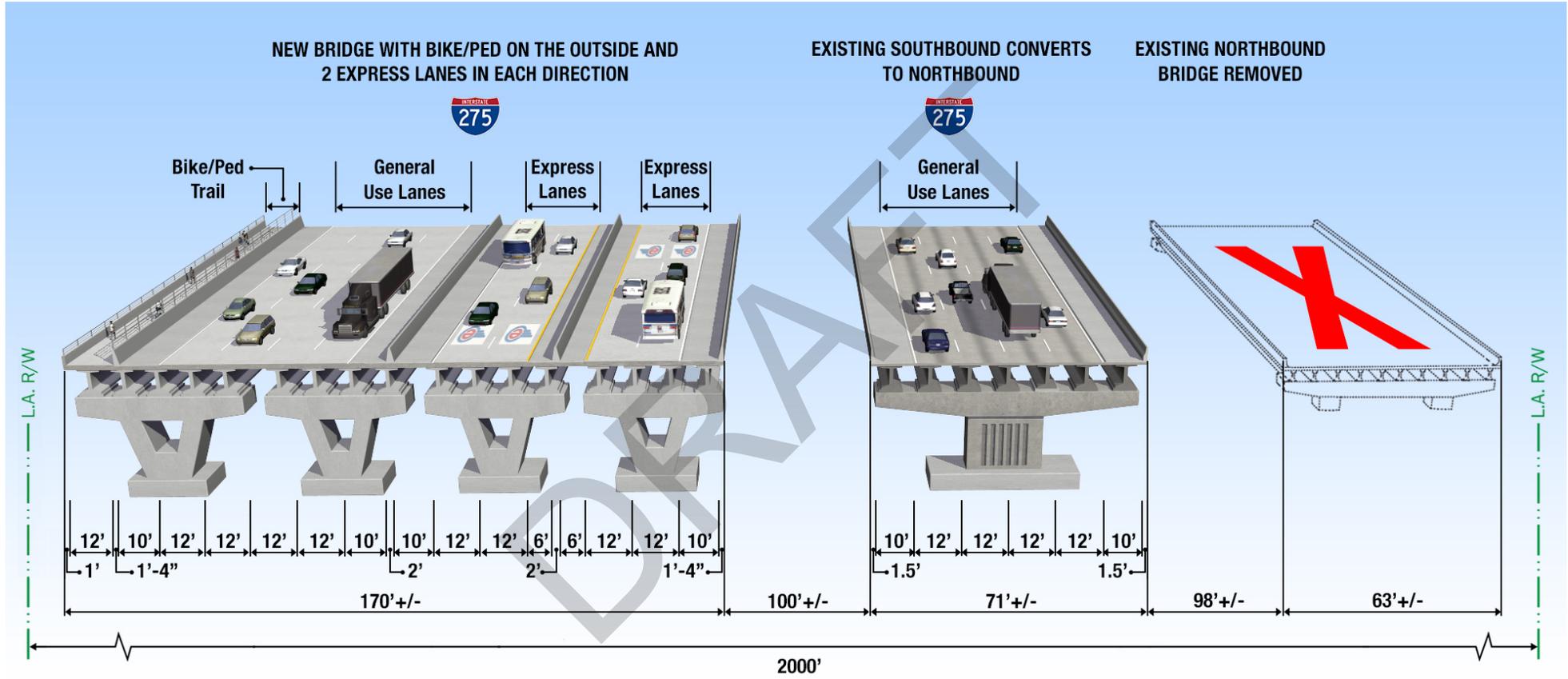
The originally proposed (2013) build alternative included constructing the new bridge between the two existing bridges (Option A) to avoid seagrass impacts. This alternative was presented at the project’s prior public hearing held on October 8 and 10, 2013. In early 2016, after further evaluation, FDOT determined that the west alignment (Option B) was preferred since it would decrease complexity of construction, reduce construction time and reduce potential lane closures associated with maintenance of traffic compared to the previously proposed alignment. Option B was also chosen due to lower seagrass quality located on the west side of the HFB

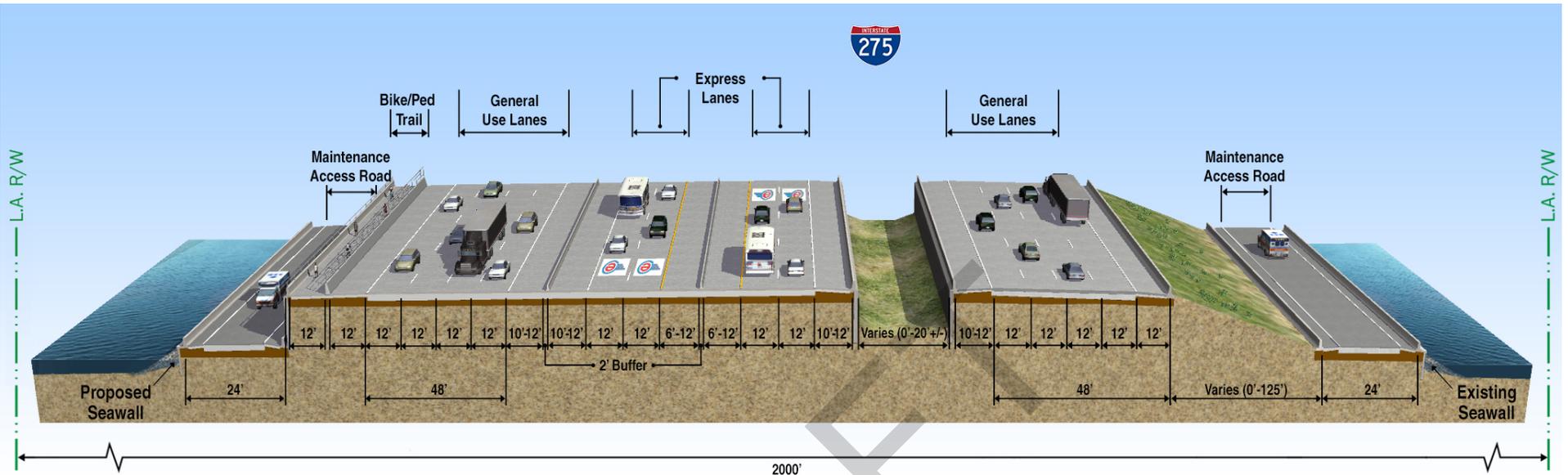
within Old Tampa Bay. The acreage of seagrass impacts was about the same for Option B and Option C (approximately 3 acres).

Proposed Improvements – The 2013 and 2016 Recommended Build Alternatives included a 75-foot wide, four-lane bridge with the capability to convert one lane to a tolled express lane; however, based on public response and comments in October 2016, the FDOT decided to reevaluate the proposed bridge replacement concept. Based on public input and further analysis of alternatives, in January 2017, the FDOT announced a revised plan to construct a new bridge which would include four general use lanes and a tolled express lane in each direction. As a result, this bridge would be 56 feet wider than the previous alternatives to accommodate the additional lanes, shoulders and barrier separations. In October 2017, the FDOT revised the bridge again, based on coordination with agencies and continued public outreach, to provide an additional express lane in each direction as well as the addition of a shared use trail. The Recommended Build Alternative for the proposed northbound HFB replacement includes constructing the new bridge to the west side of the existing southbound bridge as shown in **Figure 2** and the Recommended Build Alternative for the bridge approaches as shown in **Figure 3**. The proposed bridge will include four 12-foot general use lanes (same as the existing bridges), two 12-foot tolled express lane in each direction and a 12-foot shared use path (“trail”) on the west side, as part of Tampa Bay Next, FDOT’s program to modernize Tampa Bay’s transportation infrastructure. The tolled express lanes will be barrier separated from the general use lanes and also barrier separated between each direction of travel. The shared use path will be barrier separated from the general use lanes. The tolled express lanes could be used by express bus and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles in addition to private motor vehicles. The overall width of the bridge will be approximately 170 feet. Demolition of the existing northbound bridge is still included as part of the bridge construction. In addition to the build alternatives considered, a No-Build and a Rehabilitation option were also considered during the study process.

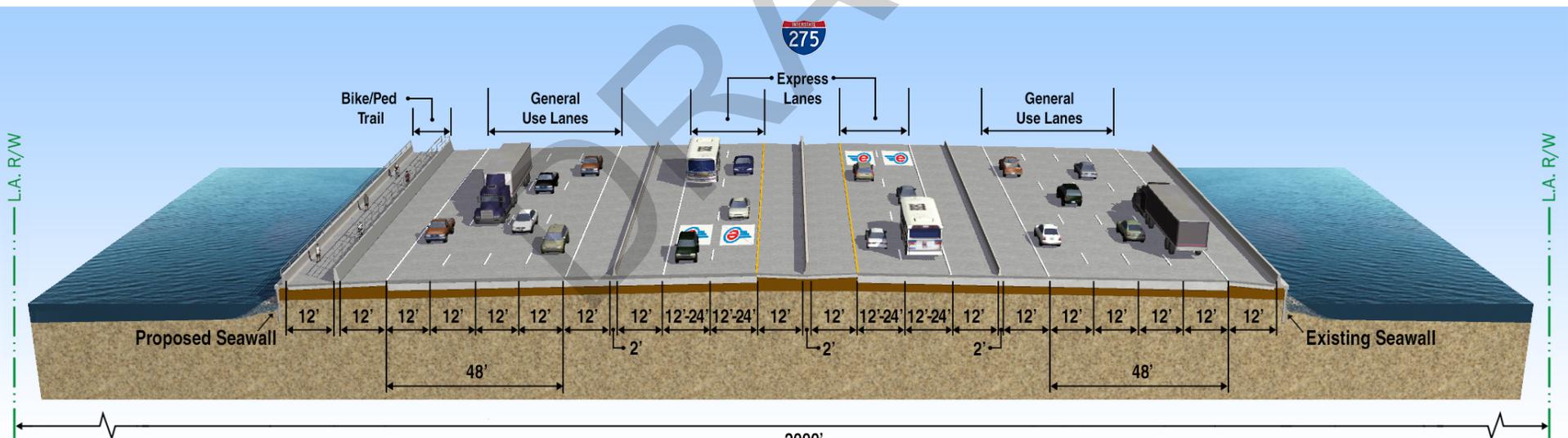
The new replacement bridge would have longer vertical curves than the existing near the center of the bridge to meet current design standards and be more geometrically consistent with the existing southbound bridge. Also, the overall profile would be constructed several feet higher than the existing northbound bridge to avoid wave forces during extreme storm events (at least one foot above the predicted 100-year wave crest elevation).

The estimated cost of the improvements, including the roadway transitions at either end of the bridge, is approximately \$785 million in 2017 dollars. The cost estimate includes an approximately additional \$27 million in structural enhancements to strengthen the new bridge to be able to accommodate a potential future light-rail transit system on the bridge.





South Approach Near Bridge End



Causeway Approach South of the Bridge

Rev. 10/23/17



Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge
 (I-275/SR 93) Replacement PD&E Study
 WPI Segment No. 422799 1
 Pinellas & Hillsborough Counties

Recommended Build Alternative for
 Bridge Roadway Approaches

Figure 3

c. Purpose and Need:

The **purpose** of the proposed project is to replace the northbound span of the HFB due to the existing structure nearing the end of its useful life. A secondary purpose is to provide additional traffic capacity by adding express lanes to the bridge corridor to enable a future connection on I-275 on either side of Old Tampa Bay. The **need** for the proposed project is explained below.

Structural Condition - An inspection conducted on the existing northbound HFB in September 2010 resulted in a sufficiency rating of 61.8 classifying the bridge as *structurally deficient*. The FDOT performed repairs that improved the sufficiency rating to 79.8 in the September 2016 inspection. The existing northbound HFB is not presently classified as structurally deficient. In the 1950's, when this bridge was originally designed, normal practice was to design bridges for a 50-year life span. While that duration has now been exceeded and the bridge is located in a harsh saltwater environment, major past rehabilitation projects have helped to extend the life of the structure.

System Linkage and Regional Connectivity - I-275 at the HFB is a vital link in the local and regional transportation network and one of only three crossings between Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties over Old Tampa Bay and the crossing which carries the most traffic. In addition to being an Interstate highway and part of the National Highway System, I-275 is part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) that provides for the high-speed movement of people and goods. The SIS is a statewide network of highways, railways, waterways and transportation hubs that handle the bulk of Florida's passenger and freight traffic.

Consistency with Transportation Plans – *Covered below in Part d.*

Emergency Evacuation and Safety - The HFB is a critical evacuation route for portions of Pinellas County and is shown on the Florida Division of Emergency Management's evacuation route network. I-275 is also designated as an emergency evacuation route by the Hillsborough County Emergency Management Office and the Pinellas County Emergency Management Office.

For the 5-year period 2011 through 2015, a total of 404 crashes were reported for the northbound direction within the study limits. The resulting economic loss of these crashes is estimated to be approximately \$ 46.8 million, based on 2015 National Safety Council unit costs. For just the 3-mile bridge limits, 163 crashes were reported on the northbound bridge compared to 93 crashes on the southbound bridge for this same time period. The crash rate was estimated to be about 75 percent higher on the northbound bridge compared to the newer southbound bridge. The difference in crash rates might be related to the differences in the designs of the older and newer bridges. The vertical alignment on the existing northbound bridge does not meet current design standards for stopping sight distance for a design speed of 70 miles per hour (mph) on an Interstate highway. Based on the as-built plans, the estimated design speed is between 50 and 55 mph, while the bridge is posted with 65 mph speed limit signs (current standards require 70 mph design speed). This lower design speed results in shorter stopping sight distances for motorists travelling over the "hump" near the center of the bridge, which

could be a contributing factor in some of the reported rear-end collisions on the bridge. In addition, the left 4-foot shoulder is less than the 10-foot standard, and two of the lanes are 11-foot wide which do not meet current Interstate design standards.

Transportation Demand – The 2016 annual average daily traffic (AADT) on the bridge was 157,500 vehicles per day (VPD) based on the FDOT’s 2016 Florida Traffic Online, with approximately half of the traffic in each direction. Based on the existing daily traffic volume, the existing level of service (LOS) is “E” based on the 2013 FDOT Quality/Level of Service Handbook. The Tampa Bay Regional Transit Model for Managed Lanes indicates that the total AADT in 2040 is expected to increase to 229,800 VPD. The projected 2040 two-way AADT of 229,800 VPD would result in LOS “F” traffic conditions without any additional traffic lanes being added to the bridge.

Transit & Multimodal Accommodations - The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) operates one express bus route which utilizes the HFB in providing service between Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. Route 300X provides a connection between the Ulmerton Road Park-N-Ride in Largo and downtown Tampa, with service primarily in the peak periods and with limited intermediate stops. The Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) does not currently operate any buses on the HFB. Various motorcoach services use HFB/I-275 as part of their regional network; for example, Amtrak’s Thruway motorcoach service connects Tampa’s Union Station to Pinellas Park-St. Petersburg, Bradenton, Sarasota, Port Charlotte, and Ft. Myers. Potential accommodations for express lanes and premium transit are discussed in the sections pertaining to the proposed improvements.

I-275 is part of the highway network that provides access to regional intermodal facilities such as the Tampa International Airport, the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport, several general aviation airports, MacDill Air Force Base, the Port of Tampa, Hookers Point, the Port of St. Petersburg, transit stations, cruise ship terminals and major CSX intermodal rail facilities. As noted earlier, I-275 is part of the SIS and is also part of TBARTA’s regional freight network, which is considered the backbone of the goods movement system for the TBARTA region. Improvements to the HFB/I-275 within the project limits will maintain access to freight activity centers in the area and facilitate the movement of freight in the greater Tampa Bay region.

d. Project Planning Consistency:

PINELLAS COUNTY SEGMENT FPN 422904-2					
Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	COMMENTS				
Yes	The replacement of the 4-lane northbound Howard Frankland Bridge is consistent with the Pinellas County MPO's 2040 Cost Feasible Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for construction in years 2020-2040. Tables 5-1, 5-8 and the map figure in Attachment B show the bridge replacement as committed (funded in the TIP 2017/18 to 2021/22) and the addition of transit lanes as <i>unfunded</i> .				
Phase	Currently Approved TIP	Currently Approved STIP	TIP/STIP \$	TIP/STIP FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	Yes	Yes	see below	2019/20	Replacement of the northbound bridge is included in the TIP (Fiscal year 2018 to 2022) for Fiscal Year 2020 as a design/build project (FPN 422904-2).
R/W	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No R/W acquisition required.
Construction (as D/B)	Yes	Yes	TIP: \$753,584,957 Current STIP: *	TIP & STIP: 2019/20	Project slated for Design/Build *"STIP Amendment currently in process" (as of 9/6/17)

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SEGMENT FPN 422904-4					
Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	COMMENTS				
N/A	This segment is not included in the Hillsborough County MPO's LRTP since the project funding is already committed in the current TIP (Fiscal Years 2017/18 to 2021/22).				
Phase	Currently Approved TIP	Currently Approved STIP	TIP/STIP \$	TIP/STIP FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	Yes	Yes	see below	2019/20	This segment (FPN 422904-4) goes with the project in Pinellas County (FPN 422904-2); express lane design costs are included in the I-275/SR 60 interchange project (FPN 433535-4).
R/W	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No R/W acquisition required.
Construction (as D/B)	Yes	Yes	TIP: \$23,777,633 Current STIP: \$69,935,009	TIP & STIP: 2019/20	Project slated for Design/Build

E. ANTICIPATED PERMITS

- US Coast Guard – Bridge Permit
- Southwest Florida Water Management District – Environmental Resource Permit
- US Army Corps of Engineers – Section 404 Permit
- Tampa Port Authority – TPA Standard Work Permit

4. COMMITMENTS

In order to assure that adverse impacts to listed species and suitable habitat within the project's construction limits will not occur, the FDOT will abide by standard protection measures in addition to the following commitments:

- The FDOT will conduct benthic surveys during the seagrass growing season (June-September), in order to support the permit approval process.
- The FDOT proposes utilizing the Old Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project as mitigation for seagrass impacts. Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) will continue as seagrass mitigation progresses or other options are proposed.
- The size/style of piles, quantity of piles, number of piles driven per day, number of strikes per pile, and other information needed in order to determine potential hydroacoustic impacts to the smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles is unknown at this time. Further information will be provided once a design-build team is selected and more details regarding design and construction related to pile driving activities is known. Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation will be re-initiated with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for smalltooth sawfish and swimming sea turtles during the future project phases once more detailed information listed above is known for this project. The FDOT will continue coordination with NMFS on potential impacts associated with pile driving activities.
- The FDOT will require the contractor to minimize potential impacts of multiple pile driving operations by maintaining a minimum 4,000 feet over the length of the bridge opening as a low-noise travel corridor. This corridor should be continuous to the extent feasible, but no individual component of the corridor will be less than 1,000 feet. Low noise corridors are defined as areas where noise levels are below injury and behavioral disturbance thresholds. This commitment will provide aquatic fauna a sufficiently wide low-noise corridor or corridors through the project area without injury or disturbance.
- 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 in order 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.

- The FDOT will adhere to the NMFS's *Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions* [**Appendix B** of the Draft *Natural Resources Evaluation* (NRE)] during construction of the project.
- The FDOT will continue informal Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation with the USFWS for the Gulf Sturgeon and manatee during future project phases.
- FDOT will incorporate the *Construction Special Conditions for the protection of the Gulf Sturgeon* (**Appendix B** of the Draft NRE).
- To assure the protection of wildlife during construction, the FDOT will implement a Marine Wildlife Watch Plan (MWWP), which will include the most current version of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work*. The FDOT will require the construction contractor to abide by these guidelines during construction. **Appendix B** of the Draft NRE provides an example of the most current *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (2011).
- No nighttime in-water work will be performed. In-water work can be conducted from official sunrise until official sunset times.
- Special conditions for manatees will be addressed during construction and include the following:
 - 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 this project, any culverts larger than eight inches and less than eight feet in diameter should be grated to prevent manatee entrapment. The spacing between the bridge 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 piles, further coordination will be conducted with the USFWS.
- No blasting is proposed for this project. If blasting is required, formal 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 FWC for their approval prior to beginning blasting activities.

- No dredging is proposed for this project. If dredging is required, Section 7 Consultation will be re-initiated with the USFWS for the manatee.
- The new replacement bridge will be designed to be able to handle the structural loads of a future Light Rail Transit (LRT) system in the future.

5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. A public hearing is not required.
2. A public hearing will be held on November 14 and 16, 2017. This draft document is publically available and comments can be submitted to FDOT until November 27, 2017.

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District Environmental Management Engineer
FDOT District Seven
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3. A public hearing was held on October 8 and 10, 2013 and an additional public hearing will be held as noted above. A transcript is included as **Attachment C** for the prior hearing. A new transcript will be included as **Attachment D** once the current public hearing process has been completed. Approval of this determination constitutes location and design concept acceptance for this project.
4. An opportunity for a public hearing was afforded and was documented.

6. DISTRICT DETERMINATION

This project has been developed without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status.

FDOT Project Manager

Date

FDOT Environmental Manager or Designee

Date

7. OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONCURRENCE

Signature below constitutes Location and Design Concept Acceptance:

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.

Director of the Office of Environmental
Management or Designee

Date

8. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT A
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS SUPPORTING INFORMATION

DRAFT

SECTION A – SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

A1. SOCIAL

Controversy Potential

A blended (informal open house format combined with a time-specified formal hearing) public hearing for this project was held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in two sessions at two locations. The first session was held in Pinellas County at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), 3201 Scherer Drive, St. Petersburg, Florida 33716 on Tuesday, October 8, 2013. The second session was held in Hillsborough County at the Tampa Marriott Westshore, 1001 N. Westshore Boulevard, Tampa, Florida 33607 on Thursday, October 10, 2013. This section will be updated following the November 2017 public hearing.

Information on the proposed future express lanes (including a proposed typical section for the express lanes starter project) was included in the Regional Transit Corridor Evaluation handout and on a display board included at the prior public hearing. The topic was also covered in the continuous loop PowerPoint presentation which ran during the hearing. In addition, The Regional Transit Corridor Evaluation handout provided information on the purpose and need for the proposed Tampa Bay Express lanes.

A total of 66 people signed in at the 2013 Public Hearing Session 1, including: 5 elected officials and 9 representatives from 9 different agency/community groups. A total of 7 written comments were received and sixteen verbal statements were made during the formal public comment period.

A total of 94 people signed in at the 2013 Public Hearing Session 2; including: 1 elected official and representatives from 9 different agency/community groups. A total of 10 written comments were received and twenty verbal statements were made during the formal public comment period.

