



## **Florida Department of Transportation**

**RON DESANTIS**  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

**KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.**  
SECRETARY

**For Immediate Release**  
December 20, 2019

**Contact:** Beth Frady (850) 491-7698  
[Beth.Frady@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Beth.Frady@dot.state.fl.us)

### **Florida Department of Transportation Concludes Unprecedented Year Under Governor Ron DeSantis**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – With a focus on safety, innovation, and congestion relief, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is concluding an unprecedented year under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis. Throughout 2019, FDOT has accomplished significant initiatives, undoubtedly improving the lives of Floridians and visitors who utilize the state’s transportation infrastructure.

“Thanks to Governor DeSantis’ bold vision, Florida is creating a resilient multimodal transportation system that serves our state now and for generations into the future,” said **FDOT Secretary Kevin J. Thibault, P.E.** “I am proud to serve alongside the men and women at FDOT and am thrilled to showcase their many accomplishments as we work to bring the Governor’s forward-thinking vision to life.”

Since January 2019, FDOT accomplishments include:

#### **National Recognition**

- **Receiving a national safety award from the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO)** for the use of technology to deploy innovative solutions to tackle the safety issues related to wrong-way driving.
- **Receiving two Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) Regional Competition Awards** for SunRail Southern Expansion and Krome Avenue Reconstruction and Widening Project.
- **National bond rating agencies reaffirmed the Turnpike’s elite “AA” credit rating.**

#### **Successful Federal Awards**

- **Earning two USDOT awards for nearly \$100 million in infrastructure projects**
  - \$90 million to replace the Cape Canaveral Spaceport Indian River Bridge.
  - \$8,046,741 to rehabilitate and create new capacity on the Seaboard Marine Terminal.
- **Receiving over \$82 million in awards from USDOT Secretary Elaine Chao (the most of any state) as part of the national BUILD Program**, to be used on significant transportation projects like autonomous shuttles in Central Florida, transit improvements in Miami-Dade County and seaport improvements at JAXPort.



## Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

- **Winning the 2019 National Roadway Safety Award for FDOT's Design-Build Push Button (DBPB) Program in District 7**
  - This first-of-its-kind contractual arrangement is designed specifically to accelerate construction of safety improvements to move toward zero deaths. FDOT will be expanding the use of DBPB throughout the state.
- **Receiving 13 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants** to serve urban, rural, seniors and persons with disabilities, transit safety and capital replacement activities.
- **Achieving formal certification from the FTA** as the result of a multi-year effort to demonstrate compliance with new federal transit safety standards.

### Statewide

#### Safety

- **Directed Unprecedented Rail Safety Measures** calling for the implementation of a number of safety measures including the deployment of dynamic envelopes at all FDOT and state-owned land rail crossings and launching a statewide education initiative. The directive has the explicit goal of preventing additional fatalities on or near the state's rail corridors. In addition, the following safety initiatives were developed:
  - **Positive Train Control (PTC)**
    - PTC is being developed to prevent train-to-train collisions, derailments caused by excessive speed, unauthorized incursions by trains onto occupied sections or a track switch left in the wrong positions.
  - **The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety (HRGCS) Improvement Program**
    - Statewide program for rail grade crossing hazard elimination; FDOT implemented 587 improvements over the past 10 years that reduced an average of 82.7% in fatal incidents (32 lives saved).
    - Implementing Strategies for Reducing Railway Trespassing (SRRT) using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), drones, and motion-sensing technologies to target trespassing hot-spots; then partnering with local officials and law enforcement to augment technology with education and enforcement.
- **Developing Florida's State Action Plan** to provide strategies to resolve rail safety hazards through engineering practices to include grade separation, humped crossings and others.
- **Facilitating Florida's traffic safety coalitions** addressing traffic crash contributing factors such as impaired driving, distracted driving, work zone, pedestrian & bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, teen driver, safety belt & child passenger safety.
- **Airport disaster reporting and coordination**
  - In May, FDOT finished a major update to airport disaster reporting and coordination which included additional capabilities for airports to report status prior to, during and after disaster events.



## **Florida Department of Transportation**

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

### **Innovation**

- **Completing construction of Phase 1 of SunTrax**, the nation's first state-owned autonomous vehicle testing facility, and beginning Phase 2 of construction.
- **Florida Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study**
  - Completing the Florida Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study which found that the total economic impact of all aviation activities in Florida is \$175 billion annually, supporting 1.4 million jobs with an annual payroll of \$60 billion.
- **Advanced Freight Mobility Solutions (AFMS)**
  - Leveraging Connected Vehicle and signal prioritization technology to improve truck travel time reliability through one of the most congested urban areas in the state. The project is located just west of Miami International Airport and was identified as the largest freight activity area in Florida.

### **Mobility/Congestion Relief**

- **Completing I-295 Express Lanes between S.R. 9B and J. Turner Butler Blvd (S.R. 202)**
  - The \$160 million I-295 Express Lanes between S.R. 9B and JTB (S.R. 202) saw the opening of a third general use lane and the additional capacity decreased travel times along the corridor by more than 20% and increased traffic speeds by 16%.
- **Widening I-75 from south of SR 50 to the Hernando/Sumter County Line** from 4 lanes to 6 lanes from south of SR 50 to the Hernando/Sumter County Line and improving the capacity of the I-75/SR 50 interchange, a critical evacuation route.
- **Funding significant infrastructure improvements that will enable future development and growth at Cape Canaveral and at Cecil Spaceport.**

### **Outreach/Partnerships**

- **Initiating a Department-wide Resilience Working Group with transportation partners to develop a resilience policy and create an implementation plan.**
- **Partnering with Port Tampa Bay, U.S. Army Corps of Engineer and private sector partners to widen and deepen the Big Bend Channel** significantly enhancing navigational capability to the Port Redwing area.
- **Partnering with the City of St Pete, Pinellas County, City of Tampa and Hillsborough County Cross Bay Ferry** for the 3<sup>rd</sup> season.

### **District 1**

- **Deploying innovative solutions to improve mobility in Southwest Florida**
  - Completed construction of the state's first Continuous Flow Intersection in Ft. Myers at the intersection of SR 82 and Daniels Parkway in Lee County.



## **Florida Department of Transportation**

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

- **Improving Capacity on US 27**
  - Widened US 27 from Highlands County line to Presidents Drive allowing for future capacity and development.
- **Reconstructing State Road 64 Interchange**
  - Completed the reconstruction of the I-75 interchange at SR 64 in Manatee County. The new diamond interchange and improvements to SR 64 not only improved the efficiency of the interchange, but also enhanced connectivity for Manatee and Hardee County.
- **Completing State Road 37 Full Depth Reclamation (FDR)**
  - Completed the reconstruction of SR 37 between County Road 630 and CR 640 in Polk County, utilizing FDR. This innovative process utilized the existing asphalt and base materials to reconstruct the roadway, reducing the estimated cost from \$23.7 million to \$6.2 million and yielding a considerable time saving.

### **District 2**

- **Opening Starke Truck Route**
  - The \$90 million project has alleviated congestion on U.S. 301 and, just after opening, there was nearly a 91% reduction of heavy truck traffic through downtown Starke.
- **Completing the First Coast Expressway – Phase 1** from I-10 to Blanding Boulevard in summer 2019.
- **Completing I-295 Express (Buckman Bridge to I-95)**
  - The \$82 million I-295 Express Lanes between the Buckman Bridge and I-95 were completed in summer 2019 and have already demonstrated success with significant increase in movement of traffic along the corridor.
- **Completing Timucuan Trail** within the A1A Ocean Islands Trail – a Florida Scenic Byway, in Duval county.
- **Improving and Repairing the St. Johns River Bridge** over the St. Johns River, which will increase the life of the bridge and allow heavier weight.
- **Contributing toward the Jacksonville Harbor Deepening Project**
  - Florida contributed more than \$35.3 million dollars toward the Jacksonville Harbor Deepening Project which will finish deepening and widening miles 3-8 of the St. Johns River.
- **Advanced construction of the Shands Bridge replacement project, providing necessary relief to transportation needs within the greater Jacksonville area.**



## **Florida Department of Transportation**

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

### **District 3**

- **Providing Hurricane Michael Recovery**
  - Removed 10 million cubic yards of debris on both state and local roadways from the storm-affected areas. To date, the total debris removed by FDOT is more than 21 million cubic yards on both state and local roadways.
  - Current repairs along U.S. 98 in Bay and Gulf counties will strengthen the roadway and prevent storm-related damages in the future. Damaged signs and wildlife fencing along the interstate are being replaced. Long-term heavy maintenance repairs of shoulders, ditches, and backslopes is ongoing to assist with drainage and prevent flooding along the state highway system.
- **Groundbreaking of Tyndall Flyover**
  - FDOT broke ground on the flyover bridge at the main gate of Tyndall Air Force Base (TAFB) at the intersection of U.S. 98 (Tyndall Parkway) and Airey Avenue/Tyndall Drive in Bay County in November. The \$19.9 million design-build project consists of an overpass to elevate the two U.S. 98 travel lanes above the Airey Avenue/Tyndall Drive main entrance to the base.
- **Reconfiguring Traffic to Pensacola Bay Bridge**
  - The traffic was shifted for U.S. 98 eastbound traffic (Pensacola to Gulf Breeze) to the new Pensacola Bay Bridge in August. The temporary configuration for the new bridge will provide two lanes of east and two lanes of westbound traffic, along with a center-lane reserved for emergency vehicles. A multiuse path for pedestrians and bicyclists is expected to be operational approximately two-months after the traffic shift.
- **Improving Port Panama City Railroad Connector**
  - Included new, on-terminal rail infrastructure to the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) rail connector, extending from the East Terminal property line, northeasterly towards the Cherry Street vicinity. The improvements will allow the Port to utilize rail services and enhance safety around the rail corridor.

