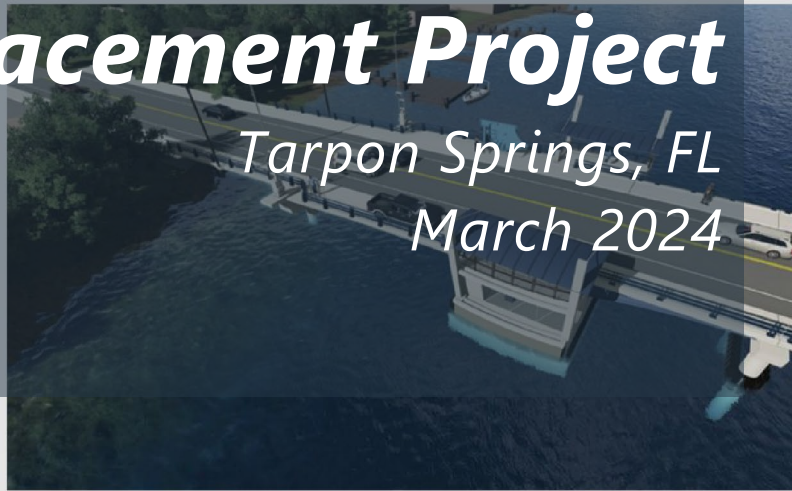




Beckett Bridge Replacement Project

*Tarpon Springs, FL
March 2024*



US DOT Bridge Investment Program | FY 2023



USDOT - FHWA: BRIDGE INVESTMENT PROGRAM
FY 2023
Beckett Bridge Replacement Project, Tarpon Springs, FL

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- Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, Volume 1 (February 23, 2015)
- Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, Volume 2 (February 23, 2015)
- Beckett Bridge NEPA Type 2 Categorical Exclusion, Documentation (January 19, 2016)
- Beckett Bridge NEPA Type 2 Categorical Exclusion, Appendix (January 19, 2016)
- Beckett Bridge - Substructure NBIS Rating Memo (June 24, 2021)
- Beckett Bridge Environmental Document Re-evaluation Form (August 26, 2022)
- Beckett Bridge Replacement Roadway Plans (January 2023)
- Tarpon Springs Fire Response Analysis (January 2024)
- Beckett Bridge - Estimate of Remaining Service Life Memo (January 24, 2024)
- Pinellas County Asset Management Plan

B. Financial Documents

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I. Basic Project Information

Project Description

As the oldest movable bridge in Florida, Beckett Bridge in Tarpon Springs, Florida requires constant monitoring and experiences closures due to its aging infrastructure. Tarpon Springs is a coastal town located within the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA and is known for its access to water, historic sponge docks, and diverse community. The proposed new bridge will replace the original 1924 timber structure that was reconstructed in 1956. The existing bridge foundations have a long history of vertical settlement and horizontal movement requiring major repairs due to a relic sinkhole. The bridge has been load-limited to 12 to 15 tons since 1987, is structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, and has a substructure rating of 4 (Poor). Heavy vehicles, including school buses, garbage trucks, and fire trucks are prohibited from crossing the bridge. Pedestrians and bicyclists cannot cross safely with less than 2-foot-wide sidewalks over the bridge on each side. **Given the current condition of the bridge and its ratings, it is anticipated that the bridge will need to completely close to traffic within the next five to ten years.¹**

Beckett Bridge's existing typical section consists of one, 10-foot-wide travel lane in each direction and 2.16-foot-wide sidewalks separated by a curb on both sides of the bridge. The bridge has no shoulders, limited lighting, and the sidewalks on the bridge are narrow and do not meet current accessibility requirements established by the ADA. The minimum required lane and shoulder widths prescribed by AASHTO are not met. The bridge railings do not meet current standards for pedestrian safety or geometric and crash testing safety standards for vehicles. Approach guardrails and transitions and end treatments also do not meet current safety standards.

Correction of the structural deficiencies affecting load capacity of the Bridge would create a substantial benefit by allowing all types of emergency vehicles and school buses to cross the



Beckett Bridge in 1965, facing Southwest

The purpose of the Beckett Bridge Replacement Project is to:

- **Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the City of Tarpon Springs and between major arterials, including US 19, downtown Tarpon Springs, and residential and recreational destinations to the west of Whitcomb Bayou in Pinellas County, Florida.**
- **Provide consistent and direct access for emergency vehicles, including paramedics.**
- **Connect people to downtown, several public beaches, healthcare, grocery stores, and schools.**

¹ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge - Estimate of Remaining Service Life Memo (January 24, 2024)

bridge and avoid longer detours. Additionally, safer conditions would be provided for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists along with better access to recreational areas. The project will also increase resilience, have a positive economic impact, and improve equity and quality of life with the addition of multimodal facilities and reduced travel detours.

More than \$4.2 million has already been invested by Pinellas County to advance the bridge project through planning and environmental review (2012-2016) and design (2016-2023). Right-of-way acquisition is underway and anticipated to be completed in 2024. Utility relocation and construction are ready to commence in 2025, and funding has been designated within the County, City of Tarpon Springs, and FDOT capital improvement plans. The anticipated remaining project costs are \$32.2 million. **As the bridge owner and project sponsor, Pinellas County is requesting \$26.5 in BIP grant funding to maximize its local dollars and advance the project prior to the anticipated year of closure.**

Issues with Current Bridge and Need for Improvements

- The bridge's structural deficiencies, Poor NBI Substructure Rating, and history of bridge closures for repairs cause concern for how long the bridge will be able to remain safely in service.
- The structural concerns have resulted in load restrictions for trucks, emergency vehicles, and school buses since 1987.
- The bridge's remaining service life is short, with the anticipated year of closure within the next five to ten years.
- The bridge is classified as functionally obsolete and the substandard roadway safety features and lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities limits multimodal access and creates safety concerns.
- The existing vertical and horizontal clearance limits access for certain vessels.



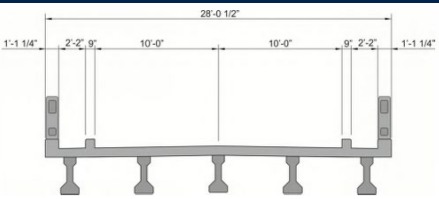
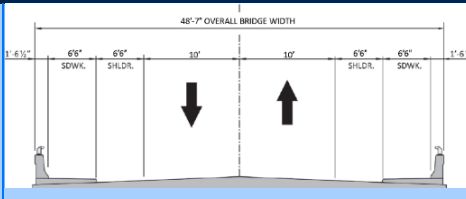
Above: Existing Narrow Sidewalk on Bridge

Below: Existing Bascule Bridge Clearances

Proposed Improvements

The proposed improvements including replacing the two-lane, low-level single-leaf, rolling-lift movable bridge with a new wider single-span, two-lane, low-level single-leaf, rolling-lift bridge of similar design. The new Beckett Bridge width would increase by about 20 feet to accommodate ADA-accessible sidewalks, shoulders, lighting, and bridge railings on both sides of the roadway. The bridge approaches will be lengthened to allow a higher vertical clearance at the navigational channel, reducing bridge openings. The new bascule will also be designed to have greater horizontal clearance to allow wider vessels to pass through the bridge. The new bridge will allow full vehicular loads including all emergency vehicles, while improving safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists. **Table 1** provides a comparison of the existing and proposed bridge typical sections and physical characteristics of the two bridge scenarios.

Table 1. Existing and Proposed Bridge Characteristics

	Existing Bridge	Proposed Bridge
Typical Section		
Movable Bridge Type	Low-level, single-leaf, rolling-lift bridge	Low-level, single-leaf, rolling-lift bridge
Bridge Width	28.04'	48.58'
Bridge Length	358.5'	360'
Vehicular Lanes	Two, 10' lanes	Two, 10' lanes; Two, 6.5' shoulders (can serve as undesignated bike lanes)
Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities	Two, 2.16' sidewalks (not ADA accessible)	Two, 6.5' sidewalks (ADA accessible)
Maximum Vertical Grade	1.3%	5%
Vertical Clearance at Navigational Channel (Bridge Closed)	6'	8.58'
Vertical Clearance (Bridge Open)	Unlimited (14' width)	Unlimited (25' width)
Horizontal Clearance (Bridge Closed)	25'	30'
Horizontal Clearance (Bridge Open)	14'	25'
Lighting	Limited	Additional Provided
Bridge Railings	Do not meet safety crash rating standards	New railings meet crash rating standards

The maximum vertical grade on the replacement bridge is five percent, which meets ADA requirements. Roadway reconstruction includes re-grading the roadway to meet new bridge approach elevations, new sidewalks, ADA sidewalk ramps, and drainage improvements between Chesapeake Drive on the west to Pampas Avenue on the east. The approach roadway will connect to the driveways to the Bayshore Mobile Home Park, the Tarpon Springs Yacht Club, and to Venetian Court with minimal re-grading. After construction, residential property driveways along Riverside Drive will still be accessible. The proposed roadway profile will be approximately two feet higher than the existing roadway at the west end of the bridge and approximately four feet higher at east end.

Project Location

The project is located at Beckett Bridge (Bridge no. 154000) in Tarpon Springs, Pinellas County, Florida, 28°8'60.0"N, 82°45'54.6"W. The project limits originally extended approximately 0.3 miles along Riverside Drive from Chesapeake Drive across Whitcomb Bayou to Forest Avenue. Resurfacing was eliminated from Pampas Avenue to Forest Avenue, accordingly, the current project limits for construction are 1306.12 feet from west of Chesapeake Drive to Pampas Avenue.

Beckett Bridge carries Riverside Drive, also known as North Spring Boulevard in Tarpon Springs (see **Figure 1**) over Whitcomb Bayou and connects coastal areas to the west and north. The bridge must open to allow some boats to pass between Whitcomb Bayou and the Anclote River, which eventually opens to the Gulf of Mexico. Riverside Drive/North Spring Boulevard is an extension of Tarpon Avenue, and is a designated evacuation route. Riverside Drive is a key route between downtown Tarpon Springs and US 19 to the east and Howard Park Beach, Sand Point, and residential areas near the Gulf beaches to the west. As described in the project Purpose and Need, approximately 5,400 residents in this coastal community rely on the bridge as a designated evacuation route (Tarpon Avenue).

No designated county or regional trails currently cross the Beckett Bridge, but one is proposed to connect Fred Howard Park to the Pinellas Trail Loop, a 65-mile-long regional trail less than one mile away to the east. The local transit does not currently provide transit service within the project limits, but the closest transit stops are approximately 0.5 miles from the bridge.²

Beckett Bridge is not located within a census tract or county that is a designed Area of Persistent Poverty, but it is adjacent to two Historically Disadvantaged Community census tracts (i.e., Tract 273.08 and Tract 274.02, shown in **Figure 4**). The project is within the Tampa-St. Petersburg 2020 Census-designated Urbanized Area. Additional census tracts to the north in Pasco County are also designated Areas of Persistent Poverty.

² Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, <https://www.psta.net/media/6134/system-map-layout-web.pdf>

Figure 1. Bridge Project Location Map



Lead Applicant

Pinellas County, the lead applicant and project sponsor for the Beckett Bridge Replacement project, has funded the planning, design, and right-of-way acquisition phases of the project. The County has extensive experience receiving and managing federal grants for transportation projects, and received federal funds for several Highway Planning and Construction projects, some of which are provided in **Table 2**. Pinellas County departments cover a wide range of responsibilities, including airports, solid waste, animal services, emergency medical services, parks, planning, and public works. The County is managing an operations and capital budget of \$3.8 billion in 2024. The County has transparent processes and standards for implementation of a fiscally responsible budget that meets the needs of community programs and services.

Table 2. Recent Pinellas County Highway Projects with Federal Funding

Project Name	Project Cost	Federal Participation
Ft De Soto Bay Pier Replacement	\$4.46M	\$1M
Belleair Causeway Bridge Replacement	\$72.6M	\$33.7M
Starkey Road Sidewalk Improvements	\$2.49M	\$1.89M
Bryan Dairy Road Widening	\$10.6M	\$2.82M

Other Public & Private Parties

Pinellas County is working in partnership with the City of Tarpon Springs and Florida Department of Transportation to replace Beckett Bridge. Prior to demolition of the existing bridge, the City of Tarpon Springs will relocate existing water and sewer lines that currently cross under the bridge. FDOT has committed \$3,850,000 of Bridge Replacement Funds.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

The bridge replacement is estimated to reduce the need for annual maintenance and repairs budget by about 17.6 percent, from \$425,000 to \$350,000 (in 2024 dollars) following construction. Pinellas County has implemented a County-wide asset management program to improve bridge maintenance, operation, and monitoring.³ This program will be used to organize historical documentation, maintenance records, and plans in one central location, which will result in more effective tracking of inspections, repairs, and monitoring. The County will fund the bridge maintenance costs, which are estimated as \$26.3 million over the life of the project (75 years).

The project includes the addition of 6.5-foot-wide wide sidewalks on both sides of the bridge, and sidewalks on the north side of the western approach roadway. Two rapid-flashing beacon-type pedestrian crossings, high-visibility crosswalk striping, two-way reflective signage, and push-button activated yellow flashing beacons, and sidewalks on both sides of the eastern approach roadway are also proposed. The bridge will provide wider shoulders on the bridge that will serve as unmarked I bicycle lanes and provide a buffer between vehicles and the sidewalks. These design features will dramatically improve multimodal accommodations along Riverside Drive and on Beckett Bridge. The wider bridge will also allow cars to move over and allow emergency vehicles to pass over the bridge.

II. National Bridge Inventory Data

Information from the most recent National Bridge Inventory (NBI) for Beckett Bridge is included in the recommended application template.

³ **Appendix A:** Pinellas County Asset Management Plan

III. Project Budget – Grant Funds, Sources & Uses

Table 3. Project Budget, BIP Request & Local Match

BIP Request Amount:	\$26,455,200 (80%)
State, Regional or Other Funding/Match:	\$6,613,800 (20%)
Total Project Eligible Costs:	\$33,069,000 (100%)

To date, approximately \$4.2 million has been invested by the County and other local parties for planning, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and permitting to prepare this project for construction. The remaining project costs for construction, including utility relocation, CEI, and post-design, are \$33.1 million. **Pinellas County is seeking to obtain \$26.5 million** or 80% of the total project eligible costs through a FHWA Bridge Improvement Program (BIP) grant. As shown in **Table 4**, the **local match provided by FDOT and Pinellas County is \$6.6 million**. (see **Appendix B** for the full project budget)

Table 4. Project Funding By Source

Project Phase	FUNDING SOURCE			Total	Status
	FY2023 BIP	FDOT	Pinellas County		
Utilities Relocation (Water & Sewer)	\$3,925,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,925,000	Begin 2025
Bridge Construction*	\$22,529,300	\$3,850,000	\$2,763,800	\$29,144,000	Begin 2025; End 2027
TOTAL PROJECT ELIGIBLE COSTS				\$33,069,000	

(*) Construction cost includes CEI/post-design and contingency.

As shown in Pinellas County's 2024 CIP and FDOT Work Program included in **Appendix B**, Pinellas County is committed to funding the bridge construction. To assist in the project funding, FDOT has committed \$3.85 million in their work program. The County's 2025 CIP is currently being updated, but will be revised to reflect the current construction estimate, which exceeds the County's committed portion of the local match. The City of Tarpon Springs has not yet identified funding for the utility relocation.

IV. Merit Criteria

Criterion #1: State of Good Repair

Beckett Bridge is a 100-year-old movable bridge that is structurally deficient, functionally obsolete, with load restrictions that limit the ability of school buses, trucks, and emergency vehicles to cross, and has an NBI Substructure rating of 4 (Poor). The project will contribute to the State of Good Repair criterion by replacing the structure completely to raise

all NBI ratings to Excellent and remove the load ratings that limit access for all vehicles that need to provide critical public safety services. The new structure will be designed with a 75-year design life. A Bridge Hydraulics Report was prepared in 2023 during the design phase to ensure the replacement bridge has adequate capacity to provide long-term resiliency for extreme weather events.

The existing bridge is classified as structurally deficient. Based on a detailed assessment of substructure conditions in 2021, the NBI Substructure Rating was downgraded from 6 (Satisfactory condition) to 4 (Poor condition) on a scale from 0 to 9.⁴ The bridge has an overall Structure Inventory and Appraisal Sufficiency Rating of 18.1 out of 100. This rating describes the physical condition of piers, abutments, piles, fenders, and footings and includes visible signs of distress such as cracking, section loss, settlement, misalignment, scour, collision damage, and corrosion. The NBI Substructure Rating of 4 is due to the following reasons:

- Foundation design and details (i.e., pile axial capacity and tip elevations), including the structural condition of the 100-year-old-plus timber piles below the bascule piers, are unknown.
- The bridge is founded on karst subsurface conditions with significant variation, ever-changing conditions from ongoing degradation of the weathered limestone and calcareous clay, and subsurface features consistent with a relict sinkhole.
- Although scour at Beckett Bridge is minimal, the bridge is designated as scour critical due to potential for foundation instability following a design scour event. This designation considers the unknown foundations.
- Existing pile foundations are unreliable with a long history of vertical settlement and horizontal movement and questionable load-carrying capacity and lateral stability, despite implementation of weight restrictions in 1987, addition of supplemental piles at the bascule pier, and addition of crutch bents at Bent 6/Rest Pier and Bent 7 in 1997. Crutch bents were installed in 1979 and 1988 to address settlement and lateral stability issues. Repairs in 2011 addressed operating machinery and bascule leaf alignment issues. These conditions require frequent monitoring, surveying inspections, and maintenance.

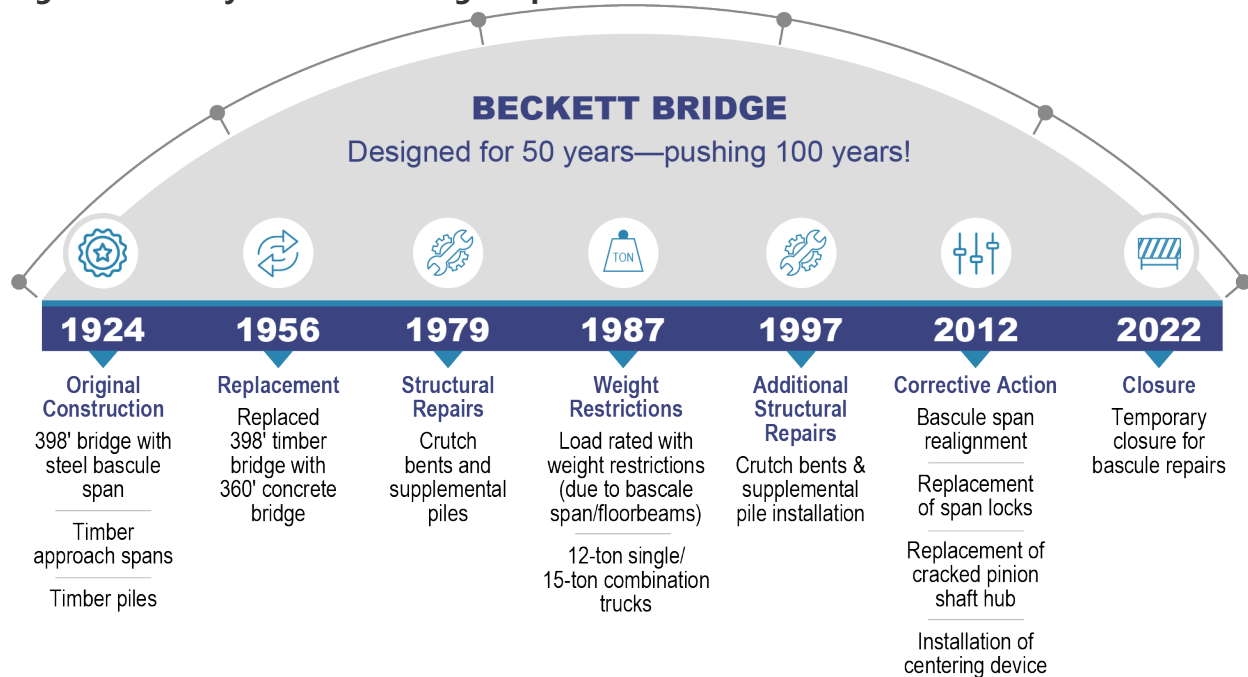
In addition to the NBI condition ratings, Beckett Bridge is considered functionally obsolete, primarily due to substandard clear roadway width of only 20 feet and substandard roadway safety features.⁵ The bridge was originally constructed in 1924, with an overall length of 398 feet, including a steel bascule span, timber approach spans, with 15 bridge spans to the west and 9 bridge spans to the east, all supported on timber piles. In 1956, the bridge was reconfigured to an overall length of 360 feet by replacing the timber approach spans with concrete spans, including five spans to the west and four to the east of the steel bascule span. The steel bascule span has been in service for almost 100 years, and the approach spans have been in service for more than 65 years, for a period that far exceeds the 50-year design life.

⁴ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge - Substructure NBIS Rating Memo (June 24, 2021)

⁵ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, Volume 1 (February 23, 2015)

The driven pile foundations have a long history of vertical settlement and horizontal movement and required structural repairs in 1979, major repairs including installation of crutch bents and supplemental piles in 1997, and numerous additional periodic repairs and adjustments after the crutch bent and supplemental pile installation including a major repair in 2012. The continued settlement and movement require frequent monitoring, surveying, inspections, and maintenance. The bridge was most recently closed due to repairs to the bascule steel span during the month of July 2022. (see **Figure 2** for a summary of repairs over the last century)

Figure 2. History of Beckett Bridge Repairs Over 100 Years



The bridge's substandard load-carrying capacity requires weight restrictions and currently limits commercial trucks, emergency vehicle, and school bus access. Detours are required for larger emergency vehicles, creating concerns for longer response times. Since 1987, the bridge has been posted for legal loads limited to 12-ton single-unit trucks and 15-ton combination trucks. This restriction currently affects larger trucks, school buses, and larger emergency rescue vehicles. **Without replacement the ongoing concerns regarding safety, reliability, and bridge closure will become a reality for thousands of daily users, not just the larger vehicles that are currently restricted from crossing the bridge.**

Given current conditions, **it is anticipated that the bridge will need to completely close to traffic within the next five to ten years.**⁶ As detailed in a technical memorandum prepared by the bridge design engineer of record, the bridge foundations have experienced ongoing settlement for at least the past 45 years that has not been fully arrested by repeated repair/rehabilitation attempts. The bridge is in poor condition and features an intolerable deck

⁶ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge - Estimate of Remaining Service Life Memo (January 24, 2024)

geometry. Based on a qualitative assessment of existing information and prior studies, the estimated remaining service life recommended for planning purposes is no more than five years at which point the continued settlement will likely require immediate replacement or extensive emergency repairs that are not justified by life-cycle cost analysis.

Maintenance, operation, and monitoring of this 100-year-old structure continue to increase annually to keep the bridge functioning. The Bridge replacement is projected to reduce the need for annual maintenance and repairs budget by 17.6 percent, from \$425,000 to \$350,000 (in 2024 dollars) following construction. This amounts to an annual savings of \$72,000 and the 30-year total discounted value of \$1.2 million (both amounts in 2022-dollar terms). Pinellas County has implemented a County-wide Asset Management Plan to improve bridge maintenance, operation, and monitoring.⁷ This program will organize the historical documentation, maintenance records, and plans in one central location for more effective tracking of inspections, repairs, and monitoring. Bridge closures result in longer travel times, increased fuel costs/emissions, increased traffic/noise through adjacent neighborhoods, increased emergency response, and increased congestion at the intersection of Tarpon Avenue and Pinellas Avenue.

The replacement bridge will meet all the current standards and incorporate best practices to eliminate the current safety deficiencies and create reliable multimodal infrastructure to serve the community needs while preserving the environment. The bridge will be more reliable, have lower maintenance and operations costs, and reduce impacts from bridge closures. The proposed Bridge Replacement is expected to retain some value beyond the 2057-time horizon, based on its 75-year useful lifespan, for which the project residual value was computed. The total monetized state of good repair benefits, based on the combined maintenance cost savings and residual value, are projected to amount to \$7.9 million (in 2022 dollars) in discounted terms.

Criterion #2: Safety and Mobility

Replacing the existing functionally obsolete and structurally deficient load posted bridge will improve safety, enhance mobility, and provide a sense of security for travelers crossing the bridge. The proposed new bridge will provide 6.5-foot-wide shoulders/bike lane and 6.5-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of the bridge, roadway and bridge lighting, ADA accommodations, safety bridge barriers/railings, a non-slip movable bridge surface, and increased navigational clearances. Heavier vehicles, including all emergency vehicles, will be able to travel over the bridge, which will improve emergency response and travel times and vehicle operating costs for various vehicles in the area.

Substandard lane widths, non-existent shoulders, and lack of adequate pedestrian facilities affect the safety of all movements across the bridge—locals, visitors, emergency services, and freight. The existing typical section consists of a 10-foot-wide travel lane and 2.16-foot-wide sidewalks separated by a curb in each direction. The bridge has no shoulders,

⁷ Appendix A: Pinellas County Asset Management Program

limited lighting, and the narrow sidewalks do not meet current ADA accessibility requirements. The minimum required lane and shoulder widths prescribed by AASHTO are not met. The bridge railings do not meet current standards for pedestrian safety or geometric and crash testing safety standards for vehicles. Approach guardrails and transitions and end treatments also do not meet current safety standards.

The existing curvature of the narrow roadways approaching the bridge encourages lower speeds through this residential area, where the speed limit is posted at 20 miles per hour. While these conditions support safer movements, reducing the severity of crashes on and around the bridge, there is still some concern about the lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which limits multimodal access and creates safety concerns. The community has expressed concerns about bicyclists that have been observed using narrow travel lanes and sidewalks, interweaving with vehicles and pedestrians. The area is vehicular-dependent, and the neighborhood streets in the surrounding areas have limited sidewalk and bicycle facilities. Access to recreational areas including local beaches and Pinellas Trail is limited since safe, multimodal options are not provided on the bridge.

A review of the historical crash data over the most recent five-year period (2018 – 2022) for the bridge project area, as extracted for this analysis from the University of Florida's Signal Four Analytics database, shows a total of four crashes, of which three were of property damage only (PDO) type, and one was a (non-incapacitating) injury type. The crashes involved lane departure, speeding, and a bicyclist. The replacement bridge and adjacent roadways will provide safer roadways by widening the bridge and approaches to provide separated facilities and shoulders for pedestrians and bicyclists, adding additional signage and lighting for crossings. The findings from the safety analysis show projected future benefits through 2057 (30-years of operations/benefits) from the Bridge Replacement project to total about \$6.3 million in discounted terms.

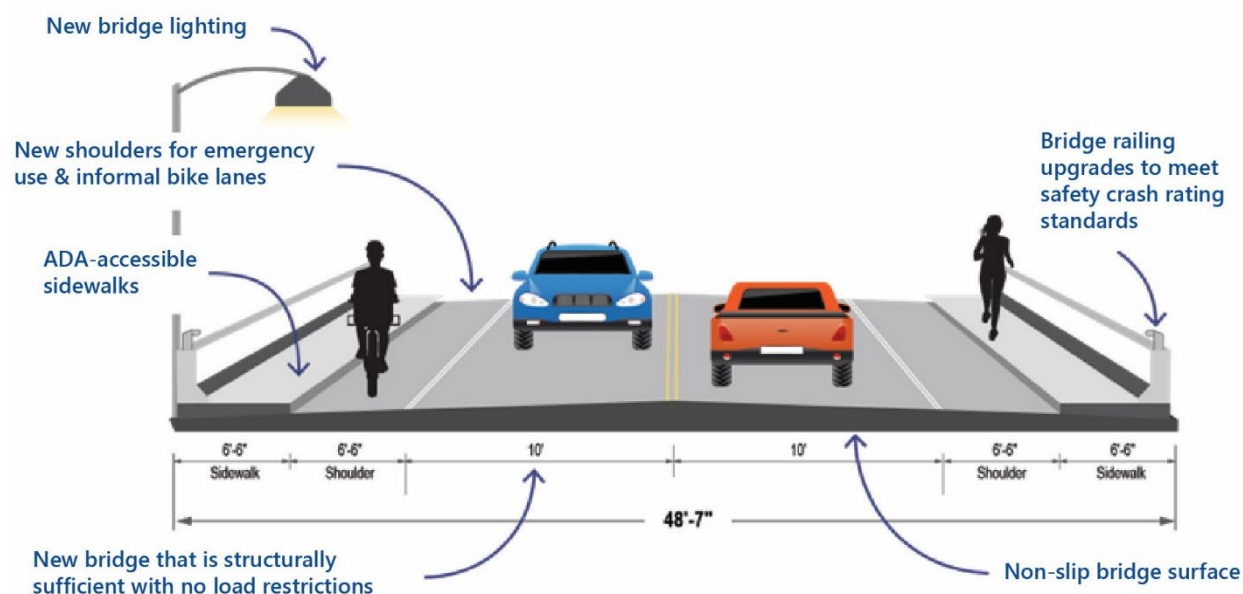
The replacement bridge will provide safer and more convenient travel by incorporating a variety of design features that will directly and indirectly improve the quality of life, mobility, and safety for the community. As shown in **Figure 3**, this includes:

- **Increased access and ADA accommodation.** The proposed bridge includes 6.5-foot-wide sidewalks and 6.5-foot-wide shoulders that can function as undesignated bicycle lanes on both sides of the bridge. The updated facilities will provide a dedicated space for pedestrians and bicyclists and provide the opportunity for school children to connect to nearby schools. (see proximity to school locations in **Figure 1**)
- **Safety shoulders.** New shoulders will allow emergency vehicles to pass during emergency situations.
- **Increased vertical and horizontal clearance.** Increasing the vertical clearance from 6 feet to 8.58 feet will allow more vessels to navigate the bridge in the closed position, reducing the number of bridge openings and vehicle queuing. The tip of the bascule leaf overhangs the fender with the leaf fully raised and does not provide unlimited vertical

clearance between the fenders. The existing horizontal clearance between the fenders when the bridge is closed is 25 feet, but only 14 feet when the bridge is opened. The proposed bridge would increase the horizontal clearance to 25 feet when the bridge is open (unlimited vertical clearance) and 30 feet when the bridge is closed (8.58 feet vertical clearance).

