

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
**TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM**

650-050-11
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
09/15

DRAFT

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE AND NEED

a. Project Information

Counties: Charlotte, Sarasota, and Desoto
Project Name: I-75 Rest Areas, Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
Project Limits: From the Charlotte/Lee County line north to the interchange of SR 681 and I-75
Project Numbers:

14206

436602-1-22-01

ETDM (if applicable)

Financial Management

Federal-Aid

Project Location Map Documentation:

- See **Attachment 1**, Project Location Map

b. Proposed Improvements:

The Preferred Alternatives have been identified as NB-2B and SB-2. These alternatives are located along I-75 in Charlotte County, one each in the northbound and southbound directions (See Attachment 1, Preferred Alternatives Map). Both Preferred Alternatives, NB-2B and SB-2, are located between Exit 161 and 164, south of Airport Road. The rest area sites will not affect the existing horizontal or vertical alignment of I-75. In addition to parking for vehicles, the rest area sites each include a main building with restrooms, vending, and security, as well as picnic shelters, a dog park and a maintenance building.

For Site NB-2B, parking for cars is located between I-75 and the rest area building. The parking for the trailer trucks and RVs is located behind the rest area building. The parking lot for the cars has 107 spaces and 5 ADA accessible spaces. The parking lot for the trailer trucks and RVs has 32 spaces and 2 ADA accessible spaces.

For Site SB-2, parking for cars is located between I-75 and the rest area building. Parking for trailer trucks and RVs is located behind the rest area building. The parking lot for the cars has 107 spaces and 5 ADA accessible spaces. The parking lot for the trailer trucks and RVs has 32 spaces and 2 ADA accessible spaces.

c. Purpose and Need:

The purpose of this study is to identify the locations for the replacement of a recently closed rest area with two new rest areas (northbound and southbound). In April of 2015, the FDOT closed the Jones Loop Rest Area at Exit 161 in Charlotte County. The closure of this facility increased the distance between existing rest area facilities to 175 miles. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines recommend rest areas should be spaced at intervals of approximately a one-hour drive between appropriate stopping opportunities. At interstate speeds, this equates to approximately 70 miles between stopping opportunities.

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d. Project Planning Consistency:

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	COMMENTS				
No	The current Charlotte-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan does not include this project.				
PHASE	Currently Approved TIP	Currently Approved STIP	TIP/STIP \$	TIP/STIP FY	COMMENTS
PE (Final Design)	Y	Y	\$3,850,000/ \$3,850,000	<2017/2017	
R/W	Y	Y	\$2,318,548/ \$2,251,018	2020/2020	
Construction	Y	Y	\$20,194,100/ \$19,684,956	>2021/>2020	

** Include pages from current TIP/STIP/LRTP*

Project Plan Consistency Documentation:

-See **Attachment 2** for pertinent STIP and TIP pages

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2. COOPERATING AGENCY

None

3. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Issues/Resources	Significant Impacts?*				Supporting Information**
	Yes	No	Enhance	NoInv	
A. SOCIAL & ECONOMIC					
1. Social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Land Use Changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment A, Part 3</u>
4. Mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. Aesthetic Effects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. Relocation Potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Farmlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment A, Part 7</u>
B. CULTURAL					
1. Section 4(f)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment B, Part 1</u>
2. Historic Sites/Districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment B, Part 2</u>
3. Archaeological Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment B, Part 3</u>
4. Recreation Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment B, Part 4</u>
C. NATURAL					
1. Wetlands and Other Surface Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment C, Part 1</u>
2. Aquatic Preserves and Outstanding FL Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Water Quality and Quantity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment C, Part 3</u>
4. Wild and Scenic Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment C, Part 5</u>
6. Coastal Zone Consistency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Coastal Barrier Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8. Protected Species and Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment C, Part 8</u>
9. Essential Fish Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
D. PHYSICAL					
1. Highway Traffic Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment D, Part 1</u>
2. Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment D, Part 2</u>
3. Contamination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment D, Part 3</u>
4. Utilities and Railroads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment D, Part 4</u>
5. Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>See Attachment D, Part 5</u>
6. Bicycles and Pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7. Navigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

- a. A USCG Permit IS NOT required.
 b. A USCG Permit IS required.

* **Impact Determination:** Yes = Significant; No = No Significant Impact; Enhance = Enhancement; NoInv = Issue absent, no involvement. Basis of decision is documented in the referenced attachment(s).

** Supporting Information is documented in the referenced attachment(s).

A. ENGINEERING ANALYSIS SUPPORT

- See Preliminary Engineering Report
- See Site Selection Report

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B. ANTICIPATED PERMITS

Section 404 and Fill Permit Nationwide Permit - USACE; Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Noticed General or Standard General Permit - SFWMD; National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit - FDEP

4. COMMITMENTS

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), is committed to the following measures:

1. Based on the findings of preliminary data collection, field surveys, and continued coordination with the SWFWMD and the USACE during the design phase of the project, the FDOT plans to adhere to mitigation for any wetland impacts pursuant to Part IV, Chapter 373, F.S. and U.S.C. 1344.
2. If an active bald eagle nest is identified within the rest area, floodplain compensation, or pond site during the final design and permitting phases, the FDOT is committed to implement mitigation measures to avoid disturbing this species, which may include control of the timing and location of construction activities and establishment of a buffer zone around active nesting sites.
3. To comply with Florida Administrative Code Chapter 68A-27, a formal gopher tortoise survey following FWC criteria will be required prior to construction.
4. To comply with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the FDOT is committed to initiate consultation with the USFWS for the following species prior to advancing the project to construction: Florida scrub-jay, wood stork, red cockaded woodpecker, Audubon's crested caracara, Florida bonneted bat, Florida panther, and eastern indigo snake.
5. The standard FDOT Construction Precautions for the Eastern Indigo Snake will be adhered to during construction of the project.

Project Commitments Record Documentation:

- See Project Commitments Record (PCR)

5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. A public hearing is not required.
2. A public hearing will be held 4/18/2017. This draft document is publicly available and comments can be submitted to FDOT until 4/29/2017.
District Contact Information: Steven A. Andrews
Florida Department of Transportation
Project Manager, Environmental Management
District One, MS-1-40
Office: 863-519-2270
steven.andrews@dot.state.fl.us
3. A public hearing was held on N/A and the transcript is included.
4. An opportunity for a public hearing was afforded and was documented N/A.

6. DISTRICT DETERMINATION

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

Steven A. Andrews
FDOT Project Manager

March 10, 2017
Date

Gwen G. Pipkin
FDOT Environmental Manager or Designee

March 10, 2017
Date

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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. §27 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated 12/14/2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

Ken Morefield, P.E.
Director of the Office of Environmental Management or
Designee

Date

8. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Attachment A – Social and Economic
- Attachment B – Cultural Impacts
- Attachment C – Natural Impacts
- Attachment D – Physical Impacts

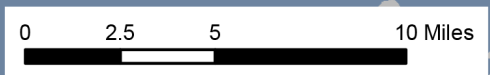
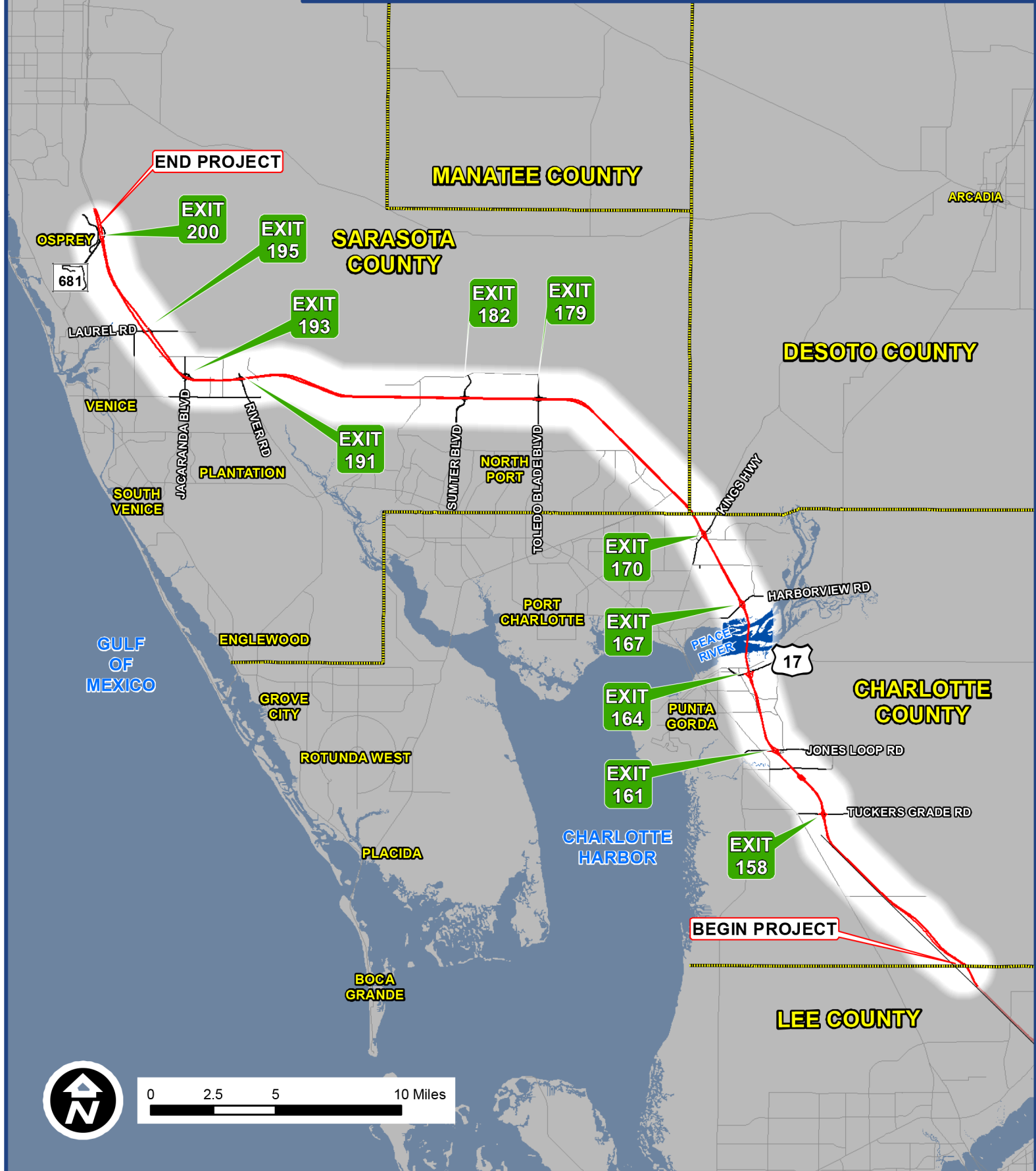
ATTACHMENT 1
Project Location Map

MANATEE COUNTY



I-75 REST AREAS PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY
I-75 from Charlotte/Lee County Line north to interchange of SR 681 and I-75 in Sarasota County
FPID No.: 436602-1-22-01

PROJECT LOCATION MAP





I-75 REST AREAS PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY
I-75 from Charlotte/Lee County Line north to interchange of SR 681 and I-75 in Sarasota County
FPID No.: 436602-1-22-01

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE SITES



Legend

- Existing Limited Access Right-of-Way Line
- Proposed Limited Access Right-of-Way Line
- Charlotte County Parcel Boundaries (2016)
- Proposed I-75 Rest Area Concept**
- Pavement
- Building
- Grass
- Sidewalk

0 300 600 1,200 Feet



ATTACHMENT 2
STIP & TIP

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 OFFICE OF WORK PROGRAM
 STIP REPORT

=====

 ITEM NUMBER:436602 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION:I-75 REST AREA IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY *SIS*
 DISTRICT:01 COUNTY:CHARLOTTE TYPE OF WORK:REST AREA (DUAL)
 PROJECT LENGTH: .001MI

FUND CODE	LESS THAN 2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	GREATER THAN 2020	ALL YEARS
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FEDERAL PROJECT NUMBER: <N/A>

PHASE: P D & E / RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: MANAGED BY FDOT							
DIH	22,060	27,939	0	0	0	0	49,999
DRA	1,200,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,200,000
PHASE: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: MANAGED BY FDOT							
DIH	0	0	250,000	0	0	0	250,000
DRA	0	0	3,600,000	0	0	0	3,600,000
PHASE: RIGHT OF WAY / RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: MANAGED BY FDOT							
DIH	0	0	0	0	40,518	0	40,518
DRA	0	0	0	0	2,210,500	0	2,210,500
PHASE: CONSTRUCTION / RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: MANAGED BY FDOT							
DIH	0	0	0	0	0	228,000	228,000
DRA	0	0	0	0	0	19,456,956	19,456,956
TOTAL <N/A>	1,222,060	27,939	3,850,000	0	2,251,018	19,684,956	27,035,973
TOTAL 436602 1	1,222,060	27,939	3,850,000	0	2,251,018	19,684,956	27,035,973
TOTAL Project:	1,222,060	27,939	3,850,000	0	2,251,018	19,684,956	27,035,973

 ITEM NUMBER:437105 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION:CHARLOTTE TMC OPS FUND COUNTY WIDE *NON-SIS*
 DISTRICT:01 COUNTY:CHARLOTTE TYPE OF WORK:OTHER ITS
 PROJECT LENGTH: .001MI

FUND CODE	LESS THAN 2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	GREATER THAN 2020	ALL YEARS
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FEDERAL PROJECT NUMBER: <N/A>

PHASE: OPERATIONS / RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: MANAGED BY CHARLOTTE COUNTY							
DDR	0	90,000	0	0	0	0	90,000

Fund	<2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	>2021	All Years
Item Number: 436602 1 Project Description: I-75 REST AREA IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY *SIS*								
District: 01 County: CHARLOTTE Type of Work: REST AREA (DUAL) Project Length: .001								
P D & E / MANAGED BY FDOT LRTP: Table 2-1, Goal 4.2 & 4.5 page 9								
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
DRA -REST AREAS - STATE 100%	1,200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,200,000
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT								
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	0	0	250,000	0	0	0	0	250,000
DRA -REST AREAS - STATE 100%	0	0	3,600,000	0	0	0	0	3,600,000
RIGHT OF WAY / MANAGED BY FDOT								
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	0	0	0	0	41,734	0	0	41,734
DRA -REST AREAS - STATE 100%	0	0	0	0	2,276,814	0	0	2,276,814
CONSTRUCTION / MANAGED BY FDOT								
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	0	0	0	0	0	0	233,800	233,800
DRA -REST AREAS - STATE 100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,960,300	19,960,300
Item 436602 1 Totals:	1,300,000	0	3,850,000	0	2,318,548	0	20,194,100	27,662,648
Project Total:	1,300,000	0	3,850,000	0	2,318,548	0	20,194,100	27,662,648

ATTACHMENT A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

A3 LAND USE CHANGES

Both of the Recommended Alternative rest area locations (NB-2B and SB-2) are within Charlotte County. The proposed improvements associated with the Recommended Alternatives will require additional right-of-way (ROW), but are not anticipated to significantly affect the land use in the surrounding area. The character of the study area will remain unchanged as this will be an “on-system” facility and will not be accessible from surrounding parcels. It will also continue to support the existing and future land uses within the project and surrounding areas. This project is included in the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Existing land use for the Recommended Alternatives was analyzed using the Southwest Florida Water Management District’s (SWFWMD) 2011 Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) data. Both Recommended Alternative rest area locations are classified as Cropland and Pastureland (FLUCFCS Code 210). Changes to land use due to direct impacts to the affected parcels are anticipated. However, this project is an on-system rest area and is not anticipated to facilitate further development in the area. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

A7 FARMLANDS

Based on the comments made in the ETDM Screening, “Farmland of Unique Importance” exists within each of the Preferred Alternative locations. Farmland evaluations occur later in the project development process, after right of way needs have been identified. This project is to be completed with federal assistance and right of way will be required. Therefore, coordination with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) was conducted. The NRCS responded via Form AD-1006, that 0.00001 percent of farmland Charlotte County will be converted and the Land Evaluation Criterion is 60.6 out of 100 points. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

ATTACHMENT B CULTURAL IMPACTS

B1 SECTION 4(f)

In accordance with Section 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966 (Title 49, U.S.C., Section 1653 (f), amended and recodified in Title 49, U.S.C., Section 303, in 1983), the project was examined for potential Section 4(f) resources. During the initial corridor screening potential Section 4(f) resources were avoided. No officially designated publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, historic and archaeological sites, or properties that represent public multiple-use land holdings are involved with the Preferred Alternative locations. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **No Involvement**.

B2 HISTORIC SITES/DISTRICTS

A Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) was completed in November 2016 in accordance with specifications established in Chapter 1A-46 Florida Administrative Code. Sites were evaluated for their significance, as per the criteria of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The historic resources survey of the project area revealed no historic resources (50 years of age or older) within the project area. A review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the NRHP, as well as county wide surveys (Austin et al., 2008; Campbell, 2008) indicated that there are no previously recorded historic resources within the project area. Field reconnaissance confirmed the lack of historic structures within, or immediately adjacent to the project. Based on this survey, this project will have no effect on any archaeological sites or historic resources, which are listed, determined eligible, or considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. A Section 106 consultation will not be required for this project, but right of way will need to be acquired. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **No Involvement**.

B3 ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

A CRAS was completed in November 2016 in accordance with specifications established in Chapter 1A-46 Florida Administrative Code. Sites were evaluated for their significance, as per the criteria of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. The archaeological investigations consisted of surface reconnaissance combined with subsurface testing. No archaeological sites were discovered. Distribution of pre-contact and historic period sites in Charlotte County indicate a pattern of site location favoring relatively better drained terrain proximate to rivers, creeks, ponds, and freshwater marshes. In the pine flatwoods, sites tend to be situated on ridges and knolls near freshwater sources or at the interface of two or more environmental zones. Sand mounds and burial mounds are most frequently found along creeks and rivers. As a result, it was determined that the survey area had a low potential for the discovery of archaeological sites. Based on these data, development of the I-75 Rest Areas will have no effect on any archaeological sites or historic resources, which are listed, determined eligible, or considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. A Section 106 consultation will not be required for this project. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **No Involvement**.

B4 RECREATIONAL AREAS

There are no designated recreational areas within the project area. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **No Involvement**.

ATTACHMENT C NATURAL IMPACTS

C1 WETLANDS

The Preferred Alternative has been evaluated for potential impacts to wetlands in accordance with Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands". Each of the build alternatives were evaluated for wetland impacts and measures were taken to select alternatives that avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands. Although the preferred northbound and southbound alternative require right of way acquisition, no impacts to wetlands meeting Florida Administrative Code 62-340, or 33 U.S.C. §1251 et seq. (1972) are anticipated. If any pond sites or floodplain compensation sites impact wetlands, potential impacts will need to be reevaluated and appropriate mitigation provided. During final design, permitting will be conducted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Wetland impacts which may result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to Section 373.4137, F.S. to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part 4 IV. Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C. s. 1344. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

