



## The Public Hearing is being held in the following location:

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 29, 2015  
**PLACE:** First Baptist Church  
Heritage Hall  
1900 Gandy Boulevard N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702  
**TIME:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Open House  
6:30 p.m. Formal Presentation

## We Want Your Input!

A successful PD&E study depends on the public's participation in the study process. We encourage your input throughout the study.

To provide comments, ask questions, and make suggestions about the study, please contact:

Sara Hall, PE  
Project Manager  
FDOT District Seven  
11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-500  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 975-6173  
(800) 226-7220  
sara.hall@dot.state.fl.us

Kirk Bogen, PE  
Environmental Management Engineer  
FDOT District Seven  
11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-500  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 975-6448  
(800) 226-7220  
kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us

## Media Contact

Kristen Carson  
Public Information Officer  
FDOT District Seven  
11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-100  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 975-6202  
(800) 226-7220  
kristen.carson@dot.state.fl.us

## Dear Property Owner or Interested Citizen:

You are invited to attend and participate in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, public hearing for a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study of I-275 (SR 93) from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North, Pinellas County, Florida. This public hearing is being held to allow interested persons the opportunity to provide comments concerning the location, conceptual design, and social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed improvements. The 16.3 mile study evaluates the need for operational improvements and congestion management for the corridor.

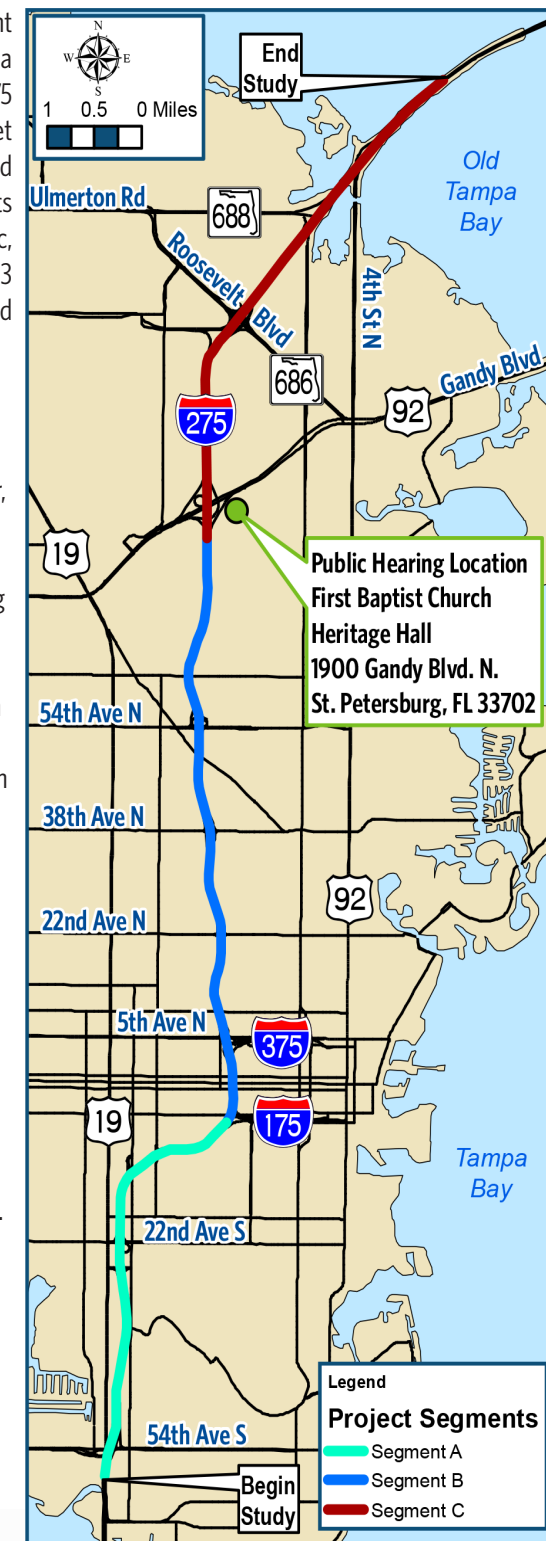
This letter also serves as notice to property owners (pursuant to F.S. 339.155) that all or a portion of their property is within 300 feet of the edge of right-of-way of the proposed project. However, this does not mean that all properties will be directly affected.

Department representatives will be available at the public hearing beginning at 5:30 p.m. to answer questions and discuss the project informally. Draft project documents and other project related materials will be displayed and a PowerPoint presentation will run continuously during the open house. At 6:30 p.m., FDOT representatives will begin the formal portion of the hearing, which will provide an opportunity for attendees to make formal oral public comments. Following the formal portion of the hearing, the informal open house will resume and continue until 7:30 p.m. A court reporter will be available to receive comments in a one-on-one setting. Written comments can also be submitted at the hearing, mailed to the FDOT, or emailed to sara.hall@dot.state.fl.us. All comments must be postmarked or emailed by **Friday, October 9, 2015**. The FDOT welcomes and appreciates everyone's participation in the study.

If you have questions about the project or the scheduled hearing, please contact Sara Hall, Project Manager, at (813) 975-6173, sara.hall@dot.state.fl.us or Kirk Bogen, Environmental Management Engineer, at (813) 975-6448, kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,

Ming Gao, PE  
Intermodal Systems Development Manager



I-275 PD&E Study  
Florida Department of Transportation  
District Seven  
MS 7-500  
11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, Florida 33612-6454



## Project Documents

Draft project documents and other project-related materials will be available for review at the following locations from Tuesday, September 8, 2015 to Friday, October 9, 2015, and on the project website, <http://active.fdotd7studies.com/i275/54th-to-4th/>

**FDOT - District Seven**  
11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612-6454  
(800) 226-7220  
Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**St. Petersburg Public Library - North Branch**  
861 70th Avenue N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702  
(727) 893-7214  
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday, 10:00 - 6:00 p.m.

**St. Petersburg Public Library - South Branch**  
2300 Roy Hanna Drive S.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33712  
(727) 893-7244  
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday, Noon - 6:00 p.m.

## Right-of-Way Acquisition Procedure

We understand that when a transportation project proposes the acquisition of private property, you may have questions and concerns. To better educate and inform you about the right-of-way acquisition process and your rights, the department has created real estate acquisition and relocation brochures. These brochures and other education materials will be available at the public hearing.

Copies of the brochures may also be found on our website:  
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rightofway/Documents.shtm>

We are interested in hearing your concerns and answering your questions. We also encourage you to speak with the departments' Project Manager or a Right-of-Way Representative at your convenience.

## Non-Discrimination Laws and Regulations Compliance

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Lee Royal, Government Liaison Administrator, at (813) 975-6427, (800) 226-7220, or email: lee.royal@dot.state.fl.us at least 7 working days in advance of the hearing.

## En Español

Si usted tiene preguntas o comentarios o si simplemente desea mas informacion sobre este Proyecto, favor de ponerse en contacto con la senora Elba Lopez, al teléfono (813) 975-6403 o correo electrónico elba.lopez@dot.state.fl.us.

### What is a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study?

A PD&E study is a comprehensive evaluation of social, cultural, economic, and environmental effects associated with a proposed transportation improvement. This analysis, along with public input, enables the FDOT in cooperation with other state/federal agencies and local governments, to determine the location and future design of the proposed improvements.

### Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to provide for operational improvements that maximize capacity within the I-275 corridor, improve lane continuity, and connect I-275 within Pinellas County to the future network of express lanes planned for the Tampa Bay Region. Improvements are needed within the I-275 corridor to help improve existing traffic congestion, enhance safety, and better accommodate future travel demands associated with projected growth in employment and population. The addition of express lanes is included in the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

I-275 is a vital link in the local and regional transportation network and serves as a critical evacuation route. As a major north-south corridor through Pinellas County, I-275 links the Tampa Bay Region with the remainder of the state and the nation supporting commerce, trade, and tourism. Preserving the operational integrity and regional functionality of I-275 is critical to the mobility and economy of the Tampa Bay Region.

### Project Description

I-275 is a limited access urban interstate highway facility that runs in a north and south direction through Pinellas County. The posted speed limit is 65 miles per hour. Within the project limits, I-275 is a divided highway comprised of two travel lanes with one auxiliary lane in each direction from south of 54th Avenue South to I-375. From I-375 to north of 4th Street North, I-275 is a divided highway comprised of three travel lanes with one auxiliary lane in each direction. Due to a series of existing left-hand entrance and exit ramps, there are no continuous travel lanes on I-275 in the southbound direction and only one continuous travel lane in the northbound direction. In order to improve traffic flow on I-275, operational improvements are needed to increase the number of continuous lanes.