### **District 4**

- **Alleviating traffic at City of Port St. Lucie Crosstown Parkway**
  - In addition to pedestrian and cyclist travel, this project provides a much needed third East-West connection across the North Fork of the St. Lucie River from Manth Lane to US-1 at the Village Green Drive intersection, alleviating traffic congestion on Port St. Lucie and Prima Vista Boulevards.
- **Completing I-75/HEFT Interchange**
  - This \$233 million project provided new interchange connection ramps, and included: milling and resurfacing, roadway widening, bridge widening, signing and pavement marking, lighting, ITS, noise walls, and drainage improvements.



## Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

- **Completing I-95 Express Phase 3A-2 ahead of schedule**
  - This \$154 million, 7.3-mile project along I-95 from North of Commercial Boulevard to South of SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street, was completed four months ahead of allowable contract time.
- **Port Everglades Southport Turning Notch Extension Project**
  - Investing more than \$106 million in the construction of Port Everglades Southport Turning Notch Extension Project including the new cargo berth areas and the installation of up to six additional Super Post-Panamax gantry cranes.
- **Advanced Construction of the SW 10th Street Project**, delivering the missing connection between Florida's Turnpike and I-95 in South Florida.

### District 5

- **Recording Record Number of Riders Using SunRail**
  - SunRail exceeded 1.5 million riders. The southern expansion increased ridership by 82%.
- **Opening New Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC)** in late fall of 2019 to monitor traffic conditions around the nine-county area 24 hours a day and seven days a week.
  - The new RTMC allows the Traffic Operations Section to minimize congestion and secondary crashes by dispatching Road Rangers and communicating with first responders directly.
- **Beginning the Final Portions of Wekiva Parkway**, connecting State Road (S.R.) 417 and I-4, completing Central Florida's beltway while also helping to protect the natural resources surrounding the Wekiva River.
- **Identifying and Funding I-4 Beyond the Ultimate Interim Projects**
  - The I-4 Beyond the Ultimate project, comprised of six design segments all with the goal of rebuilding and improving 40 miles of Interstate 4 (I-4), is an extension of the I-4 Ultimate project that continues the reconstruction of I-4.

### District 6

- **Beginning the Design-Build Process for Tamiami Trail Project**
  - FDOT and the National Park Service (NPS) began the design-build process of two new bridges along SR 90/US 41/SW 8 Street/Tamiami Trail from east of Osceola Camp to west of the Airboat Association of Florida. The project provides additional freshwater flow within Everglades National Park and improves the ecological conditions in the park and in the central Everglades, north of Tamiami Trail.
- **Agreement for City of Miami to operate and maintain I-395 under deck**
  - FDOT and the City of Miami have agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding that helps ensure a sustainable future for the new open space network.



## Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

- **Continuing to support the Miami-Dade County Transportation Planning Organization Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) Plan** since its inception by conducting the environmental phase for the North Corridor, the Kendall Corridor and the Flagler Bus Express Rapid Transit.
- **Installing High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWKs) on Roosevelt Boulevard in Key West**
  - The project extended along SR 5/North Roosevelt Boulevard in Key West and included approximately \$1.6 million in roadway, pedestrian and signalization enhancements.

### District 7

- **Improving the Sunshine Skyway and Howard Frankland Bridges**
  - Installed and pilot tested an innovative Wrong Way Driving (WWD) and Pedestrian detection system on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge to detect wrong way drivers, stalled vehicles and/or pedestrians that uses infrared/thermal technology for detection to enhance response time(s) for law enforcement and emergency response.
- **Opening Bids for the Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement Project.**
- **Holding a Public Hearing for I-275 project**, from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (SR 574) (MLK Boulevard) to Bearss Avenue (SR 678/CR 582), in Hillsborough County
- **Funding and accelerating construction on Westshore Interchange** in Hillsborough County.
- **Beginning Diverging Diamond Interchange at MLK/I-75** one year earlier than planned.

### Turnpike

- **Significantly improving call wait times from over 45 minutes to less than one minute and increasing the customer service score to an average of more than 4.5 out of 5.**
- **New northbound and southbound lane along the Turnpike Extension between SW 288<sup>th</sup> Street/Biscayne Drive and SW 186<sup>th</sup> Street/Quail Roost Drive**
  - In total, 88% of Turnpike Extension will improve capacity and add 84 lane miles.
- **FDOT issued \$177.9 million of Turnpike Revenue bonds**
  - Bonds issued at an effective interest rate at 2.79% over 30 years.
  - This is the lowest borrowing rate in the Turnpike's history.

###