C3 WATER QUALITY

The proposed storm water facility design will include the water quantity requirements for water quality impacts as required by the SWFWMD. The FDOT will create a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and erosion and sediment control plan during any future design phase of this project. Proper best management practices (BMPs) will be used during construction. Stormwater systems will be permitted through the SWFWMD in accordance with Chapter 40D-4 FAC, which requires that stormwater management systems meet the SWFWMD design criteria. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

C5 FLOODPLAINS

The majority of Alternative SB-2 is located within FEMA Flood Zone AE (Elev. 12.0-feet) with the southern end of the site located within FEMA Flood Zone X, defined as an area of minimal flooding with no established base flood elevation. The existing ground elevation at SB-2 is approximately 9.4 feet. Since the base flood elevation is 12.0 feet at SB-2, compensation will be required for all fill placed within the floodplain.

The majority of Alternative NB-2B is located within FEMA Flood Zone AE (Elev. 12.0-feet) with the southern end of the site located within FEMA Flood Zone X, defined as an area of minimal flooding and no established base flood elevation.

The FDOT will compensate for floodplain encroachment and storage through compensatory mitigation, provided it is deemed necessary by the SWFWMD. Impacts to floodplain resources and function will be avoided and minimized whenever possible. As a result, the project will not affect existing flood heights or floodplain limits. Permitting will be conducted with the SWFWMD during the design phase. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

C8 WILDLIFE AND HABITAT

Federally listed, threatened, or endangered species are protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Species are listed by the Federal Endangered Species Act and the State of Florida as Federally Endangered (FE), Federally Threatened (FT), State-Threatened (ST), or State Species of Special Concern (SSC). State-listed species are protected under various Florida Administrative Codes. Based on the sources listed above, the federally or state-listed, threatened, or endangered species with the potential for occurrence within the project limits include: American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*)(due to similarity of appearance), Eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), Audubon's crested caracara (*Polyborus plancus audubonii*), red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), Florida scrub jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*), wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*), and the Florida panther (*Puma* (= *Felis*) *concolor coryi*).

Based on the species range and the lack of suitable habitat within the proposed project areas, many of these species have a low potential to exist within the project area. No designated critical habitat occurs within the project area. However, the two Preferred Alternatives are within the Southwest Plants Consultation Area, Scrub Jay Consultation Area, Red Cockaded Woodpecker Consultation Area, Crested Caracara Consultation Area, and Wood Stork Core Foraging Areas.

To assure the protection of the Eastern indigo snake during construction, the FDOT will utilize the most current USFWS "Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake". Due to the implementation of recommended protection measures, this project "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" the Eastern indigo snake and the wood stork. This project is located outside of the Florida Panther Focus Area. It is anticipated that this project will have "no effect" on the Florida panther. Due to lack of suitable habitat, it is anticipated that this project will not affect the American alligator, Florida bonneted bat, Audubon's crested caracara, red cockaded woodpecker, or Florida scrub jay.

Four individual state-listed species have the potential for occurrence within the project limits. All four are State-designated as Threatened. No State-designated endangered species are anticipated to occur within the project limits and none were observed during the field visits. These species include little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), roseate spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*), and gopher tortoise (*Gopherus Polyphemus*).

Wading birds such as the little blue heron, tricolored heron, and roseate spoonbill are listed as State-Designated Threatened by the FWC and are protected under the MBTA (16 U.S.C. 703-712). No wetlands are anticipated to be impacted by the Preferred Alternatives; only roadside swales will be impacted. These drainage features provide minimal habitat as they are adjacent to I-75, they are maintained right of way grasses, and provide low quality foraging habitat. Therefore, no net loss of foraging habitat is anticipated, and adverse effects to these species are not likely.

No gopher tortoise burrows were observed within the project footprint during field reviews. In the event that gopher tortoise burrows are observed within the project limits or within adjacent pond or floodplain compensation sites, the latest FWC "Gopher Tortoise Permitting Guidelines" will be adhered to. Any impacts to gopher tortoises and commensal species will be mitigated through relocation efforts. Since gopher tortoises and commensals will be relocated, they will not be adversely affected. Appropriate coordination with the USFWS and the FWC will be continued during the design and construction phases

to ensure that disturbance of gopher tortoises and other listed species is minimized, avoided, or mitigated where necessary.