### What Improvement Alternatives are Being Considered? No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative assumes that, with the exception of the improvements that are already planned and funded, the existing conditions would remain for I-275 within the project limits and only routine maintenance activities would occur until the design year 2040. The advantages of the No-Build Alternative include no new costs for design and construction, no effects to existing land uses and natural resources, and no disruption to the public during construction. However, the disadvantages of the No-Build Alternative are the project’s purpose and need would not be met and the project would result in increased congestion and user costs. The traffic analyses for this alternative indicates

that by the year 2040, a significant portion of the I-275 Corridor would operate below acceptable levels of service. However, this alternative will remain a viable alternative throughout the PD&E Study process.

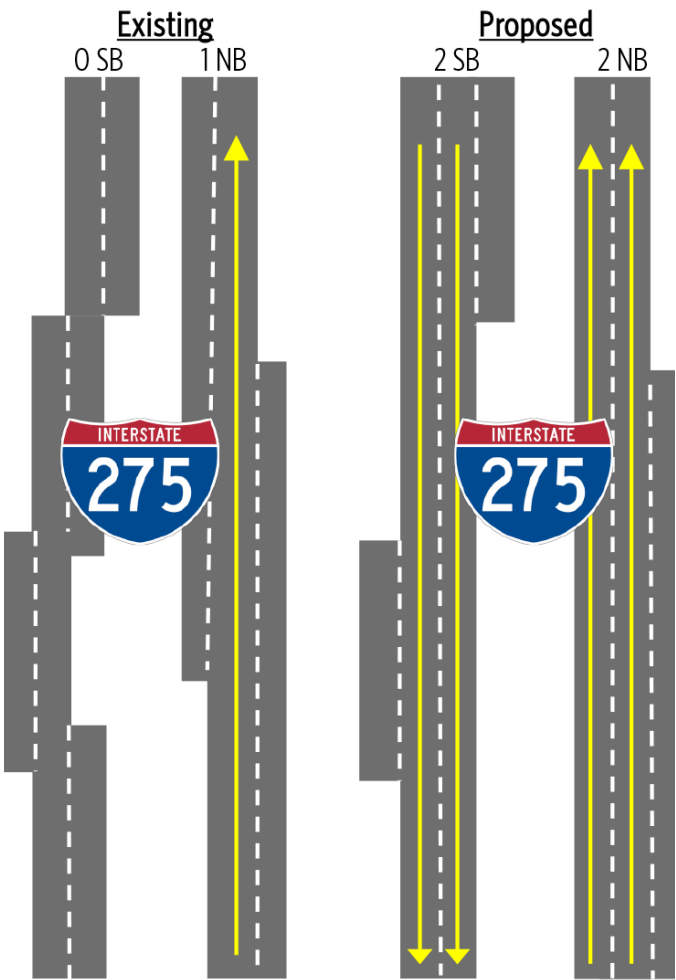
### Recommended Build Alternative

The Recommended Build Alternative consists of providing operational improvements to increase the number of continuous lanes on I-275 to two continuous lanes in each direction along 10.6 miles of the corridor, and to provide toll lanes for the remaining 5.7 miles of I-275. In order to describe the specific types of improvements proposed for the study corridor, I-275 is divided into three segments:

- Segment A (from south of 54th Avenue South to I-175)
- Segment B (from I-175 to south of Gandy Boulevard)
- Segment C (from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North)

### Segments A and B

The Recommended Alternative consists of providing intermittent widening and restriping of existing lanes to form two continuous lanes on I-275 in each direction. The graphic below illustrates the existing and proposed number of continuous lanes on I-275. The proposed lane continuity improvements will enhance traffic operations by minimizing the number of lane changes occurring on I-275.

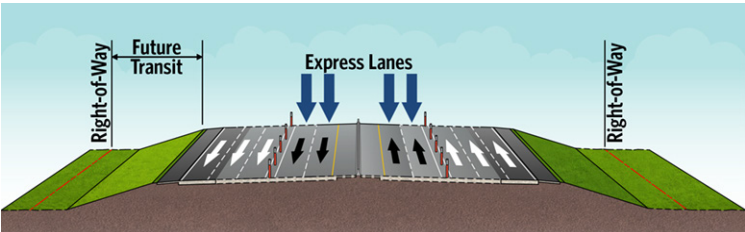


### Segment C

The proposed widening of I-275 consists of the addition of tolled express lanes to form the Master Plan and Starter projects described in the following paragraphs.

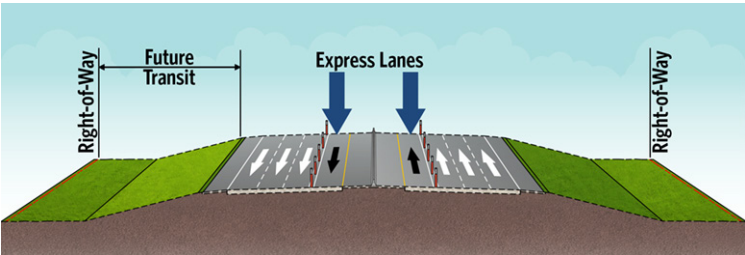
### TBX Master Plan Project

I-275 (Segment C) is a component of the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) toll lanes. As part of the TBX Master Plan, one tolled lane is to be added to I-275 in each direction from Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North. From 118th Avenue North to north of 4th Street North, two tolled lanes will be provided in each direction on I-275 (see graphic below). Access will be provided between the tolled and non-tolled lanes near Gandy Boulevard, at 118th Avenue North, and between 4th Street North and the Howard Frankland Bridge. The express lane typical section generally consists of six non-tolled lanes (three in each direction) and four tolled lanes (two in each direction). A marked four-foot buffer containing traffic delineaters (i.e., vertical PVC posts) separate the tolled and non-tolled lanes.



### TBX Starter Project (Staged Implementation)

The FDOT underwent an evaluation to identify a series of lower cost tolled lane projects that can be funded in the FDOT’s Five-Year Work Program. These initial projects could be built within a five-year or less time period and then later be incorporated into the Master Plan projects at minimal additional costs. The shorter-term, lower-cost improvements are considered the “Starter Projects.” The Starter Project improvements in Segment C consist of re-designating the existing auxiliary lanes on I-275 between Roosevelt Boulevard in Pinellas County and SR 60 in Hillsborough County to form a single tolled lane in each direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to the Howard Frankland Bridge while maintaining the same access points between tolled and non-tolled lanes as the TBX Master Plan Project (see graphic below).



For more information on this project go to <http://active.fdotd7studies.com/i275/54th-to-4th/>

### A Smart Solution - Tampa Bay Express

TBX is helping change things by giving you an exciting new commuting option. TBX allows drivers who chose to pay the express lane toll a smoother ride to wherever they’re going. All it takes is a SunPass, and then you’re ready to use TBX lanes whenever you like.

A number of ideas have been explored to help reduce traffic congestion, but they are either too expensive or unworkable over the long run (adding more non-toll lanes to our highways). Express toll lanes are the best solution because:

- They can be built next to existing non-toll lanes, making them easy to use.
- They can be maintained through toll collections without the need for tax money.
- Express toll lanes are demonstrated to be an effective solution to urban traffic congestion.

The price for using TBX lanes will vary according to motorist demand: when demand is lower, prices will be lower; when demand rises, so will the price. This is known as “dynamic pricing,” and it is used in the travel industry (hotels, airlines, rental cars), the utility industry (electricity and water), and other industries as well. While prices vary according to demand, it is important to remember that once you enter a TBX lane, the price is fixed at the price you entered. For more information go to [www.tampabayexpress.com](http://www.tampabayexpress.com).

### Evaluation Matrix

The environmental and sociocultural impacts of the proposed Build Alternative were compared to a No-Build Alternative in an evaluation matrix. Although the No-Build Alternative experiences less impacts than the Recommended Build Alternative, the detrimental effects of increased traffic congestion and reduced highway safety associated with the No-Build Alternative potentially outweighs the minimal impacts as a result of implementing the Recommended Build Alternative.

Evaluation Criteria	No-Build Alternative	Recommended Build Alternative			
		Segment A	Segment B	Segment C	Total
Potential Right-of-Way (ROW) Impacts					
Additional ROW Needed for Roadway (acres)	0	0	0	0	0
Additional ROW Needed for Ponds (acres)	0	0.5	8.6	1.3	10.4
Potential Environmental Effects					
Archaeological/Historic Sites	16	2	14	0	16
Noise-Sensitive Sites	993	192	972	158	1322
Wetlands (acres)	0	0	0	0.74	0.74
Threatened and Endangered Species	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Contamination and Hazardous Material Sites	13	5	4	4	13
Estimated Project Costs (\$millions)					
Right-of-Way Needed for Ponds	\$0	\$3.95	\$18.18	\$0.98	\$23.11
Construction	\$0	\$19.21	\$45.65	\$134.05	\$198.91
Preliminary Engineering Design	\$0	\$1.33	\$3.19	\$9.37	\$13.98
Construction Engineering Inspection	\$0	\$1.33	\$3.19	\$9.37	\$13.98
Total Capital Costs	\$0	\$25.82	\$70.21	\$153.77	\$249.80