- **Bridge railing upgrades.** Standard crash rated safety bridge railings will be constructed to improve safety for any vehicle lane departures and improve crash survivability.
- **Lighting.** New bridge lighting will provide illumination for the roadway, bike shoulders, and sidewalks, improving safety and security for travelers on the bridge and approaches.
- **Non-slip bridge surface.** The bridge deck will include a solid concrete riding surface instead of the existing open-steel grating, which is undesirable for cyclists and can be slippery in wet weather conditions.
- **Improved pedestrian safety.** Due to right-of-way constraints along Spring Boulevard and Riverside Drive approaching the bridge, the design includes two rectangular rapid-flashing beacon-type pedestrian crossings at Chesapeake Drive and Venetian Court. These improvements include high-visibility crosswalk striping, two-way reflective signage, and push button-activated yellow flashing beacons.

Figure 3. Replacement Bridge Design Enhancements



The availability of and improvement to bicycle/pedestrian facilities on the Beckett Bridge will improve regional mobility by connecting Riverside Drive with proposed trail projects leading west to Howard Park and connecting east to the existing Pinellas Trail (see Figure 1). The Pinellas Trail runs the entire length of Pinellas County from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs, and improving connections to the trail is a goal of Forward Pinellas (Pinellas County MPO). The proposed Howard Park Trail is one of three other Community Trails identified in the

Advantage Pinellas: Active Transportation Plan.⁸ Aligned along Riverside Drive/N. Spring Boulevard, crossing over Beckett Bridge, the Howard Park Trail would connect the Pinellas Trail, south downtown Tarpon Springs, residential areas along the bayous, and Fred Howard Park, a Pinellas County Park located approximately 3.1 miles to the west that fronts the Gulf of Mexico.

Transportation in the community of Tarpon Springs is constrained by waterways and bayous. Beckett Bridge plays a major role in connecting the movement of people and goods to the daily needs of work, school, groceries, and emergency services, but if the bridge closes to all traffic, all travelers will have to detour along narrow residential streets causing undue burden and delay on infrastructure and motorists. As shown in **Figure 1**, the detour adds an additional 1.9 miles, according to the NBI database, and about 1 to 3 minutes of extra travel time, based on the predictive findings from the Pinellas County Safety and Emergency Services and Google Maps.⁹

Six public schools are located within three miles of the bridge, but the buses are not permitted to cross the load posted bridge and must detour around Whitcomb Bayou. Approximately 15-20 school buses could use the bridge daily if the load restrictions were not in place.¹⁰ Fire trucks and larger emergency vehicles are also not permitted to cross the bridge, and must take detours that increase response times. Two assisted living facilities are located just north of the bridge on Chesapeake Drive and have frequent calls for assistance, including cardiac events. Because a detour is required, the typical response times are longer for larger vehicles that would otherwise cross over the bridge.¹¹

Replacement of Beckett Bridge will improve the movement of people and goods by eliminating a detour for some vehicles, including heavy trucks and school buses. If the bridge is not replaced and closure is required, all vehicles will be forced to detour. According to Florida DOT's Florida Traffic Online tool, the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volume on Riverside Dr. over the Beckett Bridge in 2022 was 6,000 vehicles. The NBI shows 3,100 vehicles, and an average annual growth rate through 2042 of 1.12 percent. The new bridge will provide adequate capacity for future traffic demands for all vehicle types. The need for existing and future detours will be eliminated, and will also reduce the traffic impacts on the detour routes. If all vehicles are no longer required to detour, the projected travel time savings are \$70.3 million (in discounted terms, 2022 dollars).

Replacing the bridge will also result in a reduction in vehicle miles traveled. The detour around Whitcomb Bayou to the same location on N. Pinellas Avenue requires an additional 1.9 miles of travel. (see **Figure 1** for detour route) This increase in vehicle miles traveled results in higher vehicle operating costs valued at about \$18.4 million in discounted terms.

⁸ Forward Pinellas, <https://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Active-Transportation-Plan-r.pdf>

⁹ **Appendix A:** Pinellas County Emergency Response Time Analysis (January 2024)

¹⁰ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, Volume 1 (February 23, 2015)

¹¹ **Appendix A:** Pinellas County Emergency Response Time Analysis (January 2024)

The total safety and mobility benefits, based on the combined crash savings, travel time savings, and vehicle operating cost savings through 2057 are forecasted to amount to about \$95.0 million in discounted terms.

Criterion #3: Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

The Beckett Bridge Replacement project will contribute to enhancing the economic competitiveness of the area and potentially beyond through improvements in the mobility of people and goods within and across the region.

- **Improved freight movement and local supply chain.** The project will increase mobility for freight by providing a structurally sound connection to existing freight routes. The existing speed limit of 20 miles per hour through the project area can be increased, improving access to nearby truck routes. Freight access is currently limited due to the posted legal load on the bridge (12-ton single-unit trucks and 15-ton combination trucks), the speed limit, and existing speed bumps. The Northwest Tarpon Springs Industrial Area is a potential Regional Freight Activity Center located north of the Spring Boulevard/Riverside Drive and west of Alternate US 19 at Anclote Boulevard and Anclote Road. Freight Activity Centers are major generators of truck trips, which include long-haul trips extending beyond the region. While the current detour around Beckett Bridge necessitates adding over 1.5 miles to truck routes, the connecting routes, e.g., Tarpon Ave., and Alternate US 19 (SR 595), and Tarpon Avenue are all unrestricted truck routes. Replacing the Beckett Bridge will allow freight to use the bridge again, which will improve the movement of goods/supply chain in the area.
- **Job creation and regional impact.** Injection of capital infrastructure spending, such as that related to the proposed Bridge Replacement project, into the area economy will lead to direct construction and related professional services jobs, as well as indirect jobs supporting the suppliers of materials and equipment, and the induced jobs and earnings impacts to the larger economy in the region and beyond. Additionally, the project improvements can be expected to aid further business attraction and retention (with the related jobs) that would not otherwise occur.
- **Land use.** The Bridge Replacement will also improve access to the nearby land uses. The Beckett Bridge and nearby roadways connect to various residential, recreational, and commercial establishments. The addition of multimodal facilities will improve residents' access to jobs, health care services, public services, government offices, and recreational facilities. These will become more accessible with the enhanced vehicular as well as pedestrian and cycling circulation connecting to the area network, and may be better positioned to realize their full potential.

Criterion #4: Climate Change, Sustainability, Resiliency, and the Environment

Eliminating the required detours created by the ongoing load ratings on Beckett Bridge and bridge closures for repairs, will result in a reduction in air pollution. In addition, impacts to the historically disadvantaged communities along the detour route will be reduced. The replacement

bridge will be more resilient to storm surge, hurricanes, and sea level rise than the existing bridge.

- **Reduction in air pollution and greenhouse gases.** The project will reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by eliminating the need for the 1.9-mile detour, providing a more direct route, and reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled. The resulting environmental/emission savings, including changes related to carbon dioxide (CO₂), non-CO₂ three pollutants, and other environmental cost savings, are projected to amount to about \$4.9 million in discounted terms (through 2057).
- **Improve resiliency of at-risk infrastructure.** The bridge resiliency will be strengthened against the weathering effects and stresses of storm events of increased frequency and intensity and other probable future extreme weather events. Wave vulnerability during a storm event could affect the reliability of the existing bridge for evacuation. Riverside Drive/N Spring Drive is considered an extension of Tarpon Avenue, which is a designated emergency evacuation route. The replacement bridge is designed to survive a 100-year storm event and resist wave forces at the Extreme Event Limit State with a performance level of "Repairable Damage." The storm surge elevation at the bridge is anticipated to be approximately 11.5 feet; the existing bridge low member elevations are below the storm surge elevation. Wave heights at the bridge during a coastal storm event are not anticipated to be large. However, structural components of the existing bridge make it susceptible to damage from waves.
- **Provide drainage infrastructure to address flooding concerns.** The Beckett Bridge Replacement project provides a storm sewer system and outfalls to an area that does not currently have drainage infrastructure. Along with a larger Riverside Drainage improvement project, the bridge replacement will address repetitive flooding issues at Riverside Drive and Chesapeake Drive by adding stormwater infrastructure to manage runoff from the neighborhood streets.
- **Federally and/or state-listed plant and animal species.** One state-listed plant species and 27 federally and state-listed animal species were identified as having the potential to occur in the project area. Pinellas County has committed to avoid adverse impacts to these species and impact determination for each identified species.¹²

Criterion #5: Equity and Quality of Life

The Beckett Bridge Replacement project will incorporate non-vehicular transportation improvements that will increase corridor reliability and mobility options. The addition of sidewalks and wider shoulders will improve access and conditions on the bridge that will boost quality of life for nearby disadvantaged communities. This project contributes to the Equity and Quality of Life criteria by engaging with and listening to the community to develop a project that enhances the quality of life by improving active transportation facilities and travel times for school buses and emergency response vehicles.

¹² **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, Volume 1 (February 23, 2015)

Community engagement was undertaken throughout project development. As documented throughout **Appendix A**, an extensive, project-specific community engagement process was implemented during the PD&E Study (2012-2016), design phase (2016-2022), and right-of-way acquisition process. The outreach provided all affected communities, including the nearby Historically Disadvantaged Community, an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process. This included the following activities:

- A large stakeholder mailing list and project-specific web page on the Pinellas County website to notify property owners, local government staff and officials, agency representatives, special interest groups, and other interested parties throughout the study. Opportunities for community stakeholder and agency input were provided throughout the duration of the study.
- Two large public meetings, the Alternatives Public Workshop (January 23, 2013) and the Public Hearing (February 26, 2014) were held. All public comments were considered during the development of alternatives during the study.
- Numerous meetings and presentations were given to local governments and local community organizations, including the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, the City of Tarpon Springs, the Pinellas County MPO, the Tarpon Springs Yacht Club Board, Tarpon Springs Chamber of Commerce, Tarpon Springs Rotary Club, and the Tarpon Springs Historical Society.
- A cultural resource committee was also established to address historic resource issues during the study. This committee included representatives from Pinellas County, FDOT, FHWA, the SHPO, the City of Tarpon Springs, and the Tarpon Springs Area Historic Society. The cultural resource committee held three meetings between October 2012 and April 2014.
- An aesthetics committee was established during the design phase of the project. The committee included representatives from Pinellas County, the SHPO, FDOT, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Tarpon Springs Area Historic Society, Tarpon Springs Yacht Club, the City of Tarpon Springs, and the local community at large. The committee held meetings on December 7, 2016, March 1, 2017, May 10, 2017, and March 22, 2018. The committee's tasks included participating in the development of a site-specific, context-sensitive aesthetic design for the proposed new bridge and developing a design to display significant elements salvaged from the old bridge that cannot be reused.
- A public meeting is planned in 2025 to update the residents and other stakeholders after a contractor is selected for construction.

Addition of nonvehicular facilities. Feedback from the community during the planning and design phases included concerns about the substandard existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the bridge and the need to provide improved, safer facilities for non-vehicular active transportation across the bridge. The current bridge's typical section has one, 10-foot-wide travel lane in each direction and 2.16-foot-wide sidewalks separated by a curb on both sides of the bridge. There are no bicycle lanes or shoulders on the bridge. To avoid detouring around the

bridge, bicyclists have been observed using narrow travel lanes and sidewalks, interweaving with vehicles and pedestrians.

The proposed new, wider bridge includes 6.5-foot-wide sidewalks and 6.5-foot-wide shoulders on each side of the bridge. The new shoulders will function as undesignated bicycle lanes for cyclists. These improvements will enhance mobility in the community with minimal impacts to adjacent property owners. Because of the limited right-of-way west of the bridge, a 6-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed only on the north side of the roadway, which will connect to the existing sidewalk. East of the bridge, the approach roadway section consists of two, 10-foot-wide through lanes (one in each direction), variable width outside shoulders that can function as undesignated bicycle lanes, and 6.5-foot-wide sidewalks on each side of the roadway.

The enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the new bridge will provide an important connection between the regional Pinellas Trail and Howard Park located west of the bridge on the Gulf of Mexico. The 155-acre Howard Park welcomes approximately 2 million visitors each year. The proposed Howard Park Trail from Howard Park on the Gulf of Mexico to the Pinellas Trail along Riverside Drive/North Spring Boulevard, crossing the Beckett Bridge, is included in Forward Pinellas' (Pinellas County MPO) current Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).¹³ These enhancements will also yield health and amenity benefits to the users of improved active transportation in the area.

Improved travel time for community resources. Replacement of Beckett Bridge will have a positive effect on access to community resources, including two fire stations, one police station, one hospital, five religious institutions, and five schools within 1.5 miles of the bridge. In addition, the Pinellas County Health Department operates a health center in the City of Tarpon Springs, approximately 1.2 miles from the Beckett Bridge. Due to the existing load restrictions, school buses and large emergency vehicles are prohibited from crossing the bridge, creating higher costs and travel times for these vehicles. After replacement, approximately 15-20 school buses and all emergency vehicles and trucks can be re-routed to travel along Spring Boulevard/Riverside Drive and cross the Beckett Bridge.¹⁴ Replacing the bridge will save time and money for the operation of school buses in the community and will improve emergency response times for the community.

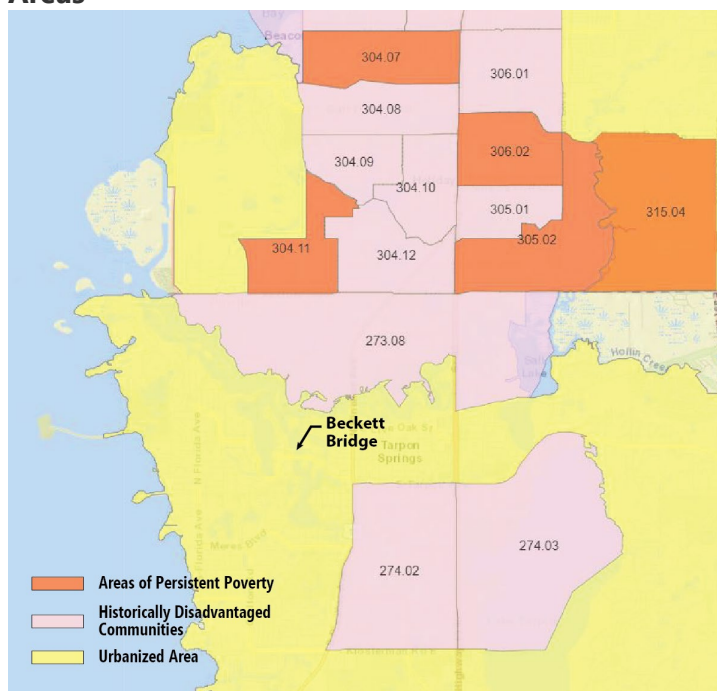
¹³ Forward Pinellas, <https://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Active-Transportation-Plan-r.pdf>

¹⁴ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge PD&E Study PER, 2015

Historically Disadvantaged Community.

As shown in Figure 4, the closest Historically Disadvantaged Community (Census Tract 275.02) is located approximately 0.3-miles south of the project area, on the south side of Whitcomb Bayou. Emergency vehicles, freight, school buses, and other vehicles required to avoid the load-restricted bridge must travel through this community to detour around the bridge to get to key destinations on the east or west sides of the bridge. This results in a disproportionate amount of detoured traffic and associated emissions and noise for the area's disadvantaged communities, which include older populations, minority populations, lower income, and health disadvantaged populations.

Figure 4. Areas of Persistent Poverty, Historically Disadvantaged Communities and Urbanized Areas¹⁵



Improved medical response. The existing load limits on Beckett Bridge restrict access for fire and medical emergency vehicles. The new bridge will allow all vehicles, including large emergency vehicles, to respond on the most direct route, reducing travel times while increasing survivability and quality of life. The Tarpon Springs Fire Rescue has three stations within three miles of the bridge, each with unique specialty equipment and operators. The need for any of the three stations to respond quickly is critical when seconds matter in life-saving situations. The Tarpon Springs Fire and Rescue Department was dispatched nearly 200 times and 28 times for cardiac related events in 2023 to the residential area west of Beckett Bridge around Whitcomb Bayou. This area of Tarpon Springs is currently served by three fire rescue stations, with emergency vehicles dispatched from two of which (# 69 and #71) presently require to take a detour route (due to weight load restrictions) to respond to patients on the west side of the bridge, including those at the assisted living/nursing home facilities located near the bridge (see **Figure 1**). Among many emergency calls placed to the two fire rescue stations in 2023, seven pertained to urgent need to assist patients with cardiac related problems, and required a detour. Based on the predictive analysis conducted by the Pinellas County Safety and Emergency Services, combined with the 2023 cardiac-related responses from the two stations, the emergency response time differential between the No-Build (bridge barrier/detour at 6 min and 42 sec) vs. Build (no bridge barrier at 5 min and 32 sec) scenarios is a weighted average of 1 min

¹⁵ DOT Grant Project Location Verification Map Viewer, <https://maps.dot.gov/BTS/GrantProjectLocationVerification/>

and 10 sec.¹⁶ Such extended response times during a cardiac arrest or critical emergency represent a substantial amount of time in life-and-death situations.

The total monetized quality of life and equity benefits, based on the combined nonvehicular health and amenity benefits and the improved emergency response times for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest cases, are projected to amount to \$61.2 million in discounted terms.

Criterion #6: Innovation

The proposed replacement bridge offers multiple innovative design technology improvements. The innovative channel shift will increase the number of power craft that will be able to pass under the bridge without requiring a bridge opening and the associated travel delays. Additionally, the innovative drive mechanism of the new bascule bridge will provide improved access for boats since the movable span can rotate or stop in any position of operation.

The design for the replacement bridge incorporates several thoughtful and sustainable elements to create a consistent, long-term service life and preserve the local historical heritage, including:

- **Accelerated construction will reduce detour by 6 months.** The innovative design calls for full off-site prefabrication and testing of the movable span, movable span machinery, and movable span control system. This reduces the time required in the field, during the detour, for installation, commissioning, and testing of these critical elements. In addition, the concrete caps for the two abutments and four intermediate piers are precast off-site and assembled onto the piles in one section. This innovative approach will accelerate the bridge construction reducing the related detour by six months (from 30 to 24). This results in the innovation benefit of about \$0.6 million in discounted terms.
- **Redundancy in operating machinery and custom design.** Mechanical equipment supporting the bascule bridge has been designed to include redundant elements so backup systems reduce bridge closures/maintenance. The new bridge design has a bespoke machinery configuration with the machinery mounted to the fixed bascule pier. The complex motion of the movable span as it opens, a combination of rotation and translation as it rolls on the track, is accommodated by a pair of cranks, driven by an electro-mechanical drive composed of electric motors, a primary gear reducer and pair of planetary reducers. This solution provides improved access and allows access with the movable span rotating or stopped in any position of operation.
- **Mirror of pier arrangement and channel shift.** Working with the USCG and the local boating community, the design flips the main and side channel positions. This moved the bascule pier (the critical pier regarding any settlement) away from the relict sink hole and allowed the side channel to better coincide with the high point of the bridge, thereby maximizing the vertical clearance without opening the bridge. Moving the bascule pier away from the relict sink hole reduced the required size and cost of the foundations and the risk of any future settlement. The new bridge will have 7.8 feet of vertical clearance in

¹⁶ **Appendix A:** Pinellas County Emergency Response Time Analysis (January 2024)

the main channel and 11.0 feet in the side channel. This will increase the number of power craft that can pass under the bridge without requiring a bridge opening and creating the associated traffic delays.

- **Innovative historic preservation.** The project includes a monument and viewing deck fabricated from the sections of the existing historic bridge.

V. Benefit-Cost Analysis Summary

This section summarizes the findings of the Beckett Bridge Replacement project's Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) performed in accordance with the latest US DOT Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs¹⁷, and using the BIP BCA Tool.

The table below presents the project BCA findings. **All monetary values are expressed in 2022 constant dollars.** The period of analysis used to estimate benefits and costs related to the differences between the With (Build) and the Without (No-Build) the Bridge Replacement scenarios runs from 2012 to 2057 (46 years overall). This evaluation timeframe includes the initial capital deployment (2012 through 2027), and 30 full years (2028 through 2057) of operations during which benefits accrue.

As shown in **Table 5**, with a 3.1 percent real discount rate, the total monetized benefits of the proposed Bridge Replacement project are forecast at \$169.4 million (in present discounted value terms) while the total discounted costs of the project are forecast at \$32.8 million. This results in a **Benefit-Cost Ratio of about 5.2**, and a **net present value (NPV) of about \$136.7 million**.

Among the project benefits, travel time benefits (\$70.3 million, in present value terms over 30 years) are projected to be the largest category, followed by other benefits (combined emergency response improvements, and innovation at \$59.8 million), vehicle operating cost savings, residual value (\$6.7 million), safety (\$6.3 million), emission savings along with other environmental benefits (\$4.9 million), facility amenity benefits (\$1.9 million), and maintenance benefits (\$1.2 million).

Overall, these results indicate that this Bridge Replacement project looks strong from an economic feasibility standpoint as the projected benefits outweigh the projected costs by about 5.2 to 1, yielding about \$136.7 million in discounted net benefits.

Details pertaining to the methodology, assumptions, and additional results presentation related to the BCA of this project are presented in the BCA Narrative (see **Appendix D**).

¹⁷ US DOT, Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs, December 2023.

Table 5. Benefit-Cost Analysis Results (in millions of 2022\$)*

Benefit and Cost Metrics	2012-2057 Totals
	Discounted at 3.1% ¹⁸
<i>Project Benefits</i>	
Safety	\$6.3
Travel Time	\$70.3
Vehicle Operating Cost	\$18.4
Health and Amenity	\$1.9
CO ₂ Emissions	\$4.2
Non-CO ₂ Emission	\$0.5
Other Environmental	\$0.1
Maintenance	\$1.2
Residual Value	\$6.7
Other Benefits	\$59.8
Total Discounted Benefits	\$169.4
Total Discounted Costs	\$32.8
<i>Key Metrics</i>	
Benefit-Cost Ratio	5.2
Net Present Value (NPV)	\$136.7

* Unless specified otherwise. The numbers are rounded.

VI. Project Readiness & Environmental Risk

Technical Feasibility & Technical Competency

Pinellas County is the owner and direct recipient of funds for the Beckett Bridge Replacement project. The County's leadership has a proven track record of delivering major studies and projects including roadway, bridge, and stormwater improvements. Some specific examples include the following:

Studies:

- Beckett Bridge Project Development & Environment Study
- Dunedin Causeway Bridge Project Development & Environment Study
- 126th Avenue Project Development & Environment Study
- San Martin Boulevard Bridge Project Development & Environment Study

Projects:

- Belleair Causeway Bridge Replacement (\$72.6M)
- Bryan Dairy Road Widening (\$10.6M)
- Keystone Road Widening (\$31.6M)
- Ft De Soto Bay Pier Replacement (\$4.46M)
- Old Coachman Road Bridge Replacement (\$6.87M)

¹⁸ This discount rate (including the 2% for CO₂ emissions) is in accordance with the US DOT BCA Guidance, December 2023.

The County's design consultant, Hardesty & Hanover, LLC provided a cost estimate for the project in December 2023 of \$19,250,545. The final estimate was increased to \$29,144,000 based on unit price revisions and a 6.5% escalation factor. The utility relocation cost estimate has been recently updated by the City of Tarpon Springs (\$3,925,000). (see **Appendix B** for detailed cost estimates).

Final design is complete. The County is finalizing acquisition of construction easements for the project and anticipates advertising the construction project in fall 2024. Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2025 and will take approximately 24 months. The City of Tarpon Springs will relocate the utilities under the bridge prior to demolition of the existing bridge. The bridge will be closed, requiring a detour around the bridge, for 8 to 12 months. All technical documents including final PD&E Study documents and the Type 2 CE (which includes project commitments) are found in Appendix A. Final plans are also included in **Appendix A**.

Pinellas County will successfully deliver the project in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements. As described below and in the supporting documentation in **Appendix A**, the project will be ready to advance to construction after FDOT approves the "Construction Advertisement Reevaluation" and an expanded State Submerged Land Easement is obtained from FDEP. Construction plans will include requirements to secure all remaining approvals and permits that will be obtained during construction. All requirements included in the Memorandum of Agreement with SHPO have been completed except those that are required during construction.

Project Schedule

Pinellas County understands how to deliver this project on budget and on-time, meeting the requirements of the grant and the expectations of the community. All pre-construction planning, design, approvals, and environmental permitting have been completed. Acquisition of construction easements and easements required by FDEP to demonstrate sufficient upland interest for an expanded State Submerged Land Easement required for construction is nearing completion. Pinellas County and the City of Tarpon Springs will enter into a Joint Project Agreement (JPA) for the relocation of the utilities west of the bridge. The County anticipates advertising the construction project in fall 2024. Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2025 and will take approximately 24 months.

Figure 5 outlines the schedule milestones of Beckett Bridge Replacement Project. All preconstruction activities will be completed to allow grant funds to be obligated sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline (September 2026) for FY2023 BIP funds.

Figure 5. Project Schedule & Approvals



Required Approvals

Environmental Permits & Reviews

A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study with preliminary design was conducted between 2012 and 2016. The study resulted in a Type 2 CE, prepared in accordance with NEPA, that was approved by FHWA on January 25, 2016.¹⁹ Based on the final design plans that were completed in 2022, acquisition of 0.1 acre of temporary construction easements and 0.01 acre of permanent construction easements is required. The right-of-way acquisition is nearing completion. The County will be requesting an expanded State Submerged Lands Easement (SSLE) from FDEP when right-of-way acquisition is complete.

A Right-of-Way Reevaluation was submitted to FHWA for review in 2023, but its approval was on hold until funding was secured.²⁰ The reevaluation documented minor changes in wetland impacts and ongoing acquisition of construction easements along the project corridor. Since the project is partially funded by FDOT, an Advance to Construction Reevaluation is required by FDOT prior to advertising the project for construction. This is currently being prepared.

The Beckett Bridge Project's environmental risk is low. A summary of technical findings from the original CE is provided below:

- Replacement of the bridge will have a positive impact on access to community resources because school buses and large emergency vehicles that currently are prohibited from crossing the bridge will be able to cross.

¹⁹ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge NEPA Type 2 Categorical Exclusion, Documentation (January 19, 2016)

²⁰ **Appendix A:** Beckett Bridge Environmental Document Re-evaluation Form (August 26, 2022)

- Beckett Bridge was deemed eligible for listing in the NRHP in 2013. Ample evidence was provided to support that a new movable bridge would be preferable to rehabilitation. Pinellas County, FHWA, FDOT, and the SHPO signed an MOA that includes a Historic American Engineering Record document of the bridge and mitigation measures.
- The project will impact approximately 0.01 acres of mangrove swamp and 0.02 acres of oyster bars. The project received the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) General Permit, so no mitigation is required.
- The project may, but is not likely to adversely affect, federally or state-listed species.
- Construction will require a complete closure of the bridge for about 8-12 months. The total time needed for construction is approximately 24 months.

The approved Type 2 CE can be found in **Appendix A**, as well as the recent Right-of-Way Reevaluation that includes the list of the project commitments. All required permits listed below are still valid. The tree permit will be obtained by the contractor prior to construction.

- **Department of the Army Section 404 Permit.** Nationwide Permit (NWP) 14 (No. SAJ-2010-03567) issued July 10, 2023. Permit valid until March 14, 2026.
- **USCG Bridge Permit.** Bridge Permit (No. 6-19-7) issued August 19, 2019 by USCG Bridge Permit (No. 6-19-7) void if construction (including contract letting, utility relocation, stormwater improvements, etc.) does not begin within 3 years of permit issuance. An extension is required if work is not completed within 5 years, or August 19, 2024. The County has submitted a request for permit extension.
- **Environmental Resource Permit (ERP/SWFWMD).** General ERP (No. 47042798.001) issued March 10, 2023; General ERP expires February 14, 2028.
- **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.** Construction contractor to obtain prior to construction.
- **Tree Permit, City of Tarpon Springs.** The City of Tarpon Springs has agreed to issue one all-inclusive permit to Pinellas County for removal of all trees on private property within the City limits required to complete the proposed construction. Construction contractor to obtain prior to construction.

State & Local Approvals

The Beckett Bridge Replacement project has high levels of local, regional, and state support. The community expressed support for the project during the planning, permitting and design phases, and were heavily involved as part of aesthetics committee during the design phase. In addition to support from City, County, and State leaders, the adjacent neighbors including the Tarpon Springs Yacht Club have provided letters of support for the project and BIP funding (see **Appendix F**). The Beckett Bridge Replacement (#001037A) is included in Forward Pinellas TIP FY2023/24-2027/2028 (adopted July 12, 2023). FDOT has committed funding in its work program to support Pinellas County. Beyond the construction approvals detailed previously, no other local approvals including Tribal government, state agency or local approvals are required to advance the project to construction.

Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

Forward Pinellas is the land use and transportation planning agency for Pinellas County, and is responsible for developing Pinellas County's LRTP, referred to as Advantage Pinellas. Based on the 2045 LRTP, adopted November 13, 2019, Replacement of the Beckett Bridge is identified in Advantage Pinellas Plan. Project costs will be updated in the FY24 Pinellas County CIP.

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Pinellas County recognizes that all projects come with potential risks. Due to ongoing supply issues, the County understands that project costs may increase, and that additional funding may be needed to complete the project. During the contracting period, Pinellas County is committed to increasing its funding using local tax revenues to cover any shortfalls that may emerge during contract negotiations or construction.

VII. Administration Priorities & Departmental Strategic Plan Goals

The Beckett Bridge Replacement project addresses the administration priorities and Departmental Strategic Plan Goals as follows:

- **Safety.** As demonstrated in Criterion #2, the bridge replacement includes correction of substandard clear roadway width of 20 feet that lack shoulders, as well as inadequate sidewalks, lighting, and railings that create safety concerns for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists traveling over the bridge. Increasing the load-rating will permit heavier vehicles, including all emergency vehicles to travel over the bridge and improve emergency response and travel times and operating costs.
- **Climate Change & Sustainability.** Detailed in Criterion #4, implementation of the project will result in a reduction in air pollution due to avoided detouring. By elevating the bridge structure, resiliency will be strengthened against the weathering effects and stresses of storm events, as well as provide an evacuation route for 5,400 residents.
- **Equity.** Public outreach was a critical component of the planning, permitting and design phases, as shown in Criterion #5. A review of the impacts and benefits of the project on the adjacent neighborhoods indicated that reduction of the detour, providing safe, nonvehicular access, and reducing travel time will improve access to employment and recreational opportunities, and enhance quality of life.
- **Workforce Development, Job Quality and Wealth Creation.** Pinellas County has instituted a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation requirement policy to maximize opportunities for qualifying firms to participate in County contracts, including construction contracts. An SBE is defined as a local business that is independently owned and which is not dominant in its field of operation. As part of the bridge contractor procurement, the County will ensure that the selected contractor will include SBE qualified firm participation to support the County's annual hiring goal.