A copy of the transcript from the 2017 public hearing (sessions 1 & 2) will be attached once the public hearing process has been completed. To date, no major opposition to the proposed bridge replacement has been expressed; therefore, there is minimal controversy potential for the replacement of the northbound HFB. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

A2. ECONOMIC

The proposed project would have little economic effects other than the temporary jobs that would be created during the construction phase along with the secondary benefits to service-related businesses. Based on the TIGER 3 FAQ's at the US DOT Application Resources website, the US DOT estimates that there are 13,000 job-years created per \$1 billion dollars of government investment (or \$76,900 per job-year; previous guidance had stated that every \$92,000 of investment is equivalent to one job year). Based on a construction cost of \$630 million, construction of this project could result in approximately 8,200 job years of employment for the local economy. Therefore, this category has been designated as Enhance.

A3. LAND USE CHANGES

Existing land use along the project corridor was determined utilizing a variety of resources including the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Soil Surveys for Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps, recent aerial photographs, land use mapping from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD, 2006), and field verification during site visits conducted within the project corridor. According to the Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCCS) data from SWFWMD (2006), the entire causeway area on either end of the bridge is identified as Transportation (8100) with the exception of a small area on the north end identified as Beaches other than Swimming Beaches (7100). The areas beneath the bridge and adjacent to the causeway are classified as Bays and Estuaries (5400) – Old Tampa Bay. There are also areas classified as Seagrasses (9110). The seagrass areas are separated into two classifications, Seagrass – Patchy (9113) and Seagrass – Continuous (9116).

The project is located within open waters of Old Tampa Bay and FDOT transportation right of way. No changes in land use would occur if the proposed project is implemented. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

SECTION B – CULTURAL

B1. SECTION 4(f)

The construction and maintenance of the proposed project including staging will occur within the existing interstate limited access ROW. Therefore, this project would not involve or have any adverse impacts on any Section 4(f) uses or resources. On February 20, 2014, the FHWA made the determination that the project will not impact Section 4(f) resources. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

B2. HISTORIC SITES / DISTRICTS

A *Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) Report* was prepared for the study and approved by FHWA on September 10, 2012, and concurred with by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on October 4, 2012. The concurrence letter is included in **Attachment E**. No archaeological field survey was conducted because the project Area of Potential Effect (APE) is comprised of manmade land and the bridge proper; however, a predictive model for underwater archaeological sites was prepared as part of this effort.

The historical field survey, conducted in January 2012, focused on the historical significance of Bridge No. 150107. Background research indicated an absence of previously recorded historic resources within the project APE, defined as the 800-foot wide existing limited access right-of-way, plus the immediate viewshed in the case of historical resources. Historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification and evaluation of the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (No. 150107; FMSF No. 8PI12006/8HI11663). Built in 1959 and opened in 1960, the Howard Frankland Bridge was the last of

three bridges built to span Tampa Bay and connect Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. It is neither distinguished by its significant historical associations nor by its engineering or architectural design. As a result, 8PI12006/8HI11663 is considered ineligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP).

Thus, project development will have no involvement with any archaeological sites or historic resources which are listed, determined eligible, or considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

B3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

(See Section B2 above for more information.) This category has been designated as NO.

B4. RECREATION AREAS

There are no officially designated or delineated recreational areas on either the bridge or on the causeway approaches. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

SECTION C – NATURAL

C1. WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS

GIS data from the ETDM screen summary report indicates there are 0.4 acres of continuous seagrass within the 100-foot buffer distance and 32.6 acres of continuous and 7.8 acres of discontinuous seagrass within the 200-foot buffer distance. Seagrasses were identified in shallow water adjacent to the existing causeway. No seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) was identified in the deep water habitat under or between the existing Howard Frankland Bridges. Vegetation along the causeways consists of mangroves, seagrasses, buttonwood, shoreline seapurslane, and seaside oxeeye.

The construction of the new Recommended Build Alternative is anticipated to result in no impacts to wetlands. The project involves open waters of Old Tampa Bay in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. No wetlands were identified within the project limits. Qualitative seagrass surveys were conducted in June 2011 and July 2013, to field verify the presence/absence of previously mapped seagrass beds as provided by the SWFWMD's 2010 and 2012 seagrass data. Qualitative and quantitative field surveys for seagrasses were conducted in September 2016 to the west of the existing southbound bridge. These surveys were conducted as part of the early permit coordination that is ongoing with the SWFWMD and USACE. Approximately 9.5 acres of seagrasses are anticipated to be impacted by implementation of the Recommended Build Alternative. Mitigation for impacts to seagrasses is anticipated using credits from the Old Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project. If any changes are made during project implementation that may result in other mitigation options being utilized for proposed impacts to seagrasses, mitigation options will be further coordinated with the NMFS, USFWS and other appropriate agencies. Approximately 23.1 acres of fill impacts, including the approximately 9.5 acres of seagrass identified above, will result to waters of Old Tampa Bay by expansion of the existing causeway to accommodate the new bridge. Temporary water quality impacts from construction may occur to waters

of Old Tampa Bay; however, BMPs will be utilized during construction. The permit submittal and approval process will be conducted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Southwest Florida Water Management District and Tampa Port Authority during implementation of the project. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C2. AQUATIC PRESERVES AND OUTSTANDING FLORIDA WATERS

The project is located adjacent to portions of the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve which is an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW). The FDOT will implement proper best management practices (BMPs) during construction to ensure there are no violations to water quality standards. Approximately 13.7 acres of fill will be placed within the Pinellas County side of Old Tampa Bay; however, the project will be located within the existing FDOT right-of-way. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C3. WATER QUALITY AND WATER QUANTITY

The project is located adjacent to portions of the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve which is an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW). The current list of 303(d) Verified List of Impaired Waters states that surrounding waters are listed for nutrients, fecal coliforms/bacteria, and mercury in fish.

Tampa Bay is designated as a Category 4b waterbody (impaired, but no TMDL required) rather than a Category 5 (impaired, needing a TMDL), based on the Integrated Reporting Classification of waterbodies. Based on the determination that Tampa Bay does not currently meet water quality standards, net improvement is required. The new bridge will be constructed to the west of the existing southbound bridge; however, the bridge will be wider to meet current standards and accommodate two express lanes in each direction.

The FDOT will implement proper best management practice (BMPs) during construction to ensure there are no violations to water quality standards. There are no anticipated stormwater quantity concerns since this project is located completely within Old Tampa Bay. The project will utilize the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project to provide for water quality treatment. The permit submittal and approval process will be conducted with the Southwest Florida Water Management District during implementation of the project. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C5. FLOODPLAINS

This bridge replacement project is located in FEMA flood zone areas Zone A and Zone VE, a special flood hazard area inundated by 100-year flooding with velocity hazard (wave action) and where the base flood elevation has been determined to be 9 feet North American Vertical Datum (NAVD-1988). The only flooding that occurs now is due to infrequent tropical storms and hurricanes, due to the low elevation of the causeway approaches to the bridge. Based on the FDOT's floodplain categories, this project falls under Category 5: "projects on existing alignment involving replacement of drainage structures in heavily urbanized floodplains." The replacement bridge will be hydraulically equivalent or greater than the existing bridge. An alternative encroachment location is not feasible since it defeats the project purpose. Since flooding conditions in the project area are inherent in the topography, existing flooding will continue, but not be increased. As a result, the project will not affect existing flood heights or

floodplain limits. This project will not result in any new or increased adverse environmental impacts. There will be no significant change in the potential for interruption or termination of emergency service or emergency evacuation routes. Permitting will be conducted with the Southwest Florida Water Management District during the design-build phase. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C6. COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY

During the ETDM Programming Screen, the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) determined that this project is consistent with the Florida Coastal Zone Management Plan (FCMP). Furthermore, 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, Florida Statutes. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C8. PROTECTED SPECIES AND HABITAT

The project is not located within USFWS Critical Habitat for the manatee; however, waters just east of the project are located within a manatee protection area, categorized as a "slow speed" zone as per 68C-22.013(2)(d)3.b. The project is also located within the USFWS Consultation Area for the piping plover and within the core foraging area for three wood stork colonies. The majority of the bridge construction will occur over open salt water, which is providing habitat and feeding areas for several birds and aquatic life forms.

Species assessed for this project include, but were not limited to, the following: Gulf sturgeon, smalltooth sawfish, West Indian manatee, swimming sea turtles (loggerhead, green turtle, leatherback and Kemp's Ridley), piping plover, wood stork, snowy plover, American oystercatcher, black skimmer, brown pelican, least tern, little blue heron, reddish egret, roseate spoonbill, smalltooth sawfish, snowy egret, tricolored heron, white ibis, and osprey. Additionally, review for the de-listed bald eagle was also conducted. Since the start of the study, the following species are no longer listed: brown pelican, snowy egret, white ibis and osprey.

Field reviews for protected species and their suitable habitat were conducted within the project study limits. Based on the findings obtained during the field survey efforts, four protected faunal species and no protected floral species were observed. Twenty-two protected species have potential habitat within or adjacent to the project study limits based on database and literature research, and field observations of available habitat.

Agency coordination was conducted early as part of the ETDM final programming screen and Advance Notification review processes initiated in February 2012. The ETDM process was used to become aware of any issues noted by the commenting agencies. ETDM coordination was conducted with the USFWS, NMFS, FWC, and SWFWMD, amongst other agencies. Much of the coordination for potential species occurrence was conducted electronically utilizing databases from USFWS, FWC, SWFWMD and FNAI. In addition to comments received as part of the ETDM process, agency comments were received based on the initial findings provided in the Draft Wetlands Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)

and coordination was conducted throughout the PD&E study process. Comments were received for the 2013 Recommended Build Alternative from NMFS on October 11, 2013, USFWS on December 16, 2013, and FWC on October 30, 2013. Additional concurrence letters approving Draft WEBAR updates were received from USFWS and NMFS on September 30, 2015, and November 3, 2015, respectively.

After further evaluation in late 2015/early 2016, it was determined that the west alignment (Option B) was preferred since it would decrease complexity of construction, reduce construction time and reduce potential lane closures associated with maintenance of traffic compared to the previously proposed alignment. Option B was also chosen due to lower seagrass quality located on the west side of the HFB within Old Tampa Bay. The acreage of seagrass impacts was about the same for Option B and Option C (approximately 3 acres). An updated Draft WEBAR was sent to agencies for review through ETDM on September 13, 2016. Correspondence/concurrence for this document update was received from USFWS, NMFS and FWC on October 13, 2016, September 22, 2016, and October 3, 2016, respectively.

Based on public response and comments in October 2016, the FDOT decided to reevaluate the proposed bridge replacement concept. The January 2017 Recommended Build Alternative would include four 12-foot general use lanes (same as the existing bridges) and one 12-foot tolled express lane in each direction. The overall width of the bridge would be 131 feet. Demolition of the existing northbound bridge was still included as part of the bridge construction. A coordination meeting was held with NMFS on June 19, 2017, and with USFWS on August 9, 2017, to discuss this proposed bridge alternative and typical section.

In October 2017, the FDOT revised the bridge again, based on coordination with agencies and continued public outreach, to provide an additional express lane in each direction as well as the addition of a shared-use trail. A coordination meeting was held with NMFS on October 3, 2017 to discuss this proposed bridge alternative and typical section. A meeting with USFWS is being scheduled. All agency coordination can be found in **Attachment E**.

A finding of no involvement was assigned for USFWS Critical Habitat. A finding of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect was assigned for the wood stork, piping plover, red knot, Gulf sturgeon, West Indian manatee, smalltooth sawfish, sea turtles, American oystercatcher, black skimmer, least tern, little blue heron, reddish egret, tricolored heron, roseate spoonbill, and snowy plover. Many of the findings are based on commitments outlined in *Section 4: Commitments* of this Type 2 Categorical Exclusion that will be implemented during future project phases. The findings are also based on coordination with NMFS and USFWS throughout the project. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

C9. ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

Estuarine and marine habitats of Old Tampa Bay exist within and adjacent to the project corridor on the east and west side of the Causeway and below the existing bridges. These habitats include seagrasses located at various areas on the east and west side of the Causeway on both the south and north end of the Howard Frankland Bridge. It is anticipated the new Recommended Build Alternative will result in approximately 9.5 acres of impacts to seagrasses. Mitigation proposed at this time includes use of the Old Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project. If any changes are made during project

implementation that may result in other mitigation options being utilized for proposed impacts to seagrasses, mitigation options will be further coordinated with the NMFS, USFWS and other appropriate agencies. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

Section 7 Consultation will be re-initiated during the design phase once pile driving requirements are known (quantity, size, location, etc.). The potential need for blasting associated with the removal of the existing northbound bridge will be determined by the contractor selected to construct the design-build project and this is addressed in the commitments included earlier. No blasting is proposed at this time. Additional surveys would be conducted during the seagrass growing season prior to construction to establish seagrass limits and determine the extent of seagrass impacts.

SECTION D – PHYSICAL

D2. AIR QUALITY

The project is located in areas which are designated as attainment for all of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards under the criteria provided in the Clean Air Act. Therefore, the Clean Air Act conformity requirements do not apply to the project. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

D3. CONTAMINATION

After reviewing data obtained from Environmental Data Resources (EDR), regulatory site lists, land uses and an on-site field review conducted within the project area, there were no facilities of concern identified within 500 feet of the proposed project, which includes Brownfield locations, Hazardous Waste Facilities, Petroleum Contamination Monitoring Sites, Storage Tank Contamination Monitoring, Superfund Act Risk Sources, Super Act Wells and Toxic Release Inventory Sites.

The existing northbound Howard Frankland Bridge was constructed in the late 1950's and was open to traffic in early 1960. The original bridge plans indicate the beams were to be set on resilient pads, but the plans did not indicate that the resilient pads included asbestos-containing materials (ACMs); however, based on the date the bridge was constructed, it is likely that ACMs were used. Many of the bearing pads have been replaced with non-ACM products as part of previous rehabilitation projects. Prior to demolition of the existing northbound bridge, an asbestos assessment will be conducted using the services of a Licensed Asbestos Consultant (LAC) in accordance with FDOT Directive 625-020-020-c, dated July 21, 2009. If ACMs are found, an abatement plan will be prepared and incorporated into the final plans/documents. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

D4. UTILITIES AND RAILROADS

The only utilities found to be on or near (within 1,000 feet) of the bridge include buried electric power and the FDOT's existing/planned Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) facilities. In addition to buried electric lines, a small house-like electric load center is located on the south side of the causeway, near each end of the bridge. These load centers provide power for the street lighting on the existing bridges.

The ITS facilities include dynamic message signs (DMS), closed-circuit television (CCTV) and detectors, in addition to related conduit, fiber and power. CCTV's are installed at approximately one-mile intervals, DMS as required, usually before every interchange and detectors at ½-mile intervals. Additional ITS projects are planned near the Kennedy/Airport off ramp and the Memorial on-ramp and on I-275 southbound from Ashley (approximately) to the Airport interchange. In addition, Highway advisory radio (HAR) facilities are being installed according to the ITS Operations Manager for FDOT District Seven.

Implementation of the project will require adjustment of these facilities. Since the project will require the relocation of some utilities, the project is expected to have minimal involvement with utilities. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

D5. CONSTRUCTION

The new Recommended Build Alternative for the proposed northbound Howard Frankland Bridge replacement is located west of the existing southbound bridge. A previously proposed build alternative was shown at the project's prior public hearing held on October 8, 2013 and on October 10, 2013. It included constructing the revised bridge between the two existing bridges. After further evaluation, it was determined that the revised Recommended Build Alternative would decrease complexity of construction, reduce construction time and decrease potential lane closures associated with maintenance of traffic over the previously proposed build alternative.

A U.S. Coast Guard permit is anticipated for construction of the new bridge structure which will address construction activities related to Tampa Bay boaters. During the ETDM programming screen review, the Coast Guard noted that a bridge permit would be required. Navigational access under the proposed bridge is anticipated to remain available at all times during its construction phase. Further coordination will be conducted with the USFWS and NMFS during the permit submittal and review process to determine specific requirements for protection of marine species during construction. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

D7. NAVIGATION

The project is located within waters that are considered to be navigable, tidal, Section 10 waters of the United States. The project is located within Old Tampa Bay which is a navigable waterway that is bridged by the Howard Frankland Bridge. The project is located within tidal waters accessible by commercial and recreational vessels. According to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), the existing northbound bridge is charted at 44.0 feet above MHW. Survey data from 2011 indicates that the bridge is approximately 43.0 feet above MHW. The project will be constructed at a minimum of 48.77 feet above MHW, which will meet or exceed the vertical clearance of the existing southbound bridge. The existing horizontal clearance at the channel span of 75 feet will be maintained with the construction of the proposed northbound bridge. Coordination was conducted with USCG in July/August 2015, and USCG concurred with the vertical clearance of the proposed bridge, as documented in **Attachment E**. The horizontal placement of the piers/pile bents for the proposed northbound bridge will be aligned with the existing southbound bridge, to the maximum extent practicable, to avoid a potential increased hazard to

navigation. A USCG permit is anticipated for construction of the bridge structure which will address construction activities related to Tampa Bay boaters. Navigational access under the proposed bridge is anticipated to remain open at all times during the project's construction phase. Further coordination will be conducted with the USCG during the future project implementation phases. Therefore, this category has been designated as NO.

DRAFT

**ATTACHMENT B
PROJECT PLANNING CONSISTENCY DOCUMENTS**

DRAFT



Map 5-9: 2040 L RTP Unfunded Roadway Projects

**Table 5-1
Committed Roadway Projects (2015–2019)**

Project Number	Facility	From	To	Existing	Committed
1	43rd St N Extension	118th Ave N	40th St	N/A	4D
2	Burbank Rd	Douglas Rd	Tampa Rd	N/A	2U
3	Douglas Rd	Commerce Blvd	Racetrack Rd	2U	2D
4	Forest Lakes Blvd	Pine Ave	Racetrack Rd	2D	4D
5	Haines Rd	60th Ave N	54th Ave N	2U	2E
6	I-275 Replacement of NB Howard Frankland Bridge ¹	SR 687 (4th St)	N of Howard Frankland	4F	4F replacement
7	SR 682 Bayway Bridge	E of SR 699 (Gulf Blvd)	W of SR 679	2D	4D
8	SR 686 (Roosevelt Blvd)	SR 688 (Ulmerton Rd)	28th St N	4D	6D
9	SR 686 (296 Connector)	E of 40th St	E of 28th St	N/A	4P
10	SR 686 (296 Connector)	E of 34th St	W of 28th St	N/A	4P
11	SR 686	N of Ulmerton Rd	E of 40th St	N/A	4P
12	SR 686	At 49th St Interchange	N/A	N/A	4P
13	SR 686	49th St Bridge/Roosevelt Blvd	N of SR 688 (Ulmerton Rd)	4D	4P + 2O each side
14	SR 686	US 19 (SR 55)	SR 686 at 40th St	6D	4P + 2O/3O each side
15	SR 694 (Gandy Blvd)	E of 4th St	W of 9th St (16th St)	4D	4P + 2Aux
16	Starkey Rd	84th Lane N	Flamevine Ave	4D	6D
17	Ulmerton Rd	Lake Seminole Bypass	Wild Acres Blvd	4D	6D
18	Ulmerton Rd	E of 49th St	W of 38th St	4D	6D
19	Ulmerton Rd	W of 38th St	W of I-275	4D/6D	6D
20	US 19 (SR 55)	Sunset Point Rd	Countryside Blvd	6D	6P
21	US 19 (SR 55)	SR 60/Gulf to Bay Blvd	Whitney Rd	6D	6P
22	US 19 (SR 55)	N of SR 580 (Main St)	Northside Dr	6D	6P
23	Park St.	Tyrone Blvd	54th Ave N	4D	4D + E
24	Starkey Rd	Bryan Dairy Rd	@Intersection	-	-

*'U' is Undivided; 'D' is Divided; 'P' is Partially Controlled Access; 'F' is Freeway; 'AUX' is Auxiliary Lanes; 'O' is One Way; and 'E' are 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.

¹Includes \$25 million to enhance the replacement structure for future rail.

PD&E on I-275 (Express Lanes from 118th St to 4th St/W End of Howard Frankland Bridge) is underway, and is not reflected in the map

Table 5-8 (Continued)
2040 Roadway Projects: State Roads

Map Number	Project Name and Limits	Improvement Type	Committed	Project Phase and Cost (YOE)	Timeframe
N/A	US 19 (SR 55) from Pinellas Trail to Pasco County Line	6D + 2Aux to 6P	ROW: Committed	PE: \$10,317,239 (TMA) CST: \$52,660,000	2020-2025 Unfunded (PDC)
N/A	Howard Frankland Bridge from 4th St to Pinellas County Line ¹	2Aux + Transit Option	PE: Committed ROW: Committed	CST: \$567,875,878	Unfunded (PDC)
N/A	I-275 Ramp NB I-275 to Westbound Ulmerton	NA to 2F	PE: Committed	ROW: \$53,590,996 CST: \$53,590,996	Unfunded (PDC)
N/A	I-275 at 31st St Interchange	2F (modify interchange)		PE: \$17,811,000	Unfunded (PDC)
N/A	Tyrone Boulevard Overpass Removal/Trail Overpass Construction	4D at Grade + Trail Overpass		PE: \$18,934,080	Unfunded (PDC)

TOTAL (funded) Cost: \$1,422,517,683

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

¹Includes 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

'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

5 Year TIP

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

Fund	<2018	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	>2022	All Years
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Item Number: 422904 1 Project Description: I-275 (SR 93) HOWARD FRANKLAND BRIDGE - RISK ANALYSIS *SIS*								
District: 07 County: PINELLAS Type of Work: FEASIBILITY STUDY Project Length: 5.267								
P D & E / MANAGED BY FDOT Long Range Transportation Plan: Table 5-1, #6								
-TOTAL OUTSIDE YEARS	13,979	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,979
Item 422904 1 Totals:	13,979	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,979

Item Number: 422904 2 Project Description: I-275 (HOWARD FRKL) FROM N OF SR687(4TH ST N) TO N OF HOWARD FRANKLAND *SIS*								
District: 07 County: PINELLAS Type of Work: BRIDGE-REPLACE AND ADD LANES Project Length: 5.275								
Extra Description: BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, TBX SECTION 3								
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT Long Range Transportation Plan: Table 5-1, #6								
ACBR -ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)	0	0	0	3,983,450	0	0	0	3,983,450
BRP -STATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	1,000,000	600,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,600,000
DS -STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	164,345	0	0	0	0	0	0	164,345
DESIGN BUILD / MANAGED BY FDOT								
ACBR -ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)	0	0	0	170,488,596	0	0	0	170,488,596
ACNP -ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP	0	0	0	75,134,416	0	0	0	75,134,416
BNBR -AMENDMENT 4 BONDS (BRIDGES)	0	0	0	208,551,866	0	0	0	208,551,866
DDR -DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	0	0	0	4,827,537	0	0	0	4,827,537
DSBK -TAMPA BAY EXPRESS LANES	0	0	0	150,000,000	0	0	0	150,000,000
DSB1 -SKYWAY	0	0	0	115,599,092	0	0	0	115,599,092
PKED -2012 SB1998-TURNPIKE FEEDER RD	0	0	0	25,000,000	0	0	0	25,000,000
Item 422904 2 Totals:	1,164,345	600,000	0	753,584,957	0	0	0	755,349,302

Item Number: 424501 1 Project Description: I-275 (SR 93) FROM 54TH AVE S TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH *SIS*								
District: 07 County: PINELLAS Type of Work: PD&E/EMO STUDY Project Length: 13.796								
P D & E / MANAGED BY FDOT Long Range Transportation Plan: Table 5-8, #31								
-TOTAL OUTSIDE YEARS	2,868,790	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,868,790
Item 424501 1 Totals:	2,868,790	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,868,790

For Pinellas County

Item Number: **422904 4** Description: I-275 (HOWARD FRKL) FM N OF HOWARD FRANKLAND TO S OF SR 60 L RTP: **System Preservation, p. 161**
 Related Project: 2583981 Extra Description: BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, TBX SECTION 3
 Project Length: 0.5
 Type of Work BRIDGE-REPLACE AND ADD LANES ***SIS***

Fund	<2018	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	>2022	All Years
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING - MANAGED BY FDOT								
DS	\$111	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$111
BRP	\$250,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$450,000
ACBR	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$388,920	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$388,920
Totals:	\$250,111	\$200,000	\$0	\$388,920	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$839,031
DESIGN BUILD - MANAGED BY FDOT								
DSB1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,266,588	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,266,588
ACBR	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,122,125	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,122,125
Totals:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23,388,713	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23,388,713
Item 422904 4 Totals:	\$250,111	\$200,000	\$0	\$23,777,633	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$24,227,744

From Hillsborough MPO's TIP for FY 2017/18-2021-/22
 Effective 10/01/17

For
Hillsborough
County

STIP Project Detail and Summaries Online Report

Printed 9/6/17

Selection Criteria	
Current STIP Financial Project:422904 4	Detail Report Related Items Shown

HIGHWAYS

Item Number: 422904 4	Project Description: I-275 (HOWARD FRKL) FM N OF HOWARD FRANKLAND TO S OF SR 60						
District: 07	County: HILLSBOROUGH	Type of Work: BRIDGE-REPLACE AND ADD LANES				Project Length: .500MI	
Extra Description:		INTERSTATE MODIFICATION SECTION 3					
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2018	2018	2019	2020	2021	>2021	All Years
DESIGN BUILD / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code: ACBR - ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)				51,282,682			51,282,682
DSB1 - SKYWAY				17,794,322			17,794,322
Phase: DESIGN BUILD Totals				69,077,004			69,077,004
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code: ACBR - ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)				858,005			858,005
BRP - STATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	250,000	200,000					450,000
DI - ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY	425						425
DS - STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	820						820
Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals		251,245	200,000		858,005		1,309,250
Item: 422904 4 Totals		251,245	200,000		69,935,009		70,386,254

STIP Project Detail and Summaries Online Report

Selection Criteria	
Approved STIP Financial Project:422904 4	Detail Report Related Items Shown

HIGHWAYS

Item Number: 422904 4	Project Description: I-275 (HOWARD FRKL) FM N OF HOWARD FRANKLAND TO S OF SR 60						
District: 07	County: HILLSBOROUGH	Type of Work: BRIDGE-REPLACE AND ADD LANES				Project Length: .500MI	
Extra Description:		INTERSTATE MODIFICATION SECTION 3					
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	>2020	All Years
DESIGN BUILD / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code: ACBR - ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)				5,122,124			5,122,124
DSB1 - SKYWAY				17,683,490			17,683,490
Phase: DESIGN BUILD Totals				22,805,614			22,805,614
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code: ACBR - ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (BRT)				388,920			388,920
Item: 422904 4 Totals				23,194,534			23,194,534

**ATTACHMENT C
2013 PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT**

DRAFT

PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that on October 8 and October 10, 2013, beginning at 6:00 p.m., I presided over a two-session Public Hearing for the following project:

Howard Frankland (I-275/SR 93) Northbound Bridge Replacement
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
from one mile south of the bridge to one mile north of the 3 mile bridge
Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Florida
Financial Project ID: 422799-1

I further certify that the subject Public Hearing sessions were 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.


Kirk Bogen, Environmental Management Engineer
Hearing Moderator

1/10/14
Date

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HOWARD FRANKLAND NORTHBOUND BRIDGE
REPLACEMENT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND
ENVIRONMENT STUDY OR PD&E STUDY

(SESSION 1)

DATE: Tuesday, October 8, 2013
TIME: 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
3201 Scherer Drive
St. Petersburg, Florida
REPORTED
BY: V. LIZ NIEVES, Court Reporter
Notary Public, State of Florida

(SESSION 2)

DATE: Thursday, October 10, 2013
TIME: 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Tampa Marriott Westshore
1001 North Westshore Boulevard
Tampa, Florida
REPORTED
BY: CATHY J. JOHNSON MESSINA, RMR, FPR
Registered Merit Reporter
Florida Profession Reporter
Notary Public, State of Florida

I N D E X

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Computer-Aided Transcription

1 (SESSION 1)

2 Bill Jonson
3 Clearwater City Councilman

4 MR. JONSON: My name is Bill Jonson, J-O-N-S-O-N.
5 I'm a City Councilman from Clearwater. I sit on the
6 PSTA Board, and I previously was Chair of the TBARTA
7 Citizens Advisory Committee, so I've been involved in
8 this process for a long time. And I understood the
9 scope of this project to be a road bridge replacement
10 and a transit bridge as the original scope.

11 I see today that the deliverable appears to have
12 been -- accelerated the bridge and de-emphasized the
13 transit envelope of the project, rather than a
14 comprehensive inclusion of transit into the next step
15 going forward.

16 And I think that's unfortunate because in
17 the past, there was great consensus on a regional
18 transit plan that would include light rail from
19 St. Petersburg through the gateway area across the
20 bridge to downtown Tampa and going to the North Tampa
21 area near USF. And I'm concerned that the
22 de-emphasis of the transit portion of the bridge will
23 affect our long-range ability for the area to really
24 make the improvements that were envisioned by the
25 DOT's interstate of transit report, which came out

1 about ten years ago, and that was the basis for the
2 PSTA advancing funds to the FDOT for the Howard
3 Frankland Bridge study.
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DRAFT

1 (SESSION 1)

2 MR. BOGEN: Good evening. Welcome to the
3 public hearing for the Howard Frankland Northbound
4 Bridge Replacement Project Development and
5 Environment Study or PD&E study.

6 My name is Kirk Bogen and I am the Environmental
7 Management Engineer for District 7 of the Florida
8 Department of Transportation. Today is Tuesday,
9 October 8, 2013, and it is approximately 6:00 p.m.
10 We are assembled at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit
11 Authority offices located in St. Petersburg, Florida.

12 This public hearing is being held relative to
13 Work Program Item Segment Number 422799-1. This
14 project is the combination of two complimentary
15 studies. The first is the Howard Frankland Northbound
16 Bridge Replacement PD&E Study and is the reason we are
17 here this evening. The second is the Regional Transit
18 Corridor Evaluation.

19 We are conducting the hearing this evening to
20 provide you an opportunity to discuss the project
21 and to submit formal comments on the PD&E study portion.
22 If you would like to provide input on the transit corridor
23 evaluation, you may do so using the available comment form
24 or by visiting the project website.

25 This public hearing is being held in accordance with

1 the applicable state and federal laws and public
2 participation is encouraged and solicited without regard
3 to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin,
4 disability or family status.

5 This hearing was advertised consistent with
6 federal and state requirements and is being
7 conducted in accordance with the Americans with
8 Disabilities Act of 1990. This information is
9 provided in the project brochure.

10 This public hearing is being conducted in two
11 sessions. Both sessions will be combined into a
12 single public hearing record for the PD&E study.

13 The first session is tonight, the 8th day
14 of October, 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Pinellas
15 Suncoast Transit Authority offices located at 3201
16 Scherer Drive, St. Petersburg, Florida. The second
17 session will be held Thursday, October the 10th,
18 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Tampa Marriott
19 Westshore located at 1001 North Westshore Boulevard,
20 Tampa, Florida.

21 This is your opportunity to receive
22 information on the Howard Frankland Northbound
23 Bridge Replacement PD&E Study and officially
24 comment on the recommended build alternative and
25 other documents available here tonight.

1 The Recommended "Build" Alternative is based on
2 comprehensive environmental and engineering
3 analysis completed to date, as well as on public
4 comments that have been received throughout the
5 duration of the study. This study meets the
6 maximum air quality standards established by the
7 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or EPA.

8 When you arrived this evening, you should have
9 received an informational newsletter and a comment
10 form. If you weren't able to sign in or did not
11 receive an information packet, please stop by our
12 sign-in table before leaving this evening. You
13 should have also had the opportunity to view the
14 video presentation that is continuously running
15 throughout this public hearing.

16 On projects such as this one, one of the
17 unavoidable consequences is the necessary
18 acquisition of properties and the relocation of
19 families and businesses. On this project, however,
20 we anticipate no property acquisitions and no
21 relocations.

22 Before I continue, I would like to recognize
23 any elected officials or their representatives who
24 are here tonight. I ask that you please stand and
25 introduce yourself for the record.

1 MR. JONSON: Bill Jonson, Clearwater City
2 Council.

3 MS. DIPOLITO: Doreen DiPolito, Clearwater
4 City Council.

5 MR. DANNER: Jeff Danner, St. Petersburg City
6 Council.

7 MR. BOGEN: Thank you. Anyone desiring to
8 make a statement or present written views and/or
9 exhibits regarding the location, conceptual design,
10 social, economic or environmental effects of the
11 Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge Replacement will
12 now have an opportunity to do so.

13 You may also make a statement at the public
14 hearing second session scheduled for Thursday
15 October the 10th, 2013 in Tampa.

16 If you have completed a speaker's card, please
17 give them to a Department staff member. If you
18 have not received a speaker's card and wish to
19 speak, please raise your hand so we can get you a
20 card to complete.

21 Written statements and exhibits may be
22 presented in lieu of or in addition to verbal
23 comments. All written statements received at
24 either session of this public hearing and at the
25 Florida Department of Transportation District Seven

1 Office located at 11201 North McKinley Drive,
2 Tampa, Florida 33612, postmarked no later than
3 October 21, 2013, will become part of the PD&E
4 study's public record.

5 At this time, I will call upon those who have
6 turned in speaker cards. When you come forward,
7 please state your name and address clearly into the
8 microphone for the record. If you represent an
9 organization, municipality or other public agency,
10 please provide that information as well.

11 Please limit your comments to the bridge
12 replacement PD&E study and keep them to three
13 minutes in order to allow everyone an opportunity to
14 speak. If you have additional comments related to the
15 PD&E study, you may continue with the court
16 reporter after the formal session.

17 Our first speaker is Andy Bell.

18 MR. BELL: Good evening.

19 MR. BOGEN: Good evening.

20 MR. BELL: Thank you for allowing me to stand
21 and address everyone this evening. Very quick
22 comment.

23 MR. BOGEN: Can I get you to state your name
24 and your address?

25 MR. BELL: Sure. Reverend Andy Bell, 500

1 Lewis Boulevard SE, St. Petersburg, Florida.

2 I am thrilled at the opportunity that we are looking
3 at in the expansion of the Howard Frankland Bridge. Not
4 only for the engineering that needs to be done, but for
5 the future possibilities and I want to urge that all
6 officials related to this program will seriously consider
7 the need for light rail transit.

8 I have lived in cities that have had light
9 rail. I have traveled to cities across this
10 country and in Europe that have wonderful light
11 rail and we are so far behind the times.

12 Looking at the benefits for those of us over on the
13 coast, when we consider people who visit in the Orlando
14 region, going to the big parks over there, isn't it going
15 to be wonderful when they're able to get on a train and go
16 to the beach without having to stop, without having to
17 rent cars, when they can go to the beach and stay for
18 several days in some of our hotels and motels.

19 Not to mention those of us who live on this
20 side who would desperately love to be able to
21 transfer to other parts of the state, to go to
22 meetings and attend venues and be able to do it
23 without having to drive a vehicle.

24 Please consider the need for light rail to take
25 the transit of this region into the 21st Century

1 and beyond.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

4 Our next speaker is Anne Drake McMullen.

5 MS. MCMULLEN: Good evening. Thank you so
6 much for being here today. My name is Anne Drake
7 McMullen. Address is 333 Third Avenue North in
8 St. Petersburg.

9 I guess my big question that I would like FDOT to
10 consider is are you aware that at this time PSTA and the
11 County Commission are considering a ballot initiative in
12 2014, November 2014 to include additional options for
13 rapid transit whatever that might be.

14 So we would ask that you consider that
15 as you're looking at these alternatives and not
16 propose an alternative that would not include the
17 option of rail or bus rapid transit in the initial
18 process.

19 Thank you so much.

20 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

21 Our next speaker is Frank Jackalone.

22 MR. JACKALONE: Good evening. My name is
23 Frank Jackalone. I live at 1863 Lakewood Drive
24 South in St. Petersburg, Florida, and I'm here
25 representing the Sierra Club today.

1 I'm here to join the people who just spoke
2 saying that light rail is an essential element for any
3 redesign of the Howard Frankland Bridge. Just
4 to add -- to solely add lanes and to improve the
5 capacity to carry cars on that bridge will not fix
6 the problem because as soon as those cars get over
7 into Tampa, and hit the extension of 275 going to
8 downtown Tampa, they're going to reach grid lock.
9 And those of us who have experienced that know
10 that.

11 The only solution to our transit problems here
12 in this area is to bring light rail, as Pinellas County
13 is moving forward to. So we ask Florida DOT to make it
14 a priority.

15 I had the great opportunity to go to the Rays game
16 last night, Tampa Bay Rays. I'm sure we have
17 more fans of the Rays here. No matter where the
18 new stadium is built, whether it's in St. Petersburg
19 or in Tampa, we need light rail to
20 connect to those sports venues, to recreation
21 venues. Otherwise, people won't go from one side of the
22 Bay to the other on the regular basis that's needed to
23 make this a vibrant community to support teams like the
24 Rays. So, please invest money now into bringing light
25 rail to the area across Howard Frankland Bridge.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Alex Glenn.

4 MR. GLENN: Alex Glenn, 299 1st Avenue North,
5 St. Petersburg, 33701. I'm president of Duke Energy
6 here in Florida and it's not very often that
7 we're in agreement with the Sierra Club.

8 But one specific comment that I would make is
9 that we shouldn't kill any of our options and
10 including whether it's bus rapid transit, whether
11 it's light rail on the bridge or an expanded bridge
12 alone, more than what is presently being
13 contemplated. I think we need to keep all those
14 options on the table and look at those.

15 And the second comment I would make is when is
16 the point of no return? What is that date in which
17 the design, the engineering is done such that we,
18 the public, will know when light rail or bus rapid
19 transit is off the table for this design and it
20 would have to be in a different location.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. BOGEN: Thank you for your comment. If
23 you would see us after the formal portion, we can
24 try and give you an indication.

25 All right. Our next speaker is Katie Franco.

1 MS. FRANCO: Hi. Katie Franco, 7609 South Wall
2 Street, Tampa 33616. I'm here representing the
3 Tampa Bay Partnership. We're an eight-county
4 economic development organization, and we are very
5 focused on the future of our economic prosperity
6 for Tampa Bay and part of that future we envision
7 is transportation and transit options throughout
8 the region.

9 We are very excited about the progress that DOT
10 has made on the bridge. We're excited about what
11 we're going to do to make sure we have the right
12 infrastructure, but we really do urge that we do
13 take the time to track with what both the counties
14 are planning on either side and we're working
15 diligently with both Hillsborough and Pinellas
16 County to support their efforts to bring rail
17 programs forward and we hope -- we see that there
18 is a transit envelope in here, but we hope we can
19 take the time that we need to make sure we don't
20 build something and have to build something else
21 later on.

22 So, again, thank you so much and we look
23 forward to working with DOT to find those
24 solutions.

25 MR. BOGEN: Thank you for your comment.

1 Our next speaker is Kevin Thurman.

2 MR. THURMAN: Thank you very much. Kevin
3 Thurman, Connect Tampa Bay. I'm the executive
4 director of an organization that represents over
5 3300 grassroots advocates who are concerned about
6 creating more transportation options in the Tampa
7 Bay region and this specific corridor and this
8 specific bridge is vital to doing that.

9 The number of transportation options is almost
10 limited to whether or not this bridge is built or
11 not because the I-275 corridor actually carries
12 more people, 20 percent more traffic than the I-4 corridor
13 that's getting the \$2.1 billion and ultimate I-4
14 upgrade which also has the \$1.2 billion Sunrail
15 upgrade as paid for mostly by the state.

16 And so what I would say is we need to not only
17 look at whether or not we're going to build this
18 bridge and keep all our options open, but we also
19 need to make sure that as we ask for money and as
20 we push forward, that we make sure that we do
21 things that make it so we are getting the kind of
22 multi-modal corridor in this corridor that we have
23 that includes the Howard Frankland Bridge.

24 And this new bridge that needs to be built
25 should be able to support any kind of expansion

1 that need be in the most cost-efficient manner.

2 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Phil Compton.

4 MR. COMPTON: Good evening, Phil Compton. I
5 reside at 1430 Park Circle, Tampa, Florida 33604. And my
6 Office at the Sierra Club is at 1990 Central
7 Avenue, St. Petersburg, 33712.

8 I'm one of those people that crosses the Bay
9 everyday. I'm also one of the people like
10 Mr. Jackalone who enjoys the Rays game. I want to
11 thank you for holding this hearing early enough so
12 people can go and see the Rays tonight.

13 Yesterday, I left my home at 4:30 in the
14 afternoon, took me 90 minutes to get to downtown
15 St. Petersburg to go to the game. Missed the
16 first inning. This is typical of what we have
17 here.

18 I want to reiterate what Ms. McMullen said
19 earlier that there is a specific plan here in
20 Pinellas County if it should pass in a little over
21 a year from now, there will be specific time frames
22 moving forward in which a multi-modal system will
23 be developed, funded, engineered and built in this
24 county.

25 We would hope very much that the plans that you

1 have, particularly as shown in figure 4 in the
2 handout, would go forward in a manner that's
3 consistent with that, so that our state and federal
4 funds are used in a way that compliments the local
5 investment that we have from Pinellas County and
6 people like myself who come over here and spend our
7 money, to connect the Bay as is planned.

8 Hillsborough County is moving forward as well
9 and could very well have that same sort of
10 commitment as well going forward.

11 So, please, let's have the specific time frames
12 done in a consistent manner. We don't want to wait
13 another 20, 30, 40 years to be able to get across
14 the Bay in some other way than driving our car in
15 the worst traffic congestion that exists in the
16 United States of America.

17 It's time to do better. It's time for DOT to
18 commit to spending resources from our tax dollars
19 here in this region, to serve the people and the
20 needs that we have in this area. Thank you very
21 much.

22 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

23 Our next speaker is Edward Ringwald.

24 MR. RINGWALD: Ringwald, that's me. Thank you
25 and good evening. My name is Edward Ringwald. I

1 reside at 119 114th Terrace NE in St. Pete and my
2 mailing address is P.O. Box 21846 in Tampa, 33622.

3 The Florida DOT has an opportunity right now
4 with the proposed replacement of the northbound
5 span of the Howard Frankland Bridge to consider a
6 transit inflow, which would mean light rail or
7 commuter rail. And our region needs light rail --
8 needs light rail or commuter rail as an option.

9 We are one of the Metro areas in the United
10 States or even the State of Florida. Miami and
11 Ft. Lauderdale has Tri-Rail, Orlando is getting Sunrail
12 and the Tampa Bay area has very limited options,
13 which means major companies cannot relocate here due to
14 the fact that there are very limited transit
15 options.

16 So, I think there is an opportunity for the
17 Florida DOT right now with the proposed replacement
18 of the northbound span of the Howard Frankland
19 Bridge to go ahead and consider a transit envelope
20 so-to-speak, like a light rail or commuter rail
21 service.

22 We just don't need Interstate 275 widened just
23 20 lanes and still have gridlock. But light rail
24 or commuter rail, there is an opportunity and the
25 opportunity is now.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Savanna DeLuca.

4 MS. DELUCA: Hello, my name is Savanna DeLuca.
5 I live at 334 4th Street South, St. Petersburg,
6 Florida.

7 I'm here because I would like to urge you to
8 consider light rail in the future of the Howard
9 Frankland Bridge. I think it's really important
10 and I'm not alone when I say if I could opt not to
11 drive a vehicle and just take light rail, I would.

12 And I know we have that option coming up in
13 St. Petersburg and we're really looking forward
14 to it. So I think considering that air pollution
15 is one of the biggest -- carbon emissions is the
16 biggest air pollution problem in Pinellas County,
17 that it would be amazing if we didn't have to so
18 many cars, we didn't have to deal with parking, car
19 insurance and automobile payments and we could just
20 hop on a rail and get to where we need to go and
21 enjoy the beautiful city of St. Petersburg and
22 Tampa.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

25 Our next speaker is Travis Norton.

1 MR. NORTON: Thank you. Travis Norton, 100
2 Second Avenue, St. Petersburg, Advocacy Manager
3 for St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce.

4 St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce strongly
5 encourages Florida Department of Transportation to
6 consider all options, including light rail and
7 rapid transit because when we start construction in
8 five years, that will last 75 years, the bridge will
9 and within that time I want my children to say
10 wow, you guys had the foresight to consider light
11 rail, rapid transit and modes of transportation for
12 the future.

13 And that's why I'd like the Florida Department
14 of Transportation to consider, and St. Petersburg
15 Chamber of Commerce would like the Florida
16 Department of Transportation to consider light
17 rail, rapid transit.

18 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

19 MR. NORTON: Go Rays.

20 MR. BOGEN: Our next speaker is Jim Lampe.

21 MR. LAMPE: Thank you for having this meeting
22 tonight and letting me speak. My name is Jim
23 Lampe, L-A-M-P-E. I live at 1921 58th Avenue
24 North, St. Petersburg.

25 When I first heard about the light rail, I

1 wondered why anybody would even want it. It's a
2 duplicate transportation system. We have a bus
3 system that can go anywhere, that people are
4 talking about, the airport, anywhere. So I tried
5 to figure out why people would want it.

6 So I did some research. And I'd like to submit
7 this. It's from the U.S. Bureau of Statistics, in
8 the last census in 2010, how many people in
9 Pinellas County said they used public transportation?
10 1.6 percent of the people, that's how many? 1.6.
11 We're going to spend billions of dollars on 1.6 percent of
12 the people. That doesn't sound like a common sense
13 solution to me.

14 We just got hit with flood insurance rates are
15 going up. Obamacare is coming. Our college kids
16 are coming home with \$100,000 in debt. The Board of
17 County Commission just passed a new storm water fee all of
18 us will have to pay for our houses. The national debt is
19 \$17 trillion. The State of Florida owes \$152 billion.

20 So I would say this bridge needs to be built as
21 cheaply as possible. A good bridge, but as cheap
22 as possible.

23 And I would like to address the myth of the
24 environmental conditions in Pinellas. Pinellas
25 Park and all of Pinellas County is within the state

1 implementation program standards of all the EPA
2 regulations. There is no air pollution problem
3 here. In addition, as cars get better, their
4 emissions get fewer and air pollution gets less
5 every year.

6 Thank you for letting me speak.

7 MR. BOGEN: Thank you. Our next speaker is
8 Jennifer Winter.

9 MS. WINTER: Hello. My name is Jennifer Winter
10 and I reside at 930 59th Avenue, St. Pete Beach,
11 Florida 33706.

12 I'd like to say that I'm a recent graduate of
13 the University of South Florida and I just signed on to
14 be the Sustainability Coordinator for the University of
15 South Florida St. Pete campus and I'd like to say that
16 at the University of South Florida we have better transit
17 options than we do here.

18 We have campus here in Tampa and also campus
19 here in St. Pete. It's very hard for students to
20 get across the bridge and most people do not have
21 the time or the gas to spend on commute back and forth
22 everyday. I think we really need to look at
23 light rail options or alternative options.

24 I was definitely not asked, I was not one of the
25 1.6 people, there's definitely more people that

1 would use light rail or other options, so please
2 consider it.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Jeff Danner.

6 MR. DANNER: Thank you. My name is Jeff
7 Danner. I reside at 2351 Dartmouth Avenue in
8 St. Petersburg, Florida.

9 I think most of the people in this room know
10 the efforts that are going underway with PSTA, the
11 MPO, the Pinellas Planning Council. What they
12 probably don't know it was a joint meeting of the
13 Pinellas and Hillsborough MPO several years ago that
14 asked DOT to move this study up forward a few
15 years and put in the work program so it coincides
16 with the alternative study that was being conducted
17 so we can look at this exact thing.

18 The TBARTA master plan which encompasses seven
19 counties and identifies the main spine of the
20 region crossing right over the Howard Frankland
21 Bridge, it basically goes from USF Tampa to USF
22 St. Petersburg, which goes to most every one of our
23 employment centers and residential centers and all
24 the activity centers in our county.

25 Recently, we traveled with TBARTA to Washington

1 D.C. to speak to our federal delegates and as we
2 listed all of the TBARTA priorities from Spring
3 Hill to Manatee, every one of them stopped and
4 wanted more information on the Howard Frankland
5 Bridge.

6 Understanding that the two largest employment
7 centers in the state are now separated by this bridge
8 and if given the opportunity to be connected by this
9 bridge, give job opportunities and can build the largest
10 employment center south of Atlanta.

11 It can't be a parking lot. It can't be a
12 simple replacement of the existing bridge. We have
13 to make sure that regardless of what comes out of
14 this, we don't preclude any options for a transit
15 connection to the future.

16 The GreenLight Council will meet and make its
17 final recommendations on November 6 and present it
18 to the county commission and it is very important
19 that this bridge is a key to not only Pinellas
20 County, but Hillsborough and the whole TBARTA
21 region as it relates to, again, like I said, our
22 jobs and the future of our region.

23 We want to make sure that you do consider
24 certainly the Phase 4, and as it even says in your
25 brochure it's at a crossroads and that's exactly

1 where we are in this region and it's time to step
2 up and make sure we don't eliminate any options.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Dan Harvey.

6 MR. HARVEY: Good afternoon. Dan Harvey, 1425
7 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, Florida. I'm on
8 The Board of Directors of the Edge District in
9 downtown St. Pete. I'm here to speak tonight on
10 the Howard Frankland Bridge replacement.

11 Boy, I wish there was room for seven or eight
12 lanes in between these two bridges right now.

13 After reviewing the plans, it looks like we just
14 have room to make kind of a like kind replacement
15 and that like kind replacement is not going to
16 allow for rail or rapid bus transit or extra lanes.

17 So, we're going to have to add on to what is being
18 proposed.

19 That add on, after you tear down the old
20 bridge, the cost of that we have to try to figure
21 out what it's going to be, how it's going to
22 connect Hillsborough to Pinellas, where it's going
23 to go to when it gets to Pinellas and where it's
24 going to go when it goes through Hillsborough.
25 That overview of that whole thing, like the young

1 lady from Tampa who said she is trying to look at
2 it from an overall picture, I would like to see it
3 from an overall picture, you know, what it looks
4 like down the road, when it's going to happen, and
5 how much it's going to cost.

6 Obviously, the key part of the spine is the
7 Howard Frankland Bridge replacement. And again,
8 you're just replacing it what it was. So, my
9 question would be and I would like to maybe delve
10 into this further or get some answers is what is
11 the overall picture look like and what is the
12 overall going to cost us because it's not easy to
13 go across that body of water and you have to
14 decide, you know, what are the ramifications of
15 that.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. BOGEN: If you see us after our session,
18 we will try and get you some more information on
19 that.

20 MR. HARVEY: All right.

21 MR. BOGEN: Our next speaker is Barbara
22 Hazelden.

23 MS. HAZELDEN: Yes, my name is Barbara
24 Hazelden and I live at 1043 31st Terrace N.E. in
25 St. Petersburg, Florida and I have been very much

1 opposed to this project based on many facts and not
2 just feelings. Facts of other communities that
3 have gone down this road and found out that the --
4 all the figuring in the world by men and women can
5 be completely off base.

6 And that within just like Charlotte, you know
7 they started out in I believe 1996 and just this
8 few years later, they're already in huge financial
9 problems with light rail. They are in need of \$5
10 billion more to go on. Some of the officials in
11 the Charlotte area have been involved in the light
12 rail since inception are basically pulling their
13 hair out as to how they're going continue to find
14 other revenue sources, which of course are the
15 people who are sitting in this room, it's the tax
16 payers that are going to be bailing out these
17 projects.

18 And it's a scenario in California and many
19 different states that plays out time and time
20 again.

21 One of the speakers was talking about the
22 number or percentage of people who actually rely on
23 public transportation and at the same time, we have
24 someone talking about how much fun it would be to
25 go to the baseball game. It's going to take a heck

1 of a lot more than to go to a baseball game to make
2 this project work. It's going to take people who
3 put their keys down or perhaps sell their car and
4 decide they're going take up a lifestyle of
5 depending on light rail and buses.

6 And we live in a time today where one phone
7 call from your cell will change your entire day and
8 you're stuck on a bus across the Bay instead of
9 having your own car and your own set of keys and I
10 think that's just not our lifestyle.

11 So when we consider that about 2 percent of
12 people in Pinellas County depend on public
13 transportation, then this means that there's going
14 to be a lot more than two percent that will be
15 necessary. I believe they refer to it in the
16 vernacular here as choice riders, people that will
17 make the choice to put their car and their
18 lifestyle and their cell phone aside and they're
19 going to rely on public transportation to make it
20 worthwhile.

21 I think it makes far more sense -- first of
22 all, I'd like to just say that what happened in
23 Hillsborough with the referendum, I forecast is
24 going to happen here also. So I hope you don't
25 make a commitment on a bridge that a year from now

1 that there's not going to be that light rail system
2 here in Pinellas County.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. BOGEN: Thank you for your comment.

5 That's the last card that I have. Is there anyone
6 else that wishes to speak?

7 MS. FORCAN: Yes. My name is Jasmina Forcan
8 and I live in Clearwater, east end of Clearwater.

9 I definitely think that you should consider
10 light rail or any other kind of public
11 transportation because I do have a car and I drive
12 and I've been rear-ended four times because people
13 from Pasco drive to Clearwater on their way to
14 Tampa and I think if you take them off the road
15 then I wouldn't be in, you know, traffic, stuck in
16 traffic and rear-ended by people who text message
17 while they drive.

18 So, definitely this is the only place on the
19 planet that doesn't have any mass transportation
20 and people are only using it -- I mean, because
21 there is not transportation available that's why
22 there's only one percent of people using it.

23 For Republican convention, my friend was going
24 to International Mall to pick up her -- she was
25 volunteering. She went to pick up her uniform and

1 it would have taken her three hours to get from
2 Clearwater to International Mall. So I gave her a ride
3 and brought her back.

4 Because we don't have that much public
5 transportation now. That's why we are trying to get
6 public transportation and that's why we should
7 think about public transportation when we are building
8 these bridges. If we had light rail or any kind of
9 rail, you wouldn't have to expand this bridge. You
10 would be saving money by, you know, putting people
11 on a transportation that don't want to drive. I'm
12 going to give you my car keys if I can go on bus or
13 light rail. So please do not avoid this.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

16 Is there anyone else? I noticed that we had some
17 elected officials or their representatives come in.
18 Is there anyone that would like to introduce themselves
19 for the record, elected officials or their
20 representative?

21 MS. SEEL: Commissioner Karen Seel from the
22 Pinellas County Commission and also Chairman of the
23 Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization.
24 Thank you all for being here tonight and sharing
25 your thoughts.

1 (SESSION 2)

2 MR. BOGEN: Welcome to the public hearing for the
3 Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge Replacement Project
4 Development and Environment Study or PD&E study. My name
5 is Kirk Bogen and I am the Environmental Management
6 Engineer for District Seven of the Florida Department of
7 Transportation.

8 Today is Thursday, October the 10th, 2013, and it is
9 approximately 6:00 p.m. We are assembled at the Tampa
10 Marriott Westshore in Tampa, Florida.

11 This public hearing is being held relative to Work
12 Program Item Segment Number 422799-1. This project is
13 the combination of two complimentary studies. The first
14 is the Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge Replacement
15 PD&E Study and is the reason we are here this evening.
16 The second in the Regional Transit Corridor Evaluation.

17 We are conducting the hearing this evening to
18 provide you with an opportunity to discuss the project
19 and to submit formal comments on the PD&E study portion.
20 If you would like to provide input on the transit
21 corridor evaluation, you may do so using the available
22 comment form or by visiting the project website.

23 This public hearing is being held in accordance
24 with applicable federal and state laws and public
25 participation is encouraged and solicited without regard

1 to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin,
2 disability, or family status.

3 This public hearing was advertised consistent with
4 federal and state requirements and is being conducted in
5 accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of
6 1990. This information is also provided in the project
7 brochure.

8 This public hearing is being conducted in two
9 sessions. Both sessions will be combined into a single
10 public hearing record for the PD&E study.

11 The first session was held on Tuesday, October 8,
12 2013, at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority office
13 located at 3201 Scherer Drive, St. Petersburg, Florida.
14 The second session is being conducted tonight, Thursday,
15 October 10, 2013, at the Tampa Marriott Westshore located
16 at 1001 North Westshore Boulevard in Tampa, Florida.

17 This is your opportunity to receive information on
18 the Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E
19 study and officially comment on the Recommended "Build"
20 Alternative and other documents available here tonight.
21 The Recommended "Build" Alternative is based on
22 comprehensive environmental and engineering analyses
23 completed to date, as well as public comments that have
24 been received throughout the duration of the study.
25 This study meets the maximum air quality standards

1 established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,
2 or EPA.

3 When you arrived this evening, you should have
4 received an informational newsletter and a comment form.
5 If you weren't able to sign in or did not receive an
6 information packet, please stop by our sign-in table
7 before you leave this evening. You should have also had
8 the opportunity to view the audio-visual presentation
9 that is continuously running throughout this public
10 hearing.

11 On projects such as this, one of the unavoidable
12 consequences is the necessary acquisition of properties
13 and the relocation of families and businesses. On this
14 project, however, we anticipate no property acquisitions
15 and no relocations.

16 Before I continue, I would like to recognize any
17 elected officials or their representatives who are here
18 tonight. I ask that you please stand and introduce
19 yourself for the record.

20 MR. JONSON: Bill Jonson, City of Clearwater
21 Council and also PSTA board member.

22 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

23 Anyone desiring to make a statement or present
24 written views and/or exhibits regarding the location,
25 conceptual design, social, economic, or environmental

1 effects of the Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge
2 Replacement will now have an opportunity to do so.

3 If you have completed a speaker's card, please give
4 them to a Department staff member here tonight. If you
5 have not received a speaker's card and wish to speak,
6 please raise your hand so we can get you a card to
7 complete.

8 Written statements and exhibits may be presented in
9 lieu of or in addition to verbal statements. All written
10 statements received at either session of this public
11 hearing and at the Florida Department of Transportation
12 District Seven Office located at 11201 North McKinley
13 Drive, Tampa, Florida 33612, postmarked no later than
14 October 21, 2013, will become a part of the PD&E study's
15 public record.

16 At this time, I will call upon those who have
17 turned in speaker's cards. When you come forward, please
18 state your name and address clearly into the microphone,
19 for the record. If you represent an organization,
20 municipality or other public agency, please provide that
21 information as well.

22 Please limit your comments to the Bridge
23 Replacement PD&E study and keep them to three minutes in
24 order to allow everyone an opportunity to speak. If you
25 have additional comments related to the PD&E study, you

1 may continue with the court reporter after the formal
2 session.

3 The first speaker is Marilyn Smith.

4 MS. SMITH: Good evening, again. My name is
5 Marilyn Smith and I live in Tampa at 413 South Melville
6 Avenue, and that's all you need.

7 First of all, I'd like to address the fact that
8 "intermodal" is a very important word. If you don't know
9 it, you should know it. The only problem is a lot of
10 people throw it around and don't even know what it means.
11 Intermodal flexibility is what we need to look for when
12 we start rebuilding anything when they screwed it up the
13 first time.

14 The biggest thing we need to incorporate at this
15 time is the airport, and we don't need a rail to go to
16 the airport, what we need are buses for flexibility to
17 bring the people out of those airplanes and let them go
18 where they want to go on a bus and interface with buses
19 around here, and that means flexibility, that means no
20 more rail-to-ground, that means less construction that we
21 have to then worry about upkeep on.

22 I speak to you from that, because I've traveled a
23 bit in my life and I do know what intermodal really
24 means. Some people really don't.

25 In fact, we had one guy from FDOT try to tell me

1 that silly little trolley that goes nowhere was
2 intermodal because there was a bus stop two blocks away.
3 Now, that's really not very bright, but anyway.

4 And in France I've used buses an awful lot. The
5 only way I traveled on train was -- you come out of the
6 Schiphol, which is an international airport, it's in
7 Amsterdam, and it is truly intermodal. It interfaces
8 with high-speed and it interfaces with regional, local,
9 all of the transportations.

10 Same thing in Italy, you can do that there also.
11 You don't have to go on a train. You certainly don't
12 have to drive, and you wouldn't want to drive there
13 anyway; they're horrible drivers.

14 So that being said, what I want to focus on here
15 is keep those brief comments in mind, folks, because
16 I'm on your side. I'm not here to feather anybody's
17 stakeholders, and that's what you call them. I call
18 them stakes in your heart.

19 The northbound bridge does need to be replaced and
20 engineering will tell you the weight maximum has already
21 destroyed many bridges here. I come from a state where
22 they have experience with bridges, California.

23 I'm very amused with this term being used here,
24 "premium transit initiative." Well, that screams light
25 rail to me. We don't need that either. Give us good

1 buses and get them to run on time with the flexibility to
2 meet the people's needs, not the seaman's (sic) needs.

3 Let's not waste anymore time on that and look into
4 the future. We need to have something that works for the
5 people. We don't need to buy anymore right-of-way to
6 make somebody else wealthy to move people from here to
7 there so they can make some more money and the cost of
8 going -- anyway, nobody really cares about the little
9 guy. All he wants to do is go to work and go there in a
10 less expensive way. He can't afford a car. And when
11 they keep changing the bus routes to helter-skelter, that
12 doesn't work. But if you don't like that, you can always
13 go off the deep end and put in light rail and then worry
14 about it, and that's really going to cause you to go to
15 work.

16 So I think I'm about at the end of my three
17 minutes.

18 MR. BOGEN: Yes.

19 MS. SMITH: I enjoyed my time and I've been doing
20 this 30 years. I'm not going away. I decided I'm not
21 leaving.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. BOGEN: Thank you for your comment.

24 Our next speaker is Peter Horstman.

25 MR. HORSTMAN: I decline to speak.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. BOGEN: Decline. Okay.

3 Our next speaker is Pete Franco.

4 MR. FRANCO: Pete Franco, 7300 Sun Island Drive,
5 South Pasadena. Thank you very much for giving me the
6 opportunity to speak.

7 I just wanted to, first off, put in what my
8 recommendation request was with respect to the bridge and
9 corridor analysis, and it would be the express lanes
10 transport, which I believe is the \$710 million
11 alternative with express lanes on the bridge, and I
12 support that concept for the whole corridor too. I'm
13 strongly opposed to light rail for a number of reasons,
14 to include cost effectiveness and value in general. I
15 certainly would not support in any way I believe it's
16 your item 3-1-R-1-3 or 4-1-R-1-4, which is the \$1.4
17 billion or \$1.5 billion builds that include a fixed rail
18 transit over the bridge.

19 So just a couple of background reasons: For one,
20 I don't believe this supports the HART plan. I believe
21 the express bus lane does.

22 In Pinellas, there's an alternative analysis going
23 on, but it's rather a resolution and -- a total analysis
24 got done and a resolution is getting ready to get done,
25 but there's been no approval for rail. I know there's a

1 lot of desire by the County Commission, but there's been
2 no approval.

3 The Tampa referendum, and I was here at that time
4 for that for rail, failed quite extensively. The people
5 voted it down. I think those should be pertinent reasons
6 to look to not do rail. A lot of this is about rail.
7 One way or the other, people are either for it or
8 opposed it.

9 I assert that there's a lot of good reasons to do
10 the bus transport, to include increased transit thru-put,
11 tolls, possibility of less congestion, faster commute
12 times, less emissions, better air quality. And I'm going
13 to give a list of some more facts that I see that support
14 that through the comments form.

15 I've noticed that throughout presentations
16 there's kind of -- there's some strongly different
17 interpretations of what the value or not value is,
18 especially with respect to things like congestion, jobs,
19 emissions, and like that.

20 My research has shown that rail is not the way to
21 go and that buses and vehicle transportation, especially
22 with better emission, is the way to go.

23 I just wanted to point to -- there's a number --
24 in terms of looking at both sides, rail or non-rail,
25 there's a whole lot of marketing for rail and, you know,

1 they're allowed to do that. There's a lot, a lot, a lot,
2 a lot of dollars behind a lot of marketing to promote a
3 poor concept. I just hope there's some willingness for
4 the county commissioners and others to look at some of
5 the opposition to the strong pro-rail.

6 MR. BOGEN: I'm going to ask that you wrap your
7 comments up.

8 MR. FRANCO: Okay. I'll just finish with this: If
9 rail got approved and it turned out to be a really,
10 really great thing, the extra lanes could be added at
11 that point.

12 Thank you for giving me the time to speak.

13 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

14 Our next speaker is Tom Krumreich.

15 MR. KRUMREICH: My name is Tom Krumreich and I'm
16 from Tampa and I chose to use public transit about four
17 years ago, so I've had a pretty good opportunity to
18 experience what it's like here. I've also had the
19 opportunity to experience what it's like up in
20 Minneapolis when I went for training up there for the
21 Sierra Club. So I'm here representing myself and also
22 Sierra Club as a voluntary member of their team.

23 So what they did in Minneapolis was almost a
24 clone of what is proposed -- one of the options to be
25 proposed in Pinellas County with the light rail, and it

1 was fantastic.

2 So in regards to this issue, after talking to the
3 people across the hall, what we need to make sure of
4 since we don't know whether light rail is going to be in
5 the mix or not, in order for it to be possible to be done
6 on this bridge that first iteration of it with the option
7 to expand has to be built to the standards to be able to
8 hold the weight of light rail. So that's the critical
9 thing.

10 If that first section is not built to that standard,
11 then that would not be an option. So, you know, that
12 decision about light rail is yet to be made, but we have
13 to set the stage for it, no matter what side of the issue
14 you're on.

15 So that's what I'm here to promote, the idea of
16 making sure that the first thing we do with the option to
17 expand is built to that load standard. Okay.

18 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

19 Our next speaker is Michael Lang, or Michael Long.

20 MR. LONG: My name is Michael Long, 10236 Douglas
21 Oaks Circle, Tampa, Florida. I'm the president of the
22 Hillsborough Young Democrats. I'm here to speak on their
23 behalf. We're an organization that represents 111,000
24 and counting registered Democrats in Hillsborough County
25 from the ages of eighteen to forty.

1 I want to start with a brief story because my
2 fiancée is from Panama City. A lot of people think it's
3 Panama City, Florida, but she's actually from Panama
4 City, Panama, and it's what most people would consider to
5 be a third-world country. They don't have rural mail
6 service or addresses. If you want to get somewhere, you
7 won't find it on a GPS. You have to tell them the blue
8 house is four doors down from the school on the street
9 and take a left from the yellow house. That's how you
10 get somewhere.

11 However, at the end of this year and beginning of
12 next year they will have a fully functional underground
13 subway system in Panama City to take people around the
14 businesses, cities, and the main areas.

15 I just want you to keep in mind when it comes to
16 public transportation you're far behind the country with
17 no street addresses, and that's got to change, and that
18 will change, especially if we want to truly develop the
19 whole Tampa Bay region into the region that we want it to
20 be, and that includes making sure that when we build a
21 bridge we leave it open to all transit opportunities to
22 people to decide on, including especially light rail,
23 because really that's how we're truly going to connect
24 to other regions.

25 I don't know if most people followed during the RNC.

1 We made a little bit of a fool of ourselves as a city
2 with the whole entire nation looking on us because we had
3 no transportation and no way for people to get places and
4 people were late to things because they were stuck in
5 traffic on buses, and we just really didn't come off
6 looking good, particularly compared to Charlotte which
7 was hosting the Democrat convention which had a fully
8 functional light rail system.

9 So if we continue to want to be this city that
10 competes for the World Cup, that competes for the Super
11 Bowl, that competes for all of the major conventions, we
12 need to develop a system that connects Pinellas County to
13 Tampa Bay and connects all of these hotels and all of
14 these prime areas to each other. And if Pinellas
15 develops their own light rail and Tampa develops their
16 own light rail and there is no connection between the two
17 of them, we really have built a broken system. And so
18 that's really why we need to make sure that stays open.

19 And I tell you what, as young people particularly,
20 public transit is what we look at when we choose where we
21 want to live, and that's why there's a lot of brain drain
22 in the Tampa Bay area.

23 When it comes to the bridge, most people consider
24 going from Pinellas to Hillsborough as like crossing the
25 abyss. A lot of people won't do it because there's no

1 good option and it takes too long. And even if you build
2 a new bridge that doesn't have any other transit options,
3 it still is going to take too long. That hurts the Rays.
4 That hurts the Bucs. It hurts a lot of the things in our
5 area where people are going to because -- I'm from New
6 York originally. We have a subway. We have a rail stop
7 near Yankee Stadium, which is part of the reason why
8 their attendance continues to be so high, despite
9 overpriced tickets and a pretty bad team.

10 So things like that are what we need if we truly
11 want to turn both Pinellas and Hillsborough into a 21st
12 Century economy. At least we need to be more advanced
13 than a country that doesn't have the street addresses.

14 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

15 Our next speaker is Eric Trull.

16 MR. TRULL: Good evening everyone. My name is Eric
17 Trull, 1228 East 7th Avenue, Tampa, Florida. Great
18 segway from the gentleman that just spoke.

19 Sadly and admittedly a little bit blunt, the
20 majority of the stakeholders for this bridge are not
21 present in this room, and the stakeholders are the
22 millennials. We'll live beside and with this bridge for
23 the next 50 to 75 years. And this generation is a
24 generation that views the world completely differently
25 from that of baby boomers. Ladies, don't worry, I know

1 you're all twenty-nine.

2 There's some interesting facts about millennials
3 that I'd like to share, my generation:

4 There are more than 80 million millennials
5 nationwide; 76 million baby boomers. So there are more
6 millennials than there are baby boomers.

7 The percentage of sixteen to twenty-four-year-olds
8 with a driver's license has dropped sharply since 1997
9 and is now below 70 percent for the first time since
10 1964.

11 Thirty-two percent of millennials reside in cities,
12 and there are 88 percent of millennials that desire to
13 live in an urban environment.

14 It may be hard to grasp, but for a growing
15 percentage of my generation a car, and for that matter a
16 house, are no longer things that are longed for.

17 The dream car has been replaced by the dream
18 life-style. To baby boomers, cars meant freedom; to
19 millennials and city dwellers, it means struggling to
20 find an empty parking space and unnecessary costs.

21 Your current proposal replaces the Northbound Bridge
22 with the exact same number of lanes. To me, this does
23 not solve any problems of congestion in the Bay area.
24 Yet, it still costs \$400 million, \$400 million for
25 essentially no change.

1 There are those in the room that scoff at the price
2 tag of mass transit, but I cannot justify spending \$400
3 million for no change whatsoever.

4 To restate your own data, there are currently
5 140,000 trips made daily over the span which will
6 increase to 200,000 in the next 30 years. This is half
7 the life of the bridge that is being proposed that holds
8 the same number of lanes as the current bridge.

9 To boost the economy of our urban cores, walking has
10 to be up-sized as the fundamental street network. This
11 is a fact. In order to do this, emphasis must be placed
12 on mass transit. Every one billion invested in public
13 transportation, capital and operations creates 36,000
14 jobs on average. That 36,000 jobs creates an additional
15 \$500 million in federal, state and local tax revenue.

16 There's been a number of events just this week that
17 support strongly this exact push for mass transit from
18 last Friday a gathering of 150 of the area's young
19 professionals to meetings just this morning with our area
20 leaders supporting mass transit.

21 I am working hard to solve the last mile problem
22 that has plagued transportation through the
23 implementation of Tampa Bay Bike Share in St. Petersburg,
24 Tampa, as well as Orlando, and I encourage you to work
25 hard to establish a transit option on this bridge looking

1 not only after my generation, but the economy of Tampa
2 Bay as a whole.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Ken Roberts.

6 MR. ROBERTS: Good evening. My name's Ken Roberts.
7 I live at 5235 Moon Shell Drive in Apollo Beach. I
8 represent Citizens Organized for Sound Transportation,
9 and we support the managed lanes option. That is the
10 option that adds two express lanes both ways supported by
11 tolls, those lanes to be shared by vehicles paying tolls
12 and buses.

13 There's a number of reasons why we think that's the
14 best answer. We think it's optimal in terms of mass
15 transit and replacing the bridge. Tolls or users pay for
16 bridge obviously increases thru-put because of the four
17 extra lanes, and the express lanes would integrate well
18 with Hillsborough's preferred transit mode, which is
19 their own model of bus rapid transit. Less congestion,
20 faster commute times, we think it's a good solution.

21 We expressly reject the addition of fixed guides or
22 rail transit that has been studied, I guess, for the
23 bridge. It's not compatible with the bus rapid transit.
24 And, really, when you look at this diagram, the reason
25 really jumped out at you. Those two purple circles

1 connected by the bridge, that's a \$5 billion proposition
2 without rail, \$5 billion. The budget for Hillsborough
3 County is \$3 billion, just to kind of put it in
4 perspective for you, and we have lots of other things to
5 spend money on.

6 So it really doesn't make sense to spend a lot of
7 money and make a commitment to a mode of transportation
8 which accomplishes mass transit at 10 times the cost of
9 bus rapid transit.

10 Look at the service that currently connects
11 downtown Tampa with the USF campus, the Metro Rapid.
12 HART installed Metro Rapid for \$25 million with 25 stops.
13 The MPO offered a light rail solution over the exact same
14 route with 8 to 13 stops, half or less the service, for
15 prices ranging from \$200 to \$500 million. That's nine
16 times the cost versus about 20 times the cost. It just
17 doesn't make the cut in cost effectiveness.

18 So rapid mass transit is going to have to look at
19 BRT. Light rail is simply not competitive and doesn't
20 make the cut for public funding.

21 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

22 Our next speaker is Stuart Rogel.

23 MR. ROGEL: Good evening. My name is Stuart Rogel
24 and I'm president and CEO of the Tampa Bay Partnership.
25 Tampa Bay Partnership is an 8-county regional economic

1 development organization that's been working in the
2 Tampa Bay region for 20 years on issues that affect
3 business and economic development.

4 Transportation, and particularly transit, is
5 something we think is key to the future of the economy
6 of the Tampa Bay region. We've spent a lot of time
7 studying and understanding this issue and we believe
8 that that is a critical component for the future of
9 Tampa Bay.

10 I want to recognize Florida DOT for, first of all,
11 partnering with our transit agencies on this project as
12 well as with other local organizations recognizing the
13 importance of understanding transit options as you go
14 forward in rebuilding the Howard Frankland Bridge, which
15 it's critically important that we do replace that bridge,
16 it's critically important that there are managed lanes,
17 express lanes as you call them, both to support the
18 funding of the expansion of the bridge and to make it
19 easier for us to move back and forth, but we also think
20 it's critically important to provide that transit
21 envelope, regardless of the technologies, so there is a
22 fixed guide way, as you call it premium transit option,
23 that we can consider, because right now in Pinellas there
24 are serious considerations about how to connect with a
25 transit system. And it's very, very important to

1 Pinellas County that they connect back to Hillsborough
2 County; and, likewise, I've heard speakers today talk
3 about bus rapid transit and other transit connections for
4 Hillsborough County. Those same kind of facilities can
5 be used if there is, indeed, a good transit envelope
6 that supports a fixed guide way system regardless of the
7 technology.

8 We encourage you to include that in your plans. We
9 thank you for what you're doing, and we thank you for
10 partnering with organizations here in the Tampa Bay
11 region.

12 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

13 Our next speaker is Rollan Bradley.

14 MR. BRADLEY: Yes, sir. Thank you. My name is
15 Rollan Bradley. I live at 3001 West Aquilla in south
16 Tampa. I'm a fifth generation Floridian. I was born and
17 raised here in Tampa and I went to the University of
18 South Florida. I graduated with a degree in chemistry.

19 And to be quite frank with you, I could not find a
20 job here in Florida so I left. I spent time in Chicago.
21 I spent time in southern California. I then moved to
22 Cologne, Germany. And then, lastly, I was in Pittsburgh
23 before I moved back to Tampa in 2006.

24 One of the things that all of these other cities
25 have that Tampa doesn't have -- I'm not going to say the

1 technology job that I have is based on rapid transit or
2 based on transit systems, but I will say that those are
3 the kind of things, as I do research, that I believe
4 would help bring those types of jobs potentially to
5 Tampa. And I would say that I was able to use public
6 transportation in all of those cities, and it's kind of a
7 shame that we don't have that. So to actually go and to
8 invest in this kind of a project and not have that option
9 to me seems incredibly short-sighted.

10 And a lot of times we talk about the fact that we
11 don't have the density here. I can remember when I lived
12 in L.A. -- I lived in Pasadena before they built the
13 light rail in Pasadena going downtown, people said the
14 same thing. Everyone uses a car in L.A.; however, there
15 is light rail going from Pasadena to downtown L.A. It
16 works great. And if you look at where the density is,
17 there's a lot of growth in that area.

18 And I travel in my present job right now and I see
19 the cities seem to have a really good vibe. They are
20 investing in rapid transit.

21 The last thing I will say is that I was in
22 Raleigh-Durham and I was listening to the radio driving
23 back to the airport. They don't have the light rail in
24 Raliegh-Durham, but I was listening to these two jocks on
25 the radio and someone called in and made a comment that

1 wasn't all that intelligent and they said, "Hey, where
2 are you from? Are you from Flori-Duh (sic)?"

3 And it's pretty sad that, you know, that people in
4 Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, when they hear someone
5 that they think they're not intelligent they think
6 they're from Florida.

7 And I think this is the kind of planning -- if we
8 don't plan for something like this, you know, maybe we'll
9 continue that reputation. Anyway, I'm here to support
10 light rail.

11 Thanks.

12 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

13 Our next speaker is Linda Saul-Sena.

14 MS. SAUL-SENA: Hello. Thank you for this
15 opportunity. I'm Linda Saul-Sena. I live at 157
16 Biscayne in Tampa. I'm here tonight as a former member
17 of the Hillsborough County MPO for 20 years and I'm
18 representing Lisa Montelione and Harry Cohen of Tampa
19 City Council who are current MPO members. They're at a
20 City Council meeting, but they wanted me to share with
21 you our concerns that we definitely build a transit
22 envelope as part of phase one. It just is smart. We
23 know we need a transit system.

24 The City of Tampa did support the transit initiative
25 on the ballot a few years ago. I'm confident that the

1 Hillsborough County Commission will follow the lead of
2 the Pinellas County Commission in the future, put
3 something on the ballot, and that it will be successful.

4 So our concerns are not only that there's a transit
5 envelope, but also that we include facilities for
6 pedestrians and bicycles as well as the other forms of
7 transit.

8 And lastly, the esthetics of this bridge have not
9 been addressed anywhere in any of the materials that I've
10 seen. I know at this point we're just considering
11 routes, but beauty is important.

12 We all celebrate the Skyway because it's such a
13 masterful design. I hope that as we go forward and spend
14 this kind of money on a public facility we ensure that
15 it's esthetically pleasing as well as functional.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

18 Our next speaker is Ron Gregory.

19 MR. GREGORY: I am Ron Gregory and I've lived in the
20 Tampa Bay area and have worked in Tampa since 1974. And
21 one of the things that -- I've had occasion to use the
22 Howard Frankland a lot for commuting around the area, and
23 one thing I do know is that the Department needs to move
24 forward with their project as soon as possible, obviously
25 because of the bridge condition, but I really think the

1 idea of implementing express lanes as soon as possible is
2 an excellent idea. And I think that express lanes would
3 qualify as premium transit too, especially if you were
4 coming out of north Pinellas and being able to go
5 directly into the Westshore area and then access the new
6 proposed intermodal center for the airport and also then
7 go downtown.

8 But my idea is that people are worried about the
9 \$390 million minimal plan, but in the context of things,
10 considering the length of this bridge, it seems like a
11 good investment, particularly if you can configure the
12 roadway as you said in your brochure into three general
13 use lanes and one express lane in each direction, the
14 idea being that very soon we could actually run
15 premium transit across the Bay and into Tampa and into
16 St. Petersburg and Clearwater.

17 I know that the Clearwater area and St. Petersburg
18 are considering a referendum this coming year and if it's
19 successful we'll have the basis for even more direct
20 service on that side of the Bay.

21 So I would encourage the Department to proceed with
22 the plan that they have recommended and be able to
23 incorporate express lanes in it. Now, would it be nice
24 to have the ultimate configuration you showed, I think
25 it's 4/2/2/4? Yes. But if the money is a real problem

1 then the 3/1/1/3 would work, and it certainly would work
2 for the idea of providing some sort of mass transit
3 across the Bay.

4 And in the long-term, I mean the really long-term,
5 if someone comes up with a plan to fund rail, certainly
6 you could add that to the plan too, but I think that what
7 we need to do is find some solution here very quickly and
8 affordable.

9 My other comment is that this looks like the kind
10 of project that could use, you know, a form of financing
11 like a public/private partnership. It seems like it's a
12 perfect project to try to get the private sector involved
13 in funding, particularly if you're going to have toll
14 lanes that could have a source of revenue. And also the
15 Federal Transit Administration, I think, would be
16 interested in any kind of premium transit as far as the
17 funding goes for that.

18 So I encourage the Department to move forward as
19 soon as they can with implementing the basic plan that
20 allows you to have all those elements right now as soon
21 as you can in the future. And I appreciate the work
22 you're doing.

23 MR. BOGEN: Thank you. Could you state your address
24 for the record?

25 MR. GREGORY: My office address?

1 MR. BOGEN: Yeah.

2 MR. GREGORY: My office address is 7650 West
3 Courtney Campbell Causeway, Tampa, 33607.

4 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Karen Jaroch.

6 MS. JAROCH: Hello. Thank you. My name is Karen
7 Jaroch and I live at 16501 East Course Drive. I'm a
8 licensed professional engineer and also a board member of
9 the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority,
10 commonly referred to as HART. HART is the public transit
11 agency which operates on this side of the Howard
12 Frankland Bridge, and I don't presume to speak for the
13 board. These are my own comments.

14 As you know, HART recently submitted its 10-year
15 transportation development plan to FDOT. In this
16 ten-year guiding document, HART listened when voters
17 rejected light rail on this side of the bridge in 2010.

18 Our 10-year plan instead builds upon the wild
19 success of our Metro Rapid bus rapid transit service that
20 was built over the proposed light rail corridor for a
21 fraction of the cost of light rail. To be precise, RBRT
22 was one-sixtieth of the capital cost for light rail.

23 When planners projected the light rail would cost up
24 to \$1.7 billion dollars, HART instead built the 18-mile
25 BRT in a year and was \$16 million under the projected \$31

1 million cost. You can see that's quite a difference in
2 cost. This BRT is hugely successful and the TDP has
3 completed five more BRT routes, one which comes down
4 Kennedy from downtown on its way to the airport with a
5 stop very close to the entrance ramp of the Howard
6 Frankland Bridge.

7 I come here today to support adding tolling express
8 lanes for new capacity on the northbound span. I'm in
9 favor of a phased approach utilizing the auxiliary lanes
10 first. Tolling new capacity is a revenue-generator that
11 would substantially subsidize the cost of reconstructing
12 this bridge. Commute times across the Bay will vastly
13 improve with express lanes in both the tolled and the
14 free lanes.

15 I am against the rail transit option due to the
16 fact that it's incompatible with HART's chosen transit
17 mode, which is bus rapid transit, and costs an additional
18 \$1 million. The rail option does not generate revenue to
19 pay for itself and would significantly reduce through
20 relief lanes that the express lanes that BRT would
21 provide.

22 The express lanes are a win/win proposition for both
23 those who rely on public transit and those who prefer the
24 freedom, flexibility, and personal mobility offered by
25 automobiles. As demonstrated in Miami, there's a great

1 boost to transit with express lanes. According to the
2 available congestion reduction demonstration report from
3 DOT, Miami's I-95 express lanes increased the express bus
4 ridership by 22 percent despite a decrease overall in
5 Miami transit ridership of 12 percent in 2010.

6 Fifty-three percent of new riders said the express
7 lanes influenced their decision to use transit.

8 Thirty-eight percent of new riders said they used to
9 drive.

10 BRT is a transit solution that can seamlessly
11 connect both transit cities now, all good reasons why I
12 support the 3/1/1/3 BRT and express lane option across
13 the Howard Frankland Bridge.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

16 Our next speaker is Marcia Biggs.

17 MS. BIGGS: Good evening. My name is Marcia Biggs.
18 I live at 350 Bailey Street in Safety Harbor, and I'm
19 here today not only representing the Executive Board of
20 the Tampa Bay Sierra Club, but I'm also a long-time
21 resident that lives in Pinellas County and I work and I
22 play in Hillsborough County.

23 Like thousands of others, I often sit in
24 bumper-to-bumper traffic on the Howard Frankland Bridge
25 with my car sputtering carbon into our skies and showing

1 up late for meetings and appointments.

2 It is a fact that Tampa has lost considerable
3 business prospects, conventions and sporting events due
4 to our lack of mass transit between the counties. The
5 main mission of the Sierra Club is to protect the
6 environment for future generations. I'm here to urge
7 FDOT to build the transit lanes across the new bridge,
8 which would include the light rail. It's a cleaner form
9 of mass transit that would connect the area business
10 districts and Tampa International Airport. It is your
11 opportunity to provide a means for cleaner transportation
12 options that will improve the quality of life and
13 encourage more businesses to move here, bring more
14 tourists to our cities and beaches and make day-to-day
15 cross-county commuting a bit more tolerable despite
16 additional cost and financial burden.

17 We must move forward to accommodate light rail on
18 this bridge if we want to compete with other cities such
19 as Miami and Orlando, and we must move forward to make
20 Tampa be a healthier place to live, a more attractive
21 destination for businesses and tourists and to join the
22 rest of the cities across the country to offer their
23 residents clean, modern, and efficient modes of
24 transportation.

25 If we continue to build more lanes to accommodate

1 more vehicles, we're only encouraging more pollution and
2 more use of fossil fuels. This way of living has to
3 stop, and it is incumbent upon you to bring the change
4 that will make Tampa Bay a better place to live, work,
5 and play.

6 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

7 The next speaker is Dan Harvey.

8 MR. HARVEY: Dan Harvey, 1425 Central Avenue,
9 St. Petersburg and I am speaking for myself.

10 I went to the summit meeting today that involved
11 the consumer regions Orlando and Tampa Bay, and they
12 talked about the private train funded privately coming
13 from Tampa to Orlando. It's going to happen. There's
14 going to be a private train, All Aboard Florida. It's
15 owned by the east coast guys, financed out of New York,
16 so there comes private train coming up the east coast.
17 Tampa Bay wants that train to come over here from
18 Orlando, but the second phase might go to Jacksonville.

19 Meanwhile, in Tampa they explain the master plan for
20 the airport, the people mover -- moving the rental car
21 facility away from the terminals, then the people mover
22 coming over to an intermodal at Westshore. Sounds like
23 it's going to happen. So there will be an intermodal at
24 Westshore connected to the airport. Looks like long-term
25 they plan for a train to come down the middle of I-275

1 through Tampa eventually that could connect with private
2 money to Orlando and then up to Jax, up to Miami. So
3 we're going to have a connection, the way I see it.

4 This conversation is about the rail going across
5 the bridge, or the Howard Frankland Bridge. So it's
6 about the bridge and how we're going to build it.

7 So the big question is: Do you put rail connecting
8 across the Howard Frankland. We've got a new bridge
9 planned. It's too bad we're putting it in the middle.
10 We can only go four-wide. For the life of me, I don't
11 know why the two existing bridges are so close together.
12 Wish we had a little more room there. Those green lines
13 are pretty far apart, and so they're slamming this little
14 bridge between the two with an option to spin out to the
15 sides of the green line.

16 Pinellas is waiting for a study to show how light
17 rail works. Over there in Pinellas where I live, the
18 connectivity to Tampa is very important, but is it worth
19 the \$3 million? I'm here to study the issue, and I'll
20 leave by saying I believe that the light rail is going to
21 connect the intermodal and Westshore to Orlando and into
22 the airport.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

25 Our next speaker is Kevin Wright. Kevin Wright.

1 (No response.)

2 MR. BOGEN: Our next speaker is Jennifer Winter.

3 MS. WINTER: Hello. My name is Jennifer Winter. I
4 reside at 930 59th Avenue, St. Pete Beach, and I'm going
5 to keep it very short and brief, because I was here on
6 Tuesday at the other meeting speaking on behalf of adding
7 alternative transportation methods to this bridge.

8 I think it's pretty crazy to only have four lanes
9 and basically rebuild the same bridge six feet higher. I
10 don't want to say in a meeting "Sorry I'm late, traffic
11 on the bridge."

12 It was important enough for me to come out twice
13 now. You know, young people are very busy, but this is
14 going to be my future and the future of all of the young
15 people in Pinellas and Hillsborough, so please think of
16 us and our future.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

19 Our next speaker is Dalyn Houser.

20 MS. HOUSER: That's me, Dalyn Houser. Hello,
21 everyone. Thanks for allowing me to speak. My name is
22 Dalyn Houser, and I reside -- or my office is at 3006
23 West Kennedy Boulevard in Tampa, Florida, 33609, I
24 believe.

25 I am a new citizen here in your area. I'm

1 speaking on behalf of Florida PIRG. I'm the program
2 associate there of the public interest research group
3 here in Florida, and we recently released a new report,
4 "Moving Off the Road," which stated that for the first
5 time ever since the car was created there has been a
6 decline since 2005 in the State of Florida and Floridians
7 are driving 11 percent less per person in their vehicles.
8 That's a pretty huge drop and pretty significant. So we
9 looked into reasons why this could be happening.

10 We looked into urbanization and economic factors,
11 but essentially found out, like a lot of what other young
12 people in the room were saying, that the largest members
13 of our population, the millennials generation-wide, are
14 the ones who are choosing not to drive in their cars and
15 it just doesn't support their life-style anymore.

16 So we also just came out with another recent report
17 called "A New Way to Go" and basically took into account
18 all of this information and it came to fruition that
19 young people would rather, and other people as well,
20 would rather be on their iPods, on their iPads, be able
21 to work or just doing other things rather than sitting in
22 a box all day long not engaging with their environment.

23 So Florida PIRG is in support of adding alternative
24 modes of transportation with the bridge, and I would
25 really urge you to do so, because if you don't then, like

1 others were saying, you are going to lose the young,
2 talented people such as Jennifer and the gentleman from
3 the Young Democrats who spoke of Hillsborough County.
4 You will lose us because we will move to other cities
5 that will provide us with a cleaner, more efficient way
6 to live.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

9 Our next person is Paula Witthouse.

10 MS. WITTHOUSE: Good evening. My name is Paula
11 Witthouse. I live at 2840 17th Avenue North in
12 St. Petersburg and I also was late to this meeting
13 because of traffic on the Howard Frankland Bridge.

14 The Howard Frankland Bridge and I were born in the
15 same year. It's lived here five years longer than I
16 have, and I have evolved as the bridge has evolved and it
17 just seems to be more and more of a mess.

18 You really do need to include the plans for light
19 rail in the future. We're not saying they're going to
20 slap a train on there this week, but if you don't plan
21 for it then you're just going to have to tear that bridge
22 up and build another one when people come to their senses
23 and light rail transport finally happens here.

24 Now, I've listened to a lot of people talk here
25 tonight and it seems to me the people that are opposed to

1 light rail transit have probably never been to a place
2 where there are alternative ways to get around. If you
3 had, you would know that it just makes sense to be able
4 to connect the three areas that we have close here;
5 Tampa, St. Pete, Clearwater. If you want to go on to
6 Orlando -- and no offense to the HART line lady, but you
7 must not have ever ridden on a Hart line bus, because
8 unless you've got some luxury coach planned for the
9 future, getting from USF to south Tampa is a half day
10 adventure. It's crowded, it is not a lot of fun, and it
11 takes forever. So unless you can look to PSTA for how to
12 run a bus system, I think you should withdraw from this
13 conversation. But, no, all of us need to be in this
14 conversation. It's all about the future.

15 Getting from one place to another when you're
16 running out of fossil fuels and you're stuck on a bridge
17 and you can't get to a gas station -- wait, there are no
18 gas stations, they're holding our gas -- you're going to
19 walk across the bridge or hop on that train that
20 hopefully is going to find its way here.

21 Now, me, myself, I don't drive anymore. I'm legally
22 blind and I can't, so being able to be on an affordable
23 way of transporting me around the area that I grew up and
24 live just makes sense.

25 So redo the bridge. You know, upgrade the bridge.

1 I get upgraded all the time. The bridge, we're about the
2 same age. We're both running down a little bit, but the
3 basic point is this: If you plan for the future, when
4 the future gets here you're not stuck going, "Whoa, why
5 didn't we think of this?" It's here now. Think about
6 it. Do it. It makes sense.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Ashley Green.

10 MS. GREEN: Hi. Good evening. Thank you for the
11 opportunity to speak tonight. My name is Ashley Green
12 and I'm a new resident of St. Petersburg and I live at
13 4234 Dartmouth Avenue.

14 I was prepared tonight to talk about the impact of
15 transit from the young perspective, but I think there
16 have been plenty of people who spoke about it but more
17 eloquently, of course. I'm going to speak on it for less
18 time than I originally planned.

19 I think the millennials have probably learned some
20 of the hardest lessons from this finance and economic
21 crisis we've had for about the last five or six years
22 now. Eighteen to twenty-four-year-olds hold the highest
23 unemployment rate across the nation and also hold the
24 biggest burden of debt in our economy. A student loan
25 that has now surpassed both credit card and mortgage debt

1 combined within America. We see cars as a financial
2 burden, as a destroyer of our environment, frankly
3 overall pains-in-the-behind to have to drive.

4 I personally should not be on the road. I get into
5 an accident nearly everyday. I don't like my car. I
6 hate my car. I was not going to stay in the State of
7 Florida, because as someone who grew up in Atlanta with
8 mass transit, I knew that there were places I could live
9 where I didn't have to worry about car insurance, car
10 accidents, gas -- paradise frankly on earth -- but I
11 think there's another level of this conversation that we
12 frequently forget, and that's the economic justice that
13 is provided by mass transit.

14 Improved transit, and let me be clear, mass transit
15 is critical to our economic security and further to
16 securing economic justice for our region. Our current
17 transportation policy has a potential to exacerbate
18 isolation from critical jobs and community resources for
19 many residents of St. Pete and Tampa.

20 At a time of high unemployment and unprecedented
21 income inequality, the implications of our transit policy
22 cannot be overstated. Mass transit, including rail, is
23 critical to really helping to provide the framework for
24 prosperity regionally.

25 I know one of the women from -- a woman earlier was

1 speaking about how tolls will help generate revenue.
2 That's great, fantastic. But people able to get to and
3 from work is going to create revenue in the area. People
4 able to pay their bills and have enough money to go and
5 socialize in Tampa Bay, Pinellas County, and any of the
6 surrounding areas is really what creates revenue, not
7 just a toll road. I do whatever I can to avoid toll
8 roads. I told you I don't like driving very much, so
9 that says something.

10 I just want to give y'all a couple of quick numbers
11 if you'll give me a second. The average annual cost of
12 owning a car according to a 2011 survey was \$9500; 33
13 percent of low income African-Americans are without
14 access to automobiles; 25 percent of low income Latinos
15 are without access to an automobile; 12 percent of low
16 income whites are without access to an automobile; 80
17 percent of our current federal funding is allocated
18 towards highways.

19 What resolution are we really reaching -- and I'm
20 going to wrap it up -- what kind of region do we want to
21 build and at the end of the day what are we investing in?

22 As a person who's going to foot the majority of the
23 bill for whatever is built, I'm telling you all I'm
24 willing to pay that bill for mass transit.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

2 Our next speaker is Tim Heberlein.

3 MR. HEBERLEIN: On the first try, good job. My
4 name's Tim Heberlein and I'm with the Tampa Florida
5 Consumer Group. We've been around since 1984 -- I'm
6 trying to get as much in in my three minutes as
7 possible -- and we're in support of building the transit
8 rail envelope.

9 What I see up on the map is two of the most
10 concentrated employment centers in the Tampa Bay area and
11 the question isn't how are we going to connect them now;
12 the question is how are we going to connect them 30 years
13 from now. And I think we have to be a little bit more
14 forethinking.

15 And right now we're currently building a system that
16 has to anticipate the transit needs that we're going to
17 have. I agree with Karen Jaroch that we need a larger
18 extended bus service in the Tampa Bay area as a whole,
19 but I do live on one of the BRT routes and there isn't a
20 whole lot of transit-oriented development popping up
21 there because of the Metro Rapid, but there is in
22 Orlando, the Sunrail. Even before the stations were
23 opened, they had a \$500 million development going up
24 around one of the transit stops. So TOD does work, it
25 does happen, and I'd love to see that in my neighborhood

1 as well, but I agree with Ms. Green's comments that
2 there's an economic justice component to this.

3 What we're talking about is connecting employers to
4 employees, especially when you look at those bright
5 purple centers, that's exactly what we're talking about.

6 And there's no reason that in our region the best
7 airport -- people who land in the best airport in the
8 country should not be able to get to the best beaches in
9 the country or the best baseball team for that matter,
10 despite what other people might think.

11 But we do want to promote and recommend that you
12 build the transit envelope.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

15 I will call Kevin Wright again to make sure he
16 didn't step out. Kevin Wright.

17 MR. WRIGHT: Hello. My name is Kevin Wright. I
18 have a small business at 1100 North 50th Street, Tampa,
19 Florida. And I would like to encourage everyone to
20 realize that we're on the precipice of a digital
21 revolution for the road. Most everything that you really
22 think that you know about transportation is being changed
23 right before our eyes.

24 Back in 1995, Bill Gates was about to roll out
25 Win 95 and he had to call all of his software engineers

1 before everyone and say, Hey, look, guys, we've got to go
2 back and spend another year rewriting this whole thing
3 because it's not internet compatible, the internet is the
4 coming thing. And they went back and they redid the
5 whole thing from the get-go and the rest is history.

6 We have now on our hips computers that are more
7 powerful than what NASA used to put men on the moon and
8 they cost less than a cell phone cost in 1980. That's
9 the power of the digital revolution. It's going to
10 change why we drive, it's going to change where we drive,
11 and it's also going to change what we drive. We are
12 going to have driverless cars.

13 About a hundred years ago, Tampa Bay was the site of
14 the first airline in human history. St. Petersburg and
15 Tampa were connected with the best plane that they had at
16 the time, and all other airlines on the earth traced
17 their history from there.

18 We have the opportunity here with this Howard
19 Frankland Bridge, which the locals know as the "Howard
20 Frankenstein" to make it the first digitally-compatible
21 bridge that is engineered for driverless cars.

22 Driverless cars are the wave of the future.

23 My friends in the handicap community who want
24 freedom and mobility, you got a lot of freedom and
25 mobility when electric wheelchairs became available.

1 Imagine how much more freedom and mobility you will
2 have when you can go to your voice-activated or
3 touch-activated personal computer or PDA or cell phone
4 and call for a car that will take you where you want to
5 go safely and efficiently.

6 Now, some of you may be saying, well, we can't
7 afford that, that's too expensive. Those are the same
8 people that said they couldn't afford a \$4,000 cell phone
9 when they first rolled out, the same cell phones that you
10 can get now for free.

11 So that's what we're talking about here, Ladies and
12 Gentlemen. Are we going to be in the Vanguard of the new
13 technology that will change the world or are we going to
14 be repeating the mistakes of Charlotte or Salt Lake City
15 or New York City or some of the other places that have
16 mass transit but hasn't really solved any of their
17 problems?

18 MR. BOGEN: You need to wrap your comments up.

19 MR. WRIGHT: That's pretty much it.

20 MR. BOGEN: Thank you.

21 That is the last card that I have. Is there anyone
22 else that wishes to speak?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. BOGEN: Seeing none, the verbatim transcript of
25 both sessions of the hearings' verbal proceedings will be

1 STATE OF FLORIDA)

2 COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH)

3 I, V. Liz Nieves, certify that I was
4 authorized to and did stenographically report the
5 foregoing Public Hearing (Session 1) taken on
6 October 8, 2013, and that the transcript is a true and
7 complete record of my stenographic notes.

8
9 I further certify that I am not a relative,
10 employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,
11 nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
12 attorney or counsel connected with the proceedings, nor
13 am I financially interested in the outcome of the
14 foregoing proceedings.

15
16 Dated this 21st day of October, 2013, in Tampa,
17 County of Hillsborough, State of florida.

18
19 

20 V. Liz Nieves,
21 Court Reporter
22 Commission # EE029648
23 Expires 12/3/14
24
25

1 STATE OF FLORIDA)

2 COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH)

3 I, CATHY J. JOHNSON MESSINA, Registered Merit
4 Reporter, Registered Florida Reporter, and Notary Public in
5 and for the State of Florida at large, hereby certify that
6 the Public Hearing (Session 2) taken on October 10th, 2013,
7 were recorded in Stenotypy by me and that the foregoing pages
8 constitute a true and correct transcription of my recordings
9 thereof.

10
11 WITNESS my hand and seal this 21st day of
12 October, 2013, in Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.

13
14
15 *Cathy J. Johnson Messina*
16
17
18 Court Reporter
19 My Commission Expires:



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**ATTACHMENT D
2017 PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT**

(To be provided after the Public Hearing)

DRAFT

**ATTACHMENT E
AGENCY COORDINATION**

DRAFT

Salicco, Christopher

From: Selly, Nicole <Nicole.Selly@dot.state.fl.us>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 9:05 AM
To: Rhinesmith, Robin
Cc: Salicco, Christopher
Subject: FW: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E
Attachments: Draft_HFB_CatEx_D8_Navigation_Update.pdf

Robin,

I just spoke with Randy, and he said he does not have any additional issues. He said the statement (below) in his original email should satisfy FHWA requirements. If for some reason it doesn't, he will send us another email.

-Nicole

"If the navigation clearance of the new structure meet or exceed the existing clearances the reasonable needs of navigation should be satisfied for this section of the waterway. I do not anticipate objections from the Coast Guard based on impacts to navigation."

-----Original Message-----

From: Selly, Nicole
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2015 8:39 AM
To: 'Overton, Randall D CIV'
Cc: Rhinesmith, Robin
Subject: RE: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E

Hi Randy,

The new northbound bridge will have a minimum vertical clearance of 48.7 feet above MHW, which will meet or exceed the vertical clearance of the existing southbound bridge, and exceed that of the existing northbound bridge by over 4 feet. The existing horizontal clearance at the channel span of 75 feet will be maintained. Also, the piers/piles for the proposed northbound bridge will align with the existing southbound bridge, to the maximum extent practicable.

Please see the attached changes to Attachment A, Part D8 of the Categorical Exclusion.

Let me know if you have any additional questions/comments/concerns.

Thank you,
Nicole

Nicole Selly
Environmental Specialist
Florida Department of Transportation
Intermodal Systems Development, District Seven
(813) 975-6455

-----Original Message-----

From: Overton, Randall D CIV [mailto:Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil]
Sent: Wednesday, August 05, 2015 3:26 PM
To: Selly, Nicole
Cc: Rhinesmith, Robin; D07-DG-D7-DPB
Subject: RE: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E

Nicole,

I have reviewed the CatEx for the proposed replacement the northbound span of the Howard Franklin Bridge (HFB), on I-275, crossing Old Tampa bay and provide the following questions/comments.

** What is the vertical clearance above the surface of the water at mean high water elevation under the new northbound bridge? The current vertical clearance is charted as 44 ft above MHW. It appears from a passage on page 6 of the CE that the profile of the new bridge will be higher than the existing bridge, however the actual under bridge vertical clearance is not discussed.

Excerpt from page 6 of the CE in the paragraph below Figure 3 it states, "Also, the overall profile would be constructed several feet higher than the existing bridge to avoid wave forces during extreme storm events (at least one foot above the predicted 100-year wave crest elevation)."

The discussion in attachment A part D8 concerning navigation should state the navigation clearances (vertical and horizontal) for the new bridge structure. Additionally the new bridge pier/bent support structures should align, to the greatest extent possible, with the existing pier/bent support structures as to not create an increased hazard to navigation.

If the navigation clearance of the new structure meet or exceed the existing clearances the reasonable needs of navigation should be satisfied for this section of the waterway. I do not anticipate objections from the Coast Guard based on impacts to navigation.

Please let me know if you need a link to the Coast Guard Bridge Permit Application Guide.

Thank you,

Randall Overton
Federal Permit Agent USCG
Bridge Management Specialist
909 SE 1st Ave Suite 432
Miami, FL 33131
(305) 205-0795 Cell
(305) 415-6736 Office

-----Original Message-----

From: Selly, Nicole [mailto:Nicole.Selly@dot.state.fl.us]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2015 8:57 AM
To: Overton, Randall D CIV
Cc: Rhinesmith, Robin
Subject: RE: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E

Randy,

The purpose of the proposed project is to replace the northbound span of the HFB due to the existing structure nearing the end of its useful life. A secondary purpose is to enable a connection of proposed express lanes on I-275 on either side of Old Tampa Bay.

I sent you the CatEx electronically via our FTA site. Please let me know if you have any questions or have trouble retrieving the document.

Thank you,
Nicole

-----Original Message-----

From: Overton, Randall D CIV [mailto:Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2015 7:31 AM
To: Selly, Nicole
Cc: D07-DG-D7-DPB
Subject: RE: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E

Nicole,
Electronic copy is preferred. At this time the CatEx will suffice.

Just briefly, what is proposed action on the Howard Franklin?

Thank you,
Randy

-----Original Message-----

From: Selly, Nicole [mailto:Nicole.Selly@dot.state.fl.us]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2015 4:22 PM
To: Overton, Randall D CIV
Subject: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge PD&E

Hello Randy,

Per my phone message - We are submitting the Howard Frankland Bridge CatEx to FHWA. The ETDM/AN was sent out in 2012, and USCG did not comment. I understand a MOA has since been implemented, and FHWA commented that the current coordination with USCG was not adequate. We will send you the CatEx for review. Would you like electronic or hard copies? Do you want to review the PER or other PD&E documents?

Thank you,
Nicole

Nicole Selly

Environmental Specialist

Florida Department of Transportation

Intermodal Systems Development, District Seven

(813) 975-6455

DRAFT

Salicco, Christopher

From: Rhinesmith, Robin <Robin.Rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Salicco, Christopher
Cc: Bogen, Kirk; Novotny, Jeffrey S.
Subject: FW: NMFS comments on the I-275 Howard Frankland Bridge WEBAR
Attachments: NMFS response to Howard Frankland WEBAR.docx

Hey Chris,

Got this last week from David.

Sincerely,

Robin M. Rhinesmith

Environmental Administrator
Intermodal Systems Development
District Seven
(813)975-6496 phone
(813) 975-6443 fax

robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us

From: David Rydene - NOAA Federal [<mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov>]
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2013 12:09 PM
To: Rhinesmith, Robin
Subject: NMFS comments on the I-275 Howard Frankland Bridge WEBAR

Hi Robin,

My comments are attached.

Thanks, Dave

--
David Rydene, Ph.D.
Fish Biologist
National Marine Fisheries Service
Habitat Conservation Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Office (727) 824-5379
Cell (813) 992-5730
Fax (727) 824-5300

NMFS staff has reviewed the draft Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report (part of the Project Development and Environment Study) for the Northbound I-275/SR 93 Howard Frankland Bridge replacement. NMFS offers the following comments to the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven (FDOT).

NMFS agrees with the selection of Option A as the project's preferred alternative as this option results in the smallest impacts to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) in Tampa Bay. If FDOT's final determination (verified by NMFS before construction) is that no seagrass, mangroves, or salt marsh will be impacted, then NMFS will not request any compensatory mitigation for EFH.

NMFS does however disagree with the "no effect" determination for smalltooth sawfish under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Smalltooth sawfish have been documented to occur in the Tampa Bay system. Although Tampa Bay is not designated critical habitat for the species, impacts to sawfish habitat in Tampa Bay still get consideration under the ESA. Potential sawfish habitat includes the water column. NMFS principal concern for sawfish is the potential effects that noise in the water column that is associated with pile driving may have on the species. These pile driving noise effects may include injury or behavioral modifications.

NMFS recommends that the ESA Section 7 determination for smalltooth sawfish be changed to "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" and that an informal Section 7 consultation with NMFS be undertaken for the species (in addition to sea turtle consultation already requested by FDOT) when sufficient information about bridge design, materials, and construction methods are available. NMFS also requests that monitoring to determine the noise levels due to pile driving be conducted at the test pile driving stage or the beginning of actual bridge construction. Site specific data regarding pile driving noise levels will help NMFS determine if noise attenuation measures or other mitigation will be necessary to reach a "not likely to affect" conclusion for sawfish and sea turtles.

If it is determined that explosive demolition (i.e. blasting) is necessary to demolish parts of the existing northbound bridge when the new bridge is completed, then an ESA Section 7 consultation will be needed for that activity. In addition to technical information from the blast contractor, a marine wildlife watch plan for the blast(s) should also be assembled for review. NMFS can provide technical assistance regarding pile driving noise monitoring and blast plan details.

In the "Commitments" section of the document (Section 6.4) it states that informal consultation under Section 7 of the ESA will be undertaken with NMFS for Gulf sturgeon. This is incorrect. If FDOT requests Section 7 consultation for Gulf sturgeon in Tampa Bay (as the designated non-federal representative for the Federal Highway Administration), then that consultation would be undertaken with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Thank you for the opportunity to comments on this draft Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report.

Salicco, Christopher

From: Rhinesmith, Robin <Robin.Rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2013 7:41 AM
To: David Rydene - NOAA Federal
Cc: Salicco, Christopher; Novotny, Jeffrey S.; Bogen, Kirk; Adair, Rick
Subject: RE: FW: HFB WEBAR Commitments

10-4 David.

Thank you for the review -- I appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Robin M. Rhinesmith

Environmental Administrator
Intermodal Systems Development
District Seven
(813)975-6496 phone
(813) 975-6443 fax

robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us

From: David Rydene - NOAA Federal [<mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov>]
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2013 2:48 PM
To: Rhinesmith, Robin
Subject: Re: FW: HFB WEBAR Commitments

Hi Robin,

I would say that it looks fine for the pile driving monitoring component. The only addition I have is that, in the event that blasting is necessary, you would have to consult with NMFS also (for sea turtles and sawfish).

-Dave

On Thu, Dec 12, 2013 at 1:14 PM, Rhinesmith, Robin <Robin.Rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us> wrote:

Good afternoon David,

We have been putting together some commitment language to include in our Type II categorical exclusion for the Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement project. Would you mind reviewing the attachment and let me know if you concur with our approach?

Sincerely,

Robin M. Rhinesmith

Environmental Administrator

Intermodal Systems Development

District Seven

[\(813\)975-6496](tel:8139756496) phone

[\(813\) 975-6443](tel:8139756443) fax

robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us

-----Original Message-----

From: Salicco, Christopher [mailto:CSalicco@acp-fl.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2013 11:37 AM

To: Rhinesmith, Robin

Cc: Adair, Rick

Subject: HFB WEBAR Commitments

Hey Robin,

Attached are the commitments from the HFB WEBAR. I am sending this mainly for you to look at the new commitment (highlighted in yellow) for the hydroacoustic analysis for NMFS. There were also a few changes based on other comments from NMFS.

Also, any update to the status of USFWS comments?

Thanks,

Chris

Christopher Salicco

Environmental Scientist/GIS Analyst

American Consulting Professionals, LLC

2818 Cypress Ridge Blvd., Suite 200

Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

[813-435-2617](tel:8134352617) (Direct)

[813-494-2469](tel:8134942469) (Cell)

[813-435-2601](tel:8134352601) (Fax)

csalicco@acp-fl.com

--

David Rydene, Ph.D.

Fish Biologist

National Marine Fisheries Service

Habitat Conservation Division

263 13th Avenue South

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Office (727) 824-5379

Cell (813) 992-5730

Fax (727) 824-5300



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>

F/SER46:DR

November 3, 2015

Ms. Nicole Selly
Environmental Specialist
Intermodal Systems Development
Florida Department of Transportation District 7
11201 North Malcolm McKinley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33612-6403

Ref.: Work Program Item Segment Number 422799-1 (ETDM Number 12539), Florida
Department of Transportation District 7, I-275 (SR 93) Howard Frankland Northbound
Bridge replacement, Pinellas County and Hillsborough County, Florida

Dear Ms. Selly:

The Florida Department of Transportation District 7 (FDOT) proposes the replacement of the existing I-275 (SR 93) Howard Frankland Northbound Bridge. You have requested that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) review the project's Final Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report, dated September 2015.

NMFS has reviewed the report and believes that FDOT has addressed the NMFS's comments and concerns related to the project. NMFS also believes that the commitments made by FDOT are in line with those requested by NMFS. Some aspects of the project, such as the potential need for hydroacoustic monitoring of pile-driving noise, will be determined when design details (e.g., the size and type of new bridge's piles) are determined. We look forward to continued coordination with FDOT on this project.

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

Sincerely,

David Rydene, Ph.D.
Fishery Biologist



From: Selly, Nicole
To: [Salicco, Christopher](#)
Cc: [Rhinesmith, Robin](#); [Yassin, Menna](#)
Subject: FW: Document Review Confirmation for Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)
Date: Thursday, September 22, 2016 11:35:49 AM

From: admin@fla-etat.org [mailto:admin@fla-etat.org]
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2016 11:29 AM
To: David.Rydene@noaa.gov
Cc: Selly, Nicole
Subject: Document Review Confirmation for Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)

A review was received for the following:

Event: Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement WEBAR Review 2016
Document: Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)
Submitted By: David Rydene
Global: Yes
Comments:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the information contained in the Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) for ETDM Project # 12539 (Work Program Item Segment Number 422799-1), dated September 2016. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 has conducted a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study to evaluate the replacement of the northbound I-275 (SR 93) Howard Frankland Bridge in Hillsborough County and Pinellas County, Florida. The existing bridge is a four-lane, pre-stressed concrete stringer/girder structure.

NMFS staff conducted a site inspection of the project area on September 22, 2016, to assess potential concerns regarding living marine resources within Old Tampa Bay. The areas adjacent to the proposed project are principally the bridges' causeway shorelines and estuarine waters of Old Tampa Bay. NMFS staff has verified that no mangrove or salt marsh occurs within the PD&E study limits. Therefore, based on the Preferred Alternative identified in the September 2016 WEBAR (Option B - a new bridge on the west side of the existing southbound bridge), the principal Essential Fish Habitat issue for NMFS will be the identification and verification of appropriate and adequate compensatory mitigation for the loss of 2.3 acres of seagrasses due to the bridge replacement project. Any modifications that will further minimize seagrass impacts are encouraged.

In terms of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation for smalltooth sawfish and swimming sea turtles, the main issue will be assuring that pile driving noise will not have

adverse effects on these ESA-listed species. Further coordination with NMFS will need to proceed as the design process moves forward and details regarding pile driving are determined. However, NMFS recommends that the Section 7 consultation not include leatherback sea turtles. We do not believe that leatherback sea turtles will be present or affected because of their very specific life history, sheltering, and foraging requirements, which are not met in or near the project's action area. Leatherbacks are a deepwater, pelagic species. Hatchlings may be found in nearshore waters near nesting beaches shortly after hatching, but there are no nesting beaches in the vicinity of the project.

It is not clear at this point whether stormwater will be directed off the new bridge for treatment before discharge into Old Tampa Bay or not. If stormwater will be directly discharged into the Old Tampa Bay, then an offsite project to compensate for new bridge's stormwater effects (i.e., degradation of water quality) must be identified and approved.

DRAFT

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: June 28, 2016 **Date Issued:** July 21, 2016
Location: FDOT District 7 Office
Project Name: Howard Frankland Bridge Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E Study
Purpose: NMFS Coordination for Starter and Ultimate Project Construction
Notes by: Chris Salicco **American Project #:** 5107275
Copies to: File

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax or e-mail</u>
Nicole Selly	FDOT District 7	813-975-6455	nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us
David Rydene	NMFS	727-824-5379	david.rydene@noaa.gov
Jeff Novotny	American Consulting	813-435-2646	jnovotny@acp-fl.com
Chris Salicco	American Consulting	813-435-2617	csalicco@acp-fl.com

The following notes reflect our understanding of the discussions and decisions made at this meeting. If you have any questions, additions or comments, please contact us at the above address. We will consider the minutes to be accurate unless written notice is received within 10 working days of the date issued.

The meeting was held to discuss the starter and ultimate project for the Howard Frankland Bridge with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prior to updates to the Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR). Summary/outline is provided below:

- To date, the PD&E study limits for the project have been one mile south of the Howard Frankland Bridge to one mile north of the bridge.
- An overview of the starter project was provided, which currently consists of replacing the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge to the west (north) of the existing southbound bridge. Once construction is completed, the existing southbound traffic will be diverted to the new bridge and the northbound traffic will be diverted to the existing southbound bridge. The existing northbound bridge will be demolished.
- It was discussed that a portion of the southern (Pinellas side) causeway may be opened with a bridge to help restore flushing within Old Tampa Bay, similar to the project being evaluated on the Courtney Campbell Causeway to the north.
- Based on the current Draft Concept Plans for the Howard Frankland Bridge, the starter project will result in approximately 2.3 acres of seagrass impacts and the 'Master Plan' project will result in approximately 7 acres of seagrass impacts, depending on the logical termini on the north (Hillsborough side). The south side limits should remain as one mile south of the bridge as originally studied. The newly created impact table that was provided at the meeting will likely be incorporated into the report and updated to reflect the project limits.
- For the starter project, the FDOT already has credits available at Fort DeSoto for seagrass mitigation. These impacts would occur on the west (north) side of the bridge, where the seagrass is less dense and poorer quality than the east (south) side.
- The future transit component may result in an additional approximately 6.5 acres of seagrass acres. The future transit alignment runs from the Gateway area in Pinellas to Westshore area in

Hillsborough County and the 6.5 acres of seagrass impacts is based on the study limits from one mile south to one mile north of the bridge.

- A commitment should be included in the WEBAR to address the potential projects being considered for mitigation to seagrass impacts and improvements to Old Tampa Bay.
 - o Demonstrate new projects being considered and document in report
 - o Get outcome of Courtney Campbell Causeway project – currently being coordinated with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by FDOT permitting staff
 - o Commitments will be coordinated with NMFS prior to submittal of updated WEBAR
- Updated seagrass surveys are being conducted by the FDOT permitting department
- MANLAA determination is still anticipated for smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles.

DRAFT

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: June 19, 2017
Location: NMFS Office – St. Petersburg
Project Name: Howard Frankland Bridge Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E Study
Purpose: NMFS Coordination for Updated Typical Section
Notes by: Chris Salicco **American Project #:** 5107275
Copies to: File

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax or e-mail</u>
Nicole Selly	FDOT District 7	813-975-6455	nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us
David Rydene	NMFS	727-824-5379	david.rydene@noaa.gov
Chris Salicco	American Consulting	813-435-2617	csalicco@acp-fl.com

The following notes reflect our understanding of the discussions and decisions made at this meeting. If you have any questions, additions or comments, please contact us at the above address. We will consider the minutes to be accurate unless written notice is received within 10 working days of the date issued.

The meeting was held to discuss the change in typical section for the Howard Frankland Bridge with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prior to updating the Natural Resource Evaluation (formerly the Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report). Summary/outline is provided below:

- NMFS was informed that the bridge typical section was changing from the four general use lanes (approximately 75-foot wide bridge) to four general use lanes with one express lane in each direction (approximately 131-foot wide bridge).
- The bridge would remain to the west (north) of the existing southbound bridge.
- No other changes were proposed other than the typical section change and bridge width to address public outreach.
- Updated typical sections and draft concept plans were shown to NMFS
- It was explained to NMFS that the impacts to seagrass would increase to eight acres
- Proposed mitigation for seagrass impacts is the use of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project.
- NMFS is aware of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project and this information needs to be documented in the NRE.
- No changes to species impact determinations for listed species were anticipated for the project with the updated typical section and bridge width.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: October 10, 2017
Location: FDOT District 7 Headquarters
Project Name: Howard Frankland Bridge Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E Study
Purpose: NMFS Coordination for Updated Typical Section – NRE Updates
Notes by: Chris Salicco **American Project #:** 5107275
Copies to: File

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax or e-mail</u>
Nicole Selly	FDOT District 7	813-975-6455	nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us
Robin Rhinesmith	FDOT District 7	813-975-6496	robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us
Kirk Bogen	FDOT District 7	813-975-6448	kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us
Ashley Henzel	FDOT District 7 - GEC	813-975-6433	ashley.henzel@dot.state.fl.us
David Rydene	NMFS	727-824-5379	david.rydene@noaa.gov
Nicole Cribbs	Faller, Davis and Assoc.	813-261-5136	ncribbs@fallerdavis.com
Chip Messencoff	HDR	813-282-2356	chip.messenkopf@hdrinc.com
Chris Salicco	American Consulting	813-435-2617	csalicco@acp-fl.com

The following notes reflect our understanding of the discussions and decisions made at this meeting. If you have any questions, additions or comments, please contact us at the above address. We will consider the minutes to be accurate unless written notice is received within 10 working days of the date issued.

The meeting was held to discuss the change in typical section for the Howard Frankland Bridge with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prior to updating the Natural Resource Evaluation. Summary/outline is provided below:

- NMFS was informed that the bridge typical section was changing from the recently proposed four general use lanes with one express lane in each direction (approximately 131-foot wide bridge) to four general use lanes with two express lanes in each direction (approximately 170-foot wide bridge).
- The bridge would remain to the west (north) of the existing southbound bridge.
- No other changes were proposed other than the typical section change and bridge width to address public outreach and agency coordination.
- Updated typical sections were shown to NMFS.
- It was explained to NMFS that the impacts to seagrass would be approximately 8.8 (anticipated less than 9) acres. Impact acreage would be updated once the draft concept plans are completed to be able to evaluate actual impacts.
- Proposed mitigation for seagrass impacts is the use of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project.
- NMFS is aware of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project and this information needs to be documented in the NRE.
- Commitments regarding potential impacts to species, specifically the Gulf sturgeon, smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles were discussed. It was noted that the current commitments include further coordination with NMFS once more information related to pile driving is known,

continued coordination/consultation, and use of appropriate species special conditions to be followed during construction, among others previously reviewed.

- Potential hydroacoustic impacts were discussed with NMFS from pile driving activities. Discussions included providing low-noise/quiet noise corridors for marine wildlife passage within the construction zone. The overall goal was to determine how many areas construction could be underway at one time without causing physical or behavioral impacts to marine wildlife. The Pensacola Bay Bridge in District 3 was used as a reference, which required maintaining 5,000 feet over the length of the project and no individual component less than 1,500 feet. For this project, NMFS stated that cumulative 4,000 feet over the length of the project with minimum 1,000-foot low-noise corridors are sufficient since neither the Gulf sturgeon nor the smalltooth sawfish are as likely within Tampa Bay as other parts of the state and there is no designated critical habitat.
- Two commitments will be added to the NRE
 - o Pile driving operations in relation to the low-noise corridors
 - o Ramp-up procedure used for installation of piles
- No changes to species impact determinations for listed species were anticipated for the project with the updated typical section and bridge width.

DRAFT



United States Department of the Interior

U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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

FWS Log No. 41910-2014-I-0034
IN REPLY REFER TO:

December 16, 2013

Robin M. Rhinesmith
District 7 Environmental Administrator
Florida Department of Transportation
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33612-6456

RE: PD&E Study for Replacement of Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93)
FDOT Work Program Number: 422799-1
Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, Florida

Dear Ms. Rhinesmith:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has completed its review of the draft Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) dated September 2013 for the proposal to replace the four-lane northbound I-275 Howard Frankland Bridge over Tampa Bay in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Florida. The Service provides the following comments in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) (16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*).

The Service received a request from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for consultation on October 2, 2013, regarding the proposed bridge replacement. The limits of the study area extend one mile beyond either end of the three-mile bridge to include portions of the causeway. The preferred alternative identified involves constructing the new bridge between the two existing bridges, utilizing staged construction and a temporary bridge near the bridge ends. Demolition of the existing bridge is included as part of the preferred alternative. The method of demolition has not been determined. The study also examines a future exclusive transit envelope, such as a toll road or an express lane for buses, as a separate structure or included as part of the new bridge.

Endangered Species Act

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. The east side of the project, in Hillsborough County, falls within an

Important Manatee Area (IMA) that translates into special restrictions for certain types of projects. The IMA requires dedicated manatee observers and no nighttime clamshell dredging. 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' if all of the following special conditions are implemented:

- 2011 In-Water Construction Conditions will be followed. In the future, current guidelines and contact numbers can be found on our office website or the Army Corps website.
- No nighttime in-water work will be performed. In-water work can be conducted from official sunrise until official sunset times.
- Two dedicated, experienced, manatee observers will be present when in-water work is being performed. A Manatee Watch Plan will be developed and submitted to the USFWS at least 60 days prior to the start of construction with manatee observer names and qualifications listed. 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.
- A current seagrass survey will be conducted during the growing season within two years prior to the start of construction. Based on current information and survey results provided by FDOT, the preferred alternative will not impact any seagrass beds or any wetlands.
- Any culverts larger than eight inches and less than eight feet in diameter 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.
- No blasting is proposed for the removal of the old bridge. FDOT understands that blasting will result in a 'may affect' determination and FDOT would initiate formal consultation.

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. The Service is currently utilizing a 15 mile core foraging area around active colonies in central Florida to evaluate the effects of wetland destruction with respect to forage availability for wood storks. Several active nesting colonies and their associated core foraging areas are found within 15 miles of the bridge structure.

The FDOT has demonstrated avoidance and minimization measures by selecting the preferred alternative and they are committed to continue reducing the direct and indirect impacts of this project on wetlands throughout the planning, design and permitting phase of this proposal. Based on the information provided and the implementation of the preferred alternative, no wetland impacts are anticipated. If the final design of the project does impact wetlands, FDOT will provide appropriate mitigation areas 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.

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

FDOT made a determination of 'no effect' for the piping plover. Because there is suitable foraging habitat along the causeway shorelines and critical habitat has been designated within the action area the Service cannot concur with a 'no effect' determination. Cornell University ebird website provides sighting data for Cypress Point Park and C. Campbell Causeway and one other area that is unlabeled to the NW of the bridge. However, since piping plovers have not been sighted within the footprint of the project and no critical habitat will be disturbed, the Service would concur with a 'may affect but not likely to adversely affect' determination for this species.

Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*)

FDOT made a determination of 'no effect' for the Gulf Sturgeon. FDOT also 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.

This letter does not represent a biological opinion as described in Section 7 of the ESA nor a final concurrence with project effects on Florida manatees 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. Based on the information provided, no wetlands would be impacted by the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Jane Monaghan 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,


for Jay B. Herrington
Field Supervisor

cc: Scott Sanders - FWC
Dr. David Rydene, PhD - NMFS

DRAFT



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. 04EF1000-2014-I-0034

September 30, 2015

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

**RE: Study of Replacement of Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93)
FDOT Work Program Number: 422799-1
Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, Florida**

Dear Ms. Selly:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has completed its review of the Categorical Exclusion Determination for the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement project. The proposed project will replace the four lane northbound I-275 Howard Frankland Bridge over Tampa Bay in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Florida. 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) on September 22, 2015, for re-initiation of informal consultation and concurrence with the commitments presented on the PD&E for the proposed project. It is our understanding that FDOT is committed to continuing informal consultation for the project's effects on listed species during its future design phase. In a previous letter the Service provided comments for conservation measures or special conditions where the Service could support a 'may affect not likely to adversely affect' determination for effects of the proposed project to the endangered Florida Manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*). The Service has reviewed FDOT's commitments for potential impacts to species listed under the Endangered Species Act and support FDOT's determination that if FDOT follows the below conditions the proposed project may affect but will not likely to adversely affect the Florida manatee. In addition to the commitments for the Florida manatee FDOT commits to continue informal consultation for the Gulf Sturgeon during the project's final design phase and to incorporate the *Construction Special Conditions for the protection of the Gulf Sturgeon*.

FDOT's commitments for the Florida Manatee:

1. To assure the protection of wildlife during construction, 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 construction. **Appendix B** of the WEBAR provides an example of the most current *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (2011).
2. No nighttime in water work will be performed. In-water work can be conducted from official sunrise until official sunset times;
3. Two dedicated (minimum one primary) and 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;
4. 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.
5. 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
6. Although culverts are unlikely for this project, any culverts larger than eight inches and less than eight feet in diameter should be grated to prevent manatee entrapment. The spacing between the bridge 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 piles, further coordination will be conducted with the USFWS.
7. No blasting is authorized for this project as part of this PD&E study. If blasting is required, formal 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.
8. No dredging is authorized for this project as part of this PD&E study. If dredging is required, Section 7 Consultation will be re-initiated with the USFWS for the manatee.
9. Staging areas should be located to avoid impacts to all existing mitigation areas and should be approved during permitting.

FDOT's commitment for the Gulf Sturgeon:

1. 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.

2. FDOT will incorporate the Construction Special Conditions for the protection of the Gulf Sturgeon (Appendix B of the WEBAR).

Thank you for considering the effects of your proposed project on fish and wildlife, and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Should changes to the proposed project occur or new information regarding fish and wildlife resources become available, further consultation with the Service should be initiated to assess any potential impacts. If you have any additional requests or questions, please contact Lourdes Mena at (904)731-3119.

Sincerely,


for Jay B. Herrington
Field Supervisor

cc: Joe Sullivan, FHWA
Cathy Kendall, FHWA
Nicolle Selly, FDOT District Seven

DRAFT



Florida Department of Transportation

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33612

ANANTH PRASAD, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 13, 2016

Ms. Zakia Williams
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200
Jacksonville, FL 32256-7517

RE: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Coordination
Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93) Replacement
Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Florida
WPI Segment No: 422799-1

Dear Ms. Williams:

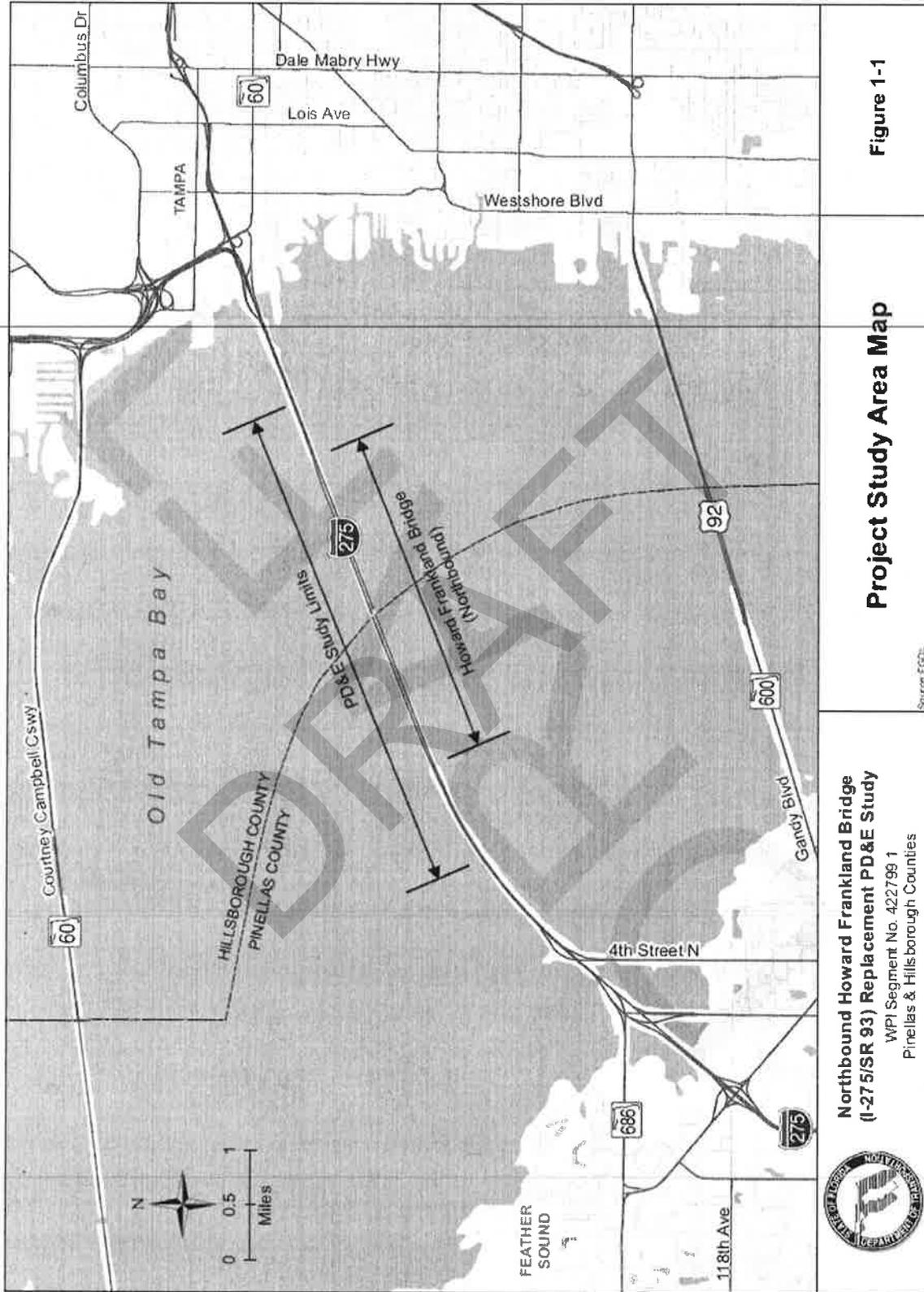
The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study to evaluate alternatives for the replacement of the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (Bridge No. 150107) on Interstate 275 (I-275/SR 93) over Old Tampa Bay, in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. The limits of the PD&E study begin approximately one mile south and end approximately 0.5 mile to the north of the existing three-mile bridge to include portions of the existing causeway (Figure 1-1). The study was designed to assist the FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in reaching a decision on the type, location, and conceptual design of the necessary improvements for the replacement of the northbound bridge.

This Draft Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) was prepared as part of this PD&E study. This report summarizes potential impacts to wetlands, federal- and state-listed species and their habitats, and essential fish habitat. Identification of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate for any potential impacts are also discussed.

Proposed Project

The Recommended Build Alternative includes constructing the new bridge to the west side of the existing southbound bridge. The previously proposed build alternative

Ms. Zakia Williams, USFWS
 WPI Segment # 422799-1-22-01
 Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93) Replacement



**Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge
 (I-275/SR 93) Replacement PD&E Study**
 WPI Segment No. 422799 1
 Pinellas & Hillsborough Counties



Project Study Area Map

Figure 1-1

Source: FDOT

included constructing the new bridge between the two existing bridges. After further evaluation, it was determined that the Recommended Build Alternative would decrease complexity of construction, reduce construction time and decrease potential lane closures associated with maintenance of traffic over the previously proposed build alternative. Demolition of the existing northbound bridge is included as part of the Recommended Build Alternative. The future transit envelope could either be a separate structure or included as part of the new bridge. In addition to the bridge replacement options, the Department is presently considering longer-range improvements to add additional lanes as tolled express lanes, which could also be used by express bus and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles.

Wetlands

No wetland impacts are anticipated to occur when the replacement of the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge is constructed. Temporary water quality impacts from construction may occur to waters of Old Tampa Bay, however, no adverse impacts are anticipated. Seagrasses are identified separately as part of the essential fish habitat assessment.

Protected Species and Habitat

Federally protected species assessed for this project include the following: Gulf sturgeon, smalltooth sawfish, West Indian manatee, swimming sea turtles (loggerhead, green, leatherback and Kemp's ridley), piping plover, and wood stork. State protected species assessed for this project include the following: snowy plover, American oystercatcher, black skimmer, brown pelican, least tern, little blue heron, reddish egret, roseate spoonbill, snowy egret, tricolored heron, white ibis, and osprey. Additionally, review for the de-listed, federally protected, bald eagle was also conducted.

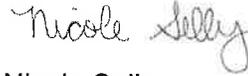
A finding of no effect was assigned for the bald eagle and a finding of no involvement was assigned for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat. A finding of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect was assigned for the wood stork, piping plover, Gulf sturgeon, West Indian manatee, smalltooth sawfish, sea turtles, American oystercatcher, black skimmer, brown pelican, least tern, little blue heron, snowy egret, reddish egret, tricolored heron, white ibis, roseate spoonbill, black skimmer, brown pelican, least tern, snowy plover, and osprey.

Essential Fish Habitat

Estuarine and marine habitats of Old Tampa Bay exist within and adjacent to the project study limits on the east and west side of the Causeway and below the existing bridges. These habitats include seagrasses located at various areas on the east and west side of the Causeway on both the south and north end of the Howard Frankland Bridge. The construction of the Recommended Build Alternative will result in approximately 2.3 acres of seagrass impacts.

The Draft WEBAR is attached for your review. The FDOT respectfully requests a response from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within 30 days. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (813) 975-6455 or email me at nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,



Nicole Selly
Environmental Specialist

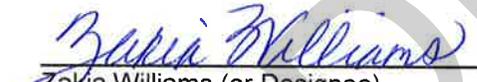
NCS

cc: Menna Yassin, FDOT
Robin Rhinesmith, FDOT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finds the attached project documentation complete and sufficient and X concurs/ _____ does not concur with the recommendations and findings provided herein.

