

November 20, 2018

David Gwynn
FDOT District Seven Secretary of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation District Seven
11201 McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL, 33612

Dear Secretary Gwynn:

Each day, more than 170,000 vehicles cross the Howard Frankland Bridge between Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, a linchpin of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System in Tampa Bay. That traffic must interact with the State Road 60 interchange that connects the Westshore District and Tampa International Airport. With four lanes of traffic coming from the east and the west along I-275, and the Veterans Expressway and SR 60 coming into the interchange from the north and south, the SR 60/I-275 interchange is the most significant transportation bottleneck in the Tampa Bay region. The Howard Frankland Bridge is four lanes wide coming into the interchange and, with exit ramps for SR 60, narrows to just two through lanes, creating daily recurring traffic congestion for traffic within and moving through Tampa.

The Westshore District and Pinellas County's Gateway area at the western end of the bridge comprise one of the largest employment areas in the Southeast, serving a rapidly growing regional population of more than 2.5 million residents. Despite this situation, the Florida Department of Transportation currently shows no construction funding for the interchange within the next five years. Planned improvements will include local street connectivity in the Westshore District to strengthen local access, improve public health and safety, and reduce pressure on the regional roadway network.

Resolving this critical transportation bottleneck will have a significant economic benefit for the entire Tampa Bay region. To improve travel time reliability, safety, and personal mobility, it is imperative that FDOT allocate funds for reconstruction of this critical interchange at the earliest opportunity.

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners supports making the reconstruction of the I-275/SR 60 interchange the top transportation project priority for the Tampa Bay region.

We look forward to continued collaboration on this priority as well as other projects within District Seven.

Sincerely,