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is no longer listed by the USFWS or FWC, but remains protected under the bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and the MBTA. No bald eagle nests occur within the two proposed rest area project areas. The nearest bald eagle nest (CH067) is approximately 3,000 feet north of SB-2 and was last known to be active in 2013. No active bald eagle nests were identified during field reviews within 660 feet of the project area. No trees are present within the Preferred Alternative sites, therefore, this project will have no effect on the bald eagle.

The Preferred Alternatives are within the Southwest Plants Consultation Area. The USFWS's protected species by county list identifies aboriginal prickly-apple (*Harrisia* (= *Cereus*) aboriginum (= *gracilis*)) and beautiful pawpaw (*Deeringothamnus pulchellus*) as potentially occurring in Charlotte County. None of these species were observed during the field surveys. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) database listed no Elemental Occurrences of the protected plants within the same Biodiversity Matrix Unit as the portion of the project. Due to the agricultural nature of the project limits, protected plants are not anticipated to occur within the project area or be affected by the project.

A finding of "no effect" was assigned by the FDOT for the Florida scrub jay, red cockaded woodpecker, American alligator, Audubon's crested caracara, Florida bonneted bat, and Florida panther. A finding of "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" was assigned for the wood stork and Eastern indigo snake.

Five build alternative segments were evaluated during the FDOT's ETDM Review Process. Several alternatives were assigned a degree of effect "Substantial" or "Dispute Resolution" due to potential conflicts with known Section 4(f) resources. In the ETDM Summary Report, the USFWS recommended that the FDOT select Alternative #3 – S of Duncan Road, as the preferred alternative. In the ETDM Summary Report, the USFWS recommended that the FDOT select ETDM Alternative #3, which was a segment located between Airport Road and Jones Loop Road, as the preferred alternative. The Preferred Alternatives, NB-2 and SB-2B are located within the Alternative #3 segment.

On March 10, 2017, the USFWS provided support via e-mail for the Preferred Alternatives and elimination of all non-preferred build alternatives. Based on the lack of available habitat, field observations, and the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

PHYSICAL IMPACTS

D1 NOISE

A traffic noise analysis for the proposed project was conducted in accordance with Florida Statute 335.17, and Chapter 17 of the FDOT PD&E Manual, Volume 2. Based on this analysis, a Noise Study Report (NSR) has been prepared. The objectives of the noise study were as follows:

- Identification of Noise Sensitive Receivers;
- Field Measurement of Noise Levels and Noise Model Verification;
- Prediction of Existing and Future Noise Levels;
- Assessment of Traffic Noise Impacts; and
- Consideration of Noise Abatement Measures.

A survey of the project corridor was conducted to identify the noise sensitive receptors that may be impacted by traffic noise associated with the proposed rest areas. Predicted exterior noise levels for the existing conditions ranged from 48.9 dB(A) to 66.1 dB(A), while predicted levels ranged from 53.5 dB(A) to 70.6 dB(A) for the design year Build Alternative. With the Preferred Build Alternative, design year traffic noise levels will approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) at one location: the Punta Gorda Alliance Church (playground area).

In accordance with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FDOT traffic noise study requirements, noise barriers were considered for all noise sensitive receptor sites where design year traffic noise levels were predicted to equal or exceed the NAC. For the outdoor area of use (playground) at Punta Gorda Alliance Church, a detailed barrier analysis was conducted. FHWA's Traffic Noise Model (TNM) was used to determine the effectiveness of a potential noise barrier and to determine the optimal barrier height and length required to provide at least 5 dB(A) of noise reduction for the entire playground area, while minimizing costs. Multiple barrier designs were evaluated. Barriers heights of 16 feet and greater are effective in providing at least 5 dB(A) of noise reduction for the entire playground area while satisfying the noise reduction design goal of 7 dB(A). Therefore, noise abatement measures were evaluated for this playground in accordance with the procedures outlined in *A Method to Determine Reasonableness and Feasibility of Noise Abatement at Special Use Locations* (July 2009). The results of this evaluation show that the daily usage of this playground does not meet the requirements set forth in the FDOT's noise policy for special use locations. Since the expected playground usage is considerably lower than the usage required to meet the FDOT's Special Use Locations criteria, a noise barrier is not considered reasonable at this location.

Based on the noise analysis performed in this study, there appears to be no apparent solution available to mitigate the predicted noise impacts at the Punta Gorda Alliance Church playground. The traffic noise impact to this noise sensitive site is an unavoidable consequence of the project. Due to the low number of unavoidable impacted sites, the noise impacts associated with this project are considered **Not Significant**.

D2 AIR QUALITY

The project is located in an area that is designated attainment for criteria air pollutants: ozone/nitrogen dioxide/particulate matter (2.5 microns in size and 10 microns in size)/sulfur dioxide/carbon monoxide/lead.

The project alternatives were subjected to a carbon monoxide (CO) screening model that makes various conservative worst-case assumptions related to site conditions, meteorology, and traffic. The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) screening model, CO Florida 2004 (released September 7, 2004) uses the latest United States Environmental Protection Agency approved software (MOBILE6 and CAL3QHC) to produce estimates of one-hour and eight-hour CO concentrations at default air quality receptor locations. The one-hour and eight-hour estimates can be directly compared to the one- and eight-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for CO that are 35 parts per million (ppm) and 9 parts per million (ppm), respectively.

As population growth and vehicle volumes increase, there is potential to have air quality conformity and non-attainment issues in the future. However, the project is located in an area that is designated attainment for all of the NAAQS under criteria provided in the Clean Air Act and no capacity improvements are associated with this project. Therefore, the Clean Air Act conformity requirements do not apply to the project. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

D3 CONTAMINATION

A Level I CSER was prepared using the FDOT PD&E Manual, Chapter 22 reporting format and standard environmental assessment practices of reviewing records of regulatory agencies, site reconnaissance, and literature review. The study area included each rest area alternative and an approximate 300 foot buffer. All the sites evaluated were determined to be "No Risk Site". This designation is reserved for when a review of all available information find there is nothing to indicate contamination would be a problem. It is possible that contaminants were handled on the property; however all information indicates that contamination problems should not be expected. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

D4 UTILITIES AND RAILROADS

A preliminary utility coordination and investigation was conducted through written and verbal communications with the existing Utility Agency/Owners (UAO). An initial list of existing UAOs was acquired through the Sunshine State One-Call of Florida Design Ticket system in May 2016. UAOs known to operate, or with plans to operate, within the project corridor include: CenturyLink, City of Punta Gorda, Comcast, Florida Power and Light (FPL), FPL FiberNet, and TECO Peoples Gas. There are no impacts to private or municipal utility facilities for any alternatives since the proposed development is outside of existing right of way and the proposed development is on private vacant property. For the Preferred Alternatives, a ramp is proposed for construction under Airport Road. All utilities are reported to be deep enough and with minimal loss of cover that impacts are not anticipated to utilities. Minor impacts to Department-owned facilities within the Limited Access Right of Way (LAROW) such as lighting, Intelligent Transportation Systems, and Advanced Traffic Management System circuits that are thought to be within the LAROW. Therefore, on the Impact Determination Checklist, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.

D5 CONSTRUCTION

During the alternatives analysis, it was determined that the preferred build alternatives would reduce complexity of construction because the sites are vacant land with no trees or structures to remove. Potential utility conflicts are also minimal at these locations. No wetlands were found within the project area but further coordination with the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the US Army Corps of Engineers and Florida Department of Environmental Protection should be conducted to determine specific permit requirements before and during construction. Therefore, this category has been designated as **Not Significant**.