USFWS Comments:

No further comments.
FWS Log No : 2014-I-0034-R034


Zakia Williams (or Designee)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
North Florida Ecological Services Office

10/13/16
Date

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: July 11, 2016 **Date Issued:** July 21, 2016
Location: FDOT District 7 Office
Project Name: Howard Frankland Bridge Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E Study
Purpose: USFWS Coordination for Starter and Ultimate Project Construction (PD&E Update)
Notes by: Chris Salicco **American Project #:** 5107275
Copies to: File

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax or e-mail</u>
Nicole Selly	FDOT District 7	813-975-6455	nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us
Menna Yassin	FDOT District 7	813-975-6433	menna.yassin@dot.state.fl.us
Lourdes Mena	USFWS	904-731-3134	lourdes_mena@fws.gov
Jeff Novotny	American Consulting	813-435-2646	jnovotny@acp-fl.com
Chris Salicco	American Consulting	813-435-2617	csalicco@acp-fl.com

The following notes reflect our understanding of the discussions and decisions made at this meeting. If you have any questions, additions or comments, please contact us at the above address. We will consider the minutes to be accurate unless written notice is received within 10 working days of the date issued.

The meeting was held to discuss the starter and ultimate project for the Howard Frankland Bridge with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) prior to updates to the Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR). Summary/outline is provided below:

- To date, the PD&E study limits for the project have been one mile south of the Howard Frankland Bridge to one mile north of the bridge.
- An overview of the starter project was provided, which currently consists of replacing the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge to the west (north) of the existing southbound bridge. Once construction is completed, the existing southbound traffic will be diverted to the new bridge and the northbound traffic will be diverted to the existing southbound bridge. The existing northbound bridge will be demolished.
- Further detail was provided regarding the 'Master Plan' project that includes the proposed express lanes as well as the 'Ultimate Construction' which would eventually add a transit component across Old Tampa Bay. The proposed bridge constructed for this project will ultimately become the transit bridge, and a new bridge would be constructed at the location of the existing northbound bridge as part of the 'Ultimate Construction'. The transit component for the remainder of the causeway will be addressed separately and may be included as a footnote in the impact table.
- Based on the current Draft Concept Plans for the Howard Frankland Bridge, the starter project will result in approximately 2.3 acres of seagrass impacts and the 'Master Plan' project will result in approximately 7 acres of seagrass impacts, depending on the logical termini on the north (Hillsborough side). The south side limits should remain as one mile south of the bridge as originally studied. The newly created impact table that was provided at the meeting will likely be incorporated into the report and updated to reflect the project limits.

- For the starter project, the FDOT already has credits available at Fort DeSoto for seagrass mitigation. These impacts would occur on the west (north) side of the bridge, where the seagrass is less dense and poorer quality than the east (south) side.
- The future transit component may result in an additional approximately 6.5 acres of seagrass acres. The future transit alignment runs from the Gateway area in Pinellas to Westshore area in Hillsborough County and the 6.5 acres of seagrass impacts is based on the study limits from one mile south to one mile north of the bridge.
- USFWS advised that in-water commitments for the manatee shall remain as provided in the original PD&E.
- Commitments for future express lane expansion should be added and include the following:
 - o Anticipated seagrass impact
 - o Same in-water commitments already documented
- The commitments for the express lanes should cover consultation for the future express lane project.
- It was discussed during the meeting that updated seagrass surveys are being conducted by the FDOT permitting department.
- MANLAA determination is still anticipated for the Florida manatee.
- USFWS requested that known manatee data within the project area be documented in the WEBAR – all available GIS data and other resources will be reviewed and updated in the current WEBAR.
- It was discussed that a portion of the southern (Pinellas side) causeway may be opened with a bridge to help restore flushing within Old Tampa Bay, similar to the project being evaluated on the Courtney Campbell Causeway to the north.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: August 9, 2017
Location: FDOT District 7 Headquarters – Teleconference with USFWS
Project Name: Howard Frankland Bridge Northbound Bridge Replacement PD&E Study
Purpose: USFWS Coordination for Updated Typical Section
Notes by: Chris Salicco **American Project #:** 5107275
Copies to: File

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Fax or e-mail</u>
Nicole Selly	FDOT District 7	813-975-6455	nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us
Zakia Williams	USFWS	904-731-3119	zakia_williams@fws.gov
Chris Salicco	American Consulting	813-435-2617	csalicco@acp-fl.com

The following notes reflect our understanding of the discussions and decisions made at this meeting. If you have any questions, additions or comments, please contact us at the above address. We will consider the minutes to be accurate unless written notice is received within 10 working days of the date issued.

The meeting was held to discuss the change in typical section for the Howard Frankland Bridge with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) prior to updating the Natural Resource Evaluation (formerly the Wetland Evaluation Biological Assessment Report). Summary/outline is provided below:

- USFWS was informed that the bridge typical section was changing from the four general use lanes (approximately 75-foot wide bridge) to four general use lanes with one express lane in each direction (approximately 131-foot wide bridge).
- The bridge would remain to the west (north) of the existing southbound bridge.
- No other changes were proposed other than the typical section change and bridge width to address public outreach.
- Description of the typical section was described to USFWS via GoTo Meeting.
- It was explained to USFWS that the impacts to seagrass would increase to approximately five acres.
- Proposed mitigation for seagrass impacts is the use of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project.
- USFWS is aware of the Upper Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project and this information needs to be documented in the NRE.
- No changes to species impact determinations for listed species were anticipated for the project with the updated typical section and bridge width.

From: Selly, Nicole
To: [Salicco, Christopher](#)
Subject: 422799-1 HFB USFWS coordination
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 9:57:31 AM

I just spoke with Zakia.

Phone Call Minutes:

Objective: 422799-1 Howard Frankland Bridge Project Updates

Date: 10/19/2017

Time: 9:30 am

Attendees: Nicole Selly (FDOT), Zakia Williams (USFWS)

Nicole described the newest project updates, including four express lanes and a trail. She also informed Zakia that the new seagrass impact estimate is 9.5 acres. Zakia asked if FDOT had coordinated with the National Marine Fisheries Service, and Nicole noted that a meeting was held with Dave Rydene at the district. Zakia is awaiting the NRE for review.

Nicole Selly

Environmental Specialist III
District Seven - PLEMO
(813) 975-6455 phone
(813) 975-6443 fax
nicole.selly@dot.state.fl.us

DRAFT



October 30, 2013

**Florida Fish
and Wildlife
Conservation
Commission**

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MyFWC.com

Robin Rhinesmith
Environmental Administrator
Florida Department of Transportation – District 7
11201 McKinley Drive, MS 7-500
Tampa, FL 33612
robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us

Re: PD&E Study Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge I-275 – Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties

Dear Ms. Rhinesmith:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) staff has reviewed the measures proposed by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 to address adverse effects on wildlife and habitat resources of the above-referenced project, based on the results of the Project Development and Environment Study (PD&E). FWC provides the following comments and recommendations for your consideration, in accordance with Chapter 379, Florida Statutes and Article 4, Section 9, Florida Constitution.

The FDOT District 7 is proposing to replace the existing four-lane, 3-mile northbound Howard Frankland Bridge on I-275 over Old Tampa Bay. The Bridge provides a connection from Tampa in Hillsborough County to St. Petersburg in Pinellas County. Our agency evaluated the potential fish, wildlife, and habitat resource impacts of this project and provided comments to FDOT during the review of ETDM 12539 in March, 2012. As part of the ongoing PD&E Study, FDOT completed a Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) and an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment to address protection measures for both federally and state-listed wildlife species and other protected resources in the project area. FDOT also relates that of the three Alternatives studied, Option A, a centered alignment between the two existing bridges, has been selected for construction. Based on FDOT's studies, no impacts to seagrasses are anticipated along this recommended bridge alternative. The following overview from the WEBAR provides insight into project commitments for listed species and identifies proposed impact avoidance and minimization measures for the project.

An assessment and impact determination was accomplished for the following species which are federally listed as Threatened (FT) or Endangered (FE), or by FWC as State Threatened (ST), or Species of Special Concern (SSC). A finding of No Effect was made for the wood stork (FE), piping plover (FT), Gulf sturgeon (FT), and the smalltooth sawfish (FE). A finding of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect was made for the American oystercatcher (SSC), black skimmer (SSC), brown pelican (SSC), least tern (ST), Florida manatee (FE), little blue heron (SSC), snowy egret (SSC), reddish egret (SSC), tricolored heron (SSC), white ibis (SSC), roseate spoonbill (SSC), loggerhead sea turtle (FT), green sea turtle (FE), leatherback sea turtle (FE), Kemp's Ridley sea turtle (FE), and also the unlisted but protected bald eagle.

An Informal Section 7 Consultation is currently underway with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). FDOT is planning to coordinate on the Gulf sturgeon, smalltooth sawfish, and swimming sea turtles during the project design phase prior to construction. FDOT will adhere to the NMFS Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Condition guidelines during all in-water project work. FDOT further states that they will follow and comply with the most recent guidelines for protection of the Florida Manatee, currently FWC's Standard Manatee and Marine Turtle Construction Conditions for In-water Work (2012). FDOT has also committed to the formulation and implementation of a blast

plan and Marine Wildlife Watch Plan (MWWP) which will be adhered to in the event that blasting is required, and commits to coordinating with FWC on the details of these plans.

Finally, in order to minimize impacts to wildlife, our agency favors bridge lights that meet dark sky standards to minimize visibility from marine turtle nesting beaches as well as contribution to cumulative sky glow. Possible recommendations include use of full cut off, well-shielded fixtures fitted with long wavelength light sources, such as low pressure sodium or amber LED. High pressure sodium fixtures may be acceptable if well shielded to eliminate direct visibility from the nesting beaches, however, metal halide lights are not recommended. For technical assistance and further coordination concerning project-specific measures to offset potential impacts to manatees and sea turtles, or for bridge lighting issues, FDOT should contact our Imperiled Species Management Section at imperiledspecies@myfwc.com or (850) 922-4330 early in the project design phase and wetland permitting planning process.

FDOT will conduct a seagrass survey during the growing season (June - August) which includes an impact determination for seagrasses and submerged aquatic vegetation. This will be accomplished within no more than two years of the construction start date. FDOT has also made a commitment to adhere to the NMFS and USFWS Construction Special Provisions, Gulf Sturgeon Protection Guidelines for the Gulf Sturgeon. Please contact Lisa Gregg of FWC's Division of Marine Fisheries Management in Tallahassee at (lisa.gregg@MyFWC.com) or by phone at (850) 617-9621 for coordination related to potential permitting issues and requirements for the Gulf Sturgeon.

We encourage FDOT District 7 to include artificial reefing as one of the selected options for materials associated with dismantling the Howard Franklin Bridge. As recommended in our 2012 ETDM comments, early contact with our agency and our county partners is essential to accomplish required permitting, scheduling, reef site selection and approval, and coordination with potential contractors for transport of suitable material. This will also ensure that special conditions and standards that may be necessary are defined and followed. These standards include such things as compliance with material weight and dimension standards, removal of steel rebar from bridge reef material to ensure public safety and minimize loss of fishing gear, and compliance with approved navigational clearance at the reef site. Mr. Charles Mangio, Pinellas County Artificial Reef Coordinator of the Pinellas County Division of Solid Waste (727-464-7544), has confirmed Pinellas County has a pending federal permit application (anticipated to be issued within 6 months) for a new artificial reef permit area in the Gulf of Mexico located less than 10 miles from the project area. This new permitted area is of sufficient dimension to accommodate most of the concrete material from the old Howard Franklin Bridge. The large sections of the Howard Franklin Bridge spans and pilings (all confirmed to be free of asphalt) will be ideal artificial reef material, potentially creating marine habitat for reef fish and benthic marine resources. As in other similar coastal bridge demolition projects, the ability to transport large sections of bridge material and the close proximity of the artificial reef permitted area is anticipated to provide a low-cost disposal option for the marine contractor, resulting in an ultimate cost savings to FDOT and long-term beneficial use of the material. Pinellas County confirms they are available to engage contractors and provide oversight during demolition activities for transport of suitable materials to the artificial reef site. For further coordination on pier or artificial reef development, and input on the associated protection of marine resources, please contact FWC biologist Keith Mille in the Division of Marine Fisheries Management in Tallahassee at keith.mille@MyFWC.com or (850) 617-9633.

The marine habitats of Old Tampa Bay are collectively a very productive system and support important commercial and recreational fisheries, listed species, and tourism. The seagrass beds, oyster bars, mudflats, tidal creeks and areas of mangrove and saltmarsh, together with open bay waters, provide habitat for the support of spotted seatrout, red drum, Atlantic croaker, black drum, striped mullet, Gulf flounder, common snook, tarpon, blue crabs, and many other species

including sea turtles, Florida manatee, and the Gulf sturgeon. The protection of marine plant communities and the quality and clarity of bay waters are important factors in the continued productivity of this marine system, which directly supports recreational opportunities for local residents and tourists, as well as opportunities for employment. Although some drainage retention areas could be sited along the upland portions of the bridge approach, due to the significant length of the proposed new bridge, runoff containing oils, greases, and sediment will necessarily be discharged into Old Tampa Bay via bridge scuppers. Therefore, we support an off-site compensatory mitigation plan for improvement of water quality in the Bay and our biologists are available to provide technical assistance and work on an inter-agency team to address and resolve this issue.

In addition, it also appears that it may be necessary to locate sizable staging areas along the bridge approach causeways for possible barge docking facilities and the storage of construction materials, fuels, equipment, and other associated materials. If this is necessary, the locations of the staging areas should be in disturbed areas to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife habitat resources, including listed species, and the selection of these areas should be vetted with state and federal resource and permitting agencies. Since many types of shorebirds and wading birds use the shoreline and littoral zone areas along the causeway, results of onsite habitat assessments and wildlife and seagrass surveys by FDOT's consultant should be a key consideration in the selection process.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this PD&E. 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. If you have specific technical questions regarding the content of this letter, please contact FWC biologist Terry Gilbert at (850) 728-1103 or by email at terry.gilbert@MyFWC.com.

Sincerely,



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

jdg/tg

ENV 1-5-2

Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge_18181_103013

cc: Lisa Gregg, lisa.gregg@MyFWC.com
Mary Duncan, mary.duncan@MyFWC.com
Kelly Roberts, kelly.roberts@MyFWC.com
Luke Davis, luke.davis@MyFWC.com
Keith Mille, keith.mille@MyFWC.com
Jon Dodrill, jon.dodrill@MyFWC.com
Jeff Wilcox, jefferey.wilcox@MyFWC.com

From: Selly, Nicole
To: [Yassin, Menna](#); [Salicco, Christopher](#)
Cc: [Novotny, Jeffrey S.](#)
Subject: FW: Document Review Confirmation for Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)
Date: Monday, October 03, 2016 4:17:27 PM

From: admin@fla-etat.org [mailto:admin@fla-etat.org]
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2016 4:11 PM
To: jennifer.goff@MyFWC.com
Cc: Selly, Nicole
Subject: Document Review Confirmation for Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)

A review was received for the following:

Event: Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement WEBAR Review 2016
Document: Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)
Submitted By: Jennifer Goff
Global: Yes
Comments:

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) staff has reviewed the Draft Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) for the above-referenced project, prepared as part of the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. We have previously reviewed this project via the Efficient Transportation Decision Making process as ETDM #12539. 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 alternatives for the replacement of the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge on I-275 over Old Tampa Bay. The limits of the PD&E Study begin approximately one mile south and end approximately one-half mile north of the existing three-mile-long bridge. The previously proposed recommended alternative involved constructing the new bridge between the two existing bridges, however the new Recommended Build Alternative involves constructing the new bridge to the west of the existing southbound bridge. The project corridor consists of spoil material from the construction of the causeway, and the waters of Old Tampa Bay. No wetland impacts are anticipated with this project, but the Recommended Build Alternative would result in approximately 2.3 acres of seagrass impacts.

The WEBAR evaluated potential project impacts to 20 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), loggerhead sea turtle (FT), green sea turtle (FE), leatherback sea turtle (FE), Kemp's ridley sea turtle, wood stork (FE), Florida manatee (FE), snowy plover (ST), American oystercatcher (SSC), black skimmer (SSC), brown pelican (SSC), least tern (ST), roseate spoonbill (SSC), snowy egret (SSC), reddish egret (SSC), little blue heron (SSC), tricolored heron (SSC), and white ibis (SSC).

Also evaluated were the bald eagle, which was delisted by state and federal agencies, but remains governed by Section 68A-16.002, F.A.C. and by the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d), and the osprey, which is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Project biologists made a finding of "no effect" for the bald eagle due to a lack of suitable nesting habitat for this species within the project area. The biologists determined that the project "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" all the other species. We agree with these determinations.

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

1. The FDOT will conduct seagrass surveys during the June - August growing season in order to support the permit approval process. Seagrass mitigation is proposed through the use of the Old Tamp Bay Water Quality Improvement Project.

If other seagrass mitigation options are proposed, such as seagrass planting, please include FWC in the 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, 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 provided by staff identified at the close of this memo.

2. The FDOT will coordinate with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on potential impacts associated with pile driving activities.

For concrete pile driving activities, please also coordinate with our agency. For technical assistance and coordination on manatees and sea turtles during pile driving activities, please

contact our Imperiled Species Management Section in Tallahassee at imperiledspecies@myfwc.com or (850) 922-4330.

3. The FDOT will adhere to the most current Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions and the most current Construction Special Conditions for the Protection of the Gulf Sturgeon.

4. The FDOT will implement a Marine Wildlife Watch Plan (MWWP) and adhere to the *Standard Manatee and Marine Turtle Conditions for In-Water Work*.

Although a number of specific manatee protection procedures are included in the project commitments, further coordination with our agency will be necessary in order to determine specific measures for this project. For technical assistance and coordination on manatees and sea turtles, please contact our Imperiled Species Management Section in Tallahassee.

5. Although no blasting is authorized, if blasting is required, formal consultation will be initiated with USFWS and NMFS. A blasting plan would be submitted to FWC, USFWS, and NMFS for approval prior to initiation of blasting activities.

6. Dredging is also not authorized, but if dredging is required, formal consultation for the manatee will be re-initiated with the USFWS.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on highway design and the conservation of fish and wildlife resources. Please contact Brian Barnett at (772) 579-9746 or email brian.barnett@MyFWC.com to initiate the process for further overall coordination on this project.



2012 SEP 13 2:58 PM

Florida Department of Transportation

11201 N. McKinley Drive Tampa, FL 33612-6456 Phone (813) 975-6000 1-800-226-72200

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

ANANTH PRASAD, P.E.
SECRETARY

August 14, 2012

Ms. Linda Anderson
Federal Highway Administration
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

RE: Work Program Item Segment No.: 422799-1; ETDM Project No.: 12539
Replacement of the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93) PD&E Study
Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Enclosed are two copies of the Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) (July 2012), two original Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms (8PI12006 and 8HI11663), a CD containing the FMSF forms and photos, and a Survey Log Sheet for the above referenced project. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate alternatives for the replacement of the northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (Bridge No. 150107) on Interstate 275 (I-275/SR 93) over Old Tampa Bay, in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. The limits of the PD&E Study extend approximately one mile beyond either end of the three mile bridge to include portions of the existing causeway. The study is designed to assist the FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in reaching a decision on the type, location, and conceptual design of the necessary improvements for the replacement of the northbound bridge. A simultaneous Regional Transit Corridor Evaluation is underway to evaluate premium transit alternatives within the bridge corridor to link the Gateway area in Pinellas County to the Westshore area in Hillsborough County.

This PD&E Study will evaluate options for inclusion of a future exclusive transit envelope within the Howard Frankland Bridge corridor. Location concepts for constructing the new bridge include the west side of the southbound bridge, between the two existing bridges, or east of the existing northbound bridge. Demolition of the existing northbound bridge is included as part of all alternatives. The future transit envelope could either be a separate structure or included as part of the new bridge. In addition to the bridge replacement options, the FDOT is presently considering adding additional lanes as *managed lanes*, which would be variable-price tolled and could also be used by express bus and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles.

RECEIVED
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2012 SEP 13 P 2:58

Ms. Linda Anderson
Replacement of the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93) PD&E Study
Work Program Item Segment No.: 422799-1
August 14, 2012
Page 2 of 3

Based on background research and the ETDM Programming Screen review, there were no previously recorded historic resources and the presence of unrecorded historic resources was considered unlikely within the project's area of potential effect (APE). For historic resources, the APE was defined as the 800-foot wide existing limited access right-of-way, plus the immediate viewshed. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) indicated that submerged sites are likely, and noted their preference that these be identified with a desktop review. No archaeological field survey was conducted because the project's APE is comprised of made land and the bridge proper. However, a predictive model for underwater archaeological sites was prepared as part of this effort.

The historic resources field survey resulted in the identification and evaluation of the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (No. 150107; FMSF Nos. 8PI12006 and 8HI11663). Built in 1959 and opened in 1960, the Howard Frankland Bridge was the last of three bridges built to span Tampa Bay and connect Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. It is neither distinguished by its significant historical associations nor by its engineering or architectural design. SHPO had indicated in the ETDM review that the rehabilitation of the bridge in 1996 also made it ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). As a result, 8PI12006/8HI11663 is considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP.

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 this letter, please coordinate with SHPO for concurrence that the proposed project will have no effect on any cultural resources. One copy of the enclosed CRAS is for your files. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Spain Schwarz at (813) 281-8308 (rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com) or myself at (813) 975-6496 (robin.rhinesmith@dot.myflorida.com).

Sincerely,



Robin Rhinesmith
Environmental Administrator

RR/rss

Enclosure

cc: Nahir DeTizio, FHWA
Roy Jackson, FDOT CEMO
Kirk Bogen, FDOT
Jeff Novotny, American Consulting Engineers
Rebecca Spain Schwarz, Atkins

Ms. Linda Anderson
Replacement of the Northbound Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275/SR 93) PD&E Study
Work Program Item Segment No.: 422799-1
August 14, 2012
Page 3 of 3

The FHWA finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Report provided with this letter to be complete and sufficient and approves / does not approve the above recommendations and findings.

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:

PLEASE ADDRESS COMMENTS / OPINION TO LINDA ANDERSON, FHWA. P: 850-553-2226, E: linda.anderson@dot.gov. PLEASE CC: ROBIN RHINESMITH, FDOT D7; NATIE DETZIG, FHWA; AND ROY JACKSON, CEMO.
--

/s/ Linda Anderson
Martin C. Knopp
Division Administrator
Florida Division
Federal Highway Administration

9-10-12
Date

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Report complete and sufficient and concurs with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/DHR Project File Number 2012-4134.

/s/ Alissa M. Slade, Deputy SHPO
Robert F. Bendus

10.4.12
Date

for
State Historic Preservation Officer
Director, Florida Division of Historical Resources