



RESOLUTION 2024-xx (DRAFT)

SUPPORTING POLK TPO'S REQUEST FOR THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) TO WORK TO IDENTIFY STATE/FEDERAL DISCRETIONARY FUNDING TO COMPLETE THE FOUR-LANE WIDENING OF STATE ROAD 60 ACROSS CENTRAL FLORIDA

WHEREAS, State Road 60 is part of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and is designated as a critical freight and hurricane evacuation route in the State of Florida and extends 161 miles across three (3) Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Districts and five (5) counties including Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Osceola and Indian River; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census, the combined population of these counties in 2020 was 3.7 million residents and is one the fastest growing areas in the State having added nearly 210,000 residents since 2020 (2020-2023); and

WHEREAS, State Road 60 is one of only four (4) major east-west, coast-to-coast arterial highways south of Interstate 4 on the Florida Peninsula and while some of these roads are multi-laned, significant portions of State Road 60 in Polk and Osceola counties remain two-lanes; and

WHEREAS, since 2017 Florida has experienced several significant evacuations of residents from the urban population centers in the central and southern coastal areas of the state fleeing approaching hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, State Road 60 was used as one of the primary routes for residents fleeing these storms and experienced significant congestion throughout the corridor, but was more pronounced on the two-lane portion, which hindered the ability of this regional traffic to transit efficiently; and

WHEREAS, State Road 60 provides strategic connections across the Peninsula with service to several major ports including Port Tampa Bay, Port Manatee, Port of Fort Pierce and Port Canaveral which are growing and distributing large amounts of cargo transported to and from these ports on State Road 60; and

WHEREAS, truck traffic as a percent of its daily traffic volume is over 30% for portions of State Road 60; and

WHEREAS, portions of State Road 60 are designated as Critical Freight Corridors under the National Highway Freight Program, a federal freight funding program; and

WHEREAS, there are over a dozen freight activity centers, or logistic clusters located along the corridor. This includes Florida's Gateway Intermodal Logistics Center (a.k.a. Central Florida ILC) which is strategically located on State Road 60 near its crossing with CSX's S-Line in Polk County and has the capacity to process over 300,000 containers of freight annually; and

WHEREAS, the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) is one of eleven such hiking trails in the United States and traverses the State of Florida from the Everglades to the Panhandle; and

WHEREAS, the FNST uses the State Road 60-Kissimmee River Bridge for trail users to cross the Kissimmee River between Polk and Osceola counties and this bridge currently lacks adequate pedestrian facilities to accommodate the safe passage of pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida has already made a significant investment to add lanes to the vast majority of State Road 60 - 134 of its 161 centerline miles, or 83%, are four or more lanes; and

WHEREAS, the remaining two-lane portion of State Road 60 (Polk County Road 630 to US 441 / Florida's Turnpike) extends for 27 miles with no traffic signals or stop signs and as a result large queues or platoons of traffic can build behind slower traveling vehicles; and

WHEREAS, in the last five (5) years there have been 17 severe crashes resulting in 28 fatalities on the two-lane section of State Road 60 in Polk and Osceola counties with 14 of the 17 crashes being either head-on or sideswipe collisions; and

WHEREAS, the two-lane portion of State Road 60 has narrow shoulders immediately adjacent to deep drainage swales which limits the ability of vehicles, and trucks in particular, to safely park off of the roadway in an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the FDOT and the MPOs and TPOs that comprise the Central Florida MPO Alliance have a shared goal of safe and fatality free travel conditions on all of the regions roads; and

WHEREAS, the Adopted 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plans for the Polk TPO and MetroPlan Orlando include the four-lane widening of State Road 60 in both Polk and Osceola Counties (CR 630 to the Kissimmee River Bridge); and

WHEREAS, FDOT's 2045 Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Cost Feasible Plan identifies funding in support of widening the corridor in both Polk and Osceola counties; and

WHEREAS, in Polk County the preliminary engineering has begun to widen the two-lane segment of State Road 60 to four-lanes; the section from CR 630 to Grape Hammock Road (FPN: 433856-2) is being designed; design has not started from Grape Hammock Road to east of the Kissimmee River Bridge (FPN: 433856-3); no additional project phases, or related projects are currently programmed in FDOT's Adopted Work Program (See Exhibit A); and

WHEREAS, in Osceola County a project development and environmental (PD&E) study for the widening of State Road 60 from the Kissimmee River Bridge to US 441 (FPN: 452574-1) is funded in 2028/29 and additional passing lanes (FPN: 443702-1) are funded for construction in FY 2024/25; no additional project phases, or other related projects are currently programmed in FDOT's Adopted Work Program (See Exhibit A).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA) at its regular meeting convened on October 11, 2024:

1. The CFMPOA supports Resolution #XX-XX, adopted by the Polk TPO at its June 13, 2024 meeting, requesting FDOT to recognize the intermodal safety and strategic traveler, and freight need to complete capacity improvements on State Road 60 and work to identify state/federal discretionary funding for the four-lane widening from Polk County Road 630 to US 441 at Florida's Turnpike.
2. The Central Florida MPO Alliance's list of priority projects identifies the regional need to fund the construction for the widening of State Road 60 from CR 630 to US 441 in Polk and Osceola Counties.
3. The CFMPOA further requests FDOT consider the addition of safe pedestrian facility improvements in support of the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) as part of the design and construction plans for the State Road 60 Kissimmee River Bridge project (FPN: 433856-3).

Signed:

Name, Chair

Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA)

October 11, 2024

Date

ATTEST:
