



PINELLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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CHARLIE JUSTICE
COMMISSIONER

August 16, 2022

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of Pinellas County Government for consideration of the design costs for the Dunedin Causeway bridges replacement project to be selected for funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation for the 2022 Bridge Investment Program. The overall project consists of replacing the existing bridges with a tide relief bridge and mid-level movable bridge. The bridges are the sole connection from the City of Dunedin to Honeymoon Island State Park and residential living. The grant funding request is for design fees only as construction is not anticipated to begin until 2025-2026.

The Dunedin Causeway provide access to Honeymoon Island, which has the second biggest economic impact of state parks in Florida with 1.6 million annual visitors, over \$140 million in direct economic impact and nearly 2,000 jobs supported. Honeymoon Island is also the ferry terminal for access to another unspoiled state park, Caladesi Island. The Dunedin Causeway, located along the existing bridges, is a popular area for citizens and visitors to enjoy recreational activities such as walking, jogging and biking on the designated trail and swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, and fishing in the Intracoastal Waterway. The importance of maintaining the Causeway is well documented and understood by the citizens and local governments. The proposed new bridge will meet all current safety standards and provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The need for frequent repairs will be eliminated.

Located on the Gulf Coast of Florida, Pinellas County is home to nearly one million residents, with an additional 15.5 million visitors each year, including seasonal residents and tourists. The County values the significance the shoreline along the Causeway brings to the community, both economically and as a favorite destination for citizens and visitors to enjoy natural Florida.

Pinellas County government confidently supports investing in the longevity of the Dunedin Causeway. The project directly aligns with the County's Strategic Plan goal to *Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality* by investing in infrastructure to meet current and future needs, and in doing so, providing safe and efficient transportation systems to support the efficient flow of motorists, commerce, and regional connectivity.

Sincerely,

Charlie Justice
Chairman, Pinellas County Commission
Commissioner, At-Large District 3



APPROVED AS TO FORM

By: Brendan Mackesey
Office of the County Attorney

ATTEST: KEN BURKE, CLERK

By: