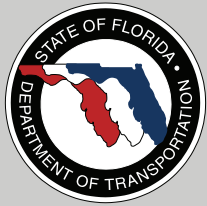


Technical Memorandum:

Identification of Corridor Conditions and Needs

Prepared for:



Florida Department of Transportation
Systems Planning Office

May 2012

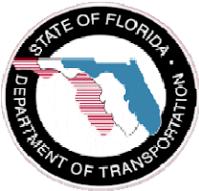


This page intentionally left blank.



Technical Memorandum: Identification of Corridor Conditions and Needs

Prepared for:



**Florida Department of Transportation
Systems Planning Office**

Prepared by:



May 2012

This page intentionally left blank.



Table of Contents

Page

1 – Introduction

1.1 – Study Background and Purpose	1-1
1.2 – Study Corridor.....	1-1
1.3 – Study Area.....	1-2
1.4 – Study Participants.....	1-2
1.5 – Project Information and Communications	1-4

2 – Demographic Elements

2.1 – Existing Demographic Characteristics	2-1
2.2 – Future Demographic Estimates	2-12
2.3 – Special Population Considerations	2-14

3 – Transportation Network

3.1 – Previous Transportation Studies.....	3-1
3.2 – Transportation Network System Characteristics	3-9
3.3 – Corridor Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	3-18
3.4 – Existing Traffic Characteristics	3-22
3.5 – Existing Traffic Operations	3-27
3.6 – Planned Improvements.....	3-30
3.7 – Future Traffic Operations	3-35
3.8 – Existing Freight Mobility System	3-42

4 – Environmental Considerations

4.1 – The Federal NEPA Process.....	4-1
4.2 – Study Environmental Process	4-3
4.3 – General Environmental Considerations	4-9

5 – Emergency and Security Response

5.1 – Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program	5-1
5.2 – County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans.....	5-8
5.3 – Homeland Security and Emergency Response.....	5-11



Table of Contents

Page

6 – Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

6.1 – Economic Development Benefits and Opportunities	6-1
6.2 – Tourism	6-7

7 – Corridor Summary

7.1 – Summary of Findings	7-1
7.2 – Identified Needs	7-4
7.2 – The Corridor Moving Forward	7-5



List of Tables

	<u>Page</u>
Table 2.1.1: Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area	2-2
Table 2.1.2: County Level Population Trends 2000-2010.....	2-8
Table 2.1.3: Top Count Raw Growth 2000-2010.....	2-10
Table 2.2.1: County Level Population Projections – BEBR Medium Series.....	2-13
Table 2.3.1: Elderly Population by County	2-19
Table 2.3.2: Minority Population and Population Below Poverty Level.....	2-20
Table 3.1.1: Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor	3-2
Table 3.2.1: Existing Right-of-Way Widths	3-17
Table 3.5.1: 2010 Traffic Operations	3-28
Table 3.6.1: Planned 2013-2035 Improvements	3-30
Table 3.7.1: Future Year 2035 Projected Traffic Operations	5-40
Table 3.8.1: Intermodal Freight Facility Locations	3-44
Table 4.3.1: Outstanding Florida Waters along I-75 Corridor	4-14
Table 4.3.2: State Parks along I-75 Corridor	4-17
Table 4.3.3: Mitigation Banks along I-75 Corridor	4-20
Table 5.2.1: Emergency Support Functions	5-9
Table 6.1.1: Florida Enterprise Zones Located within the I-75 Study Area and Local Accomplishments 10/1/2009–9/30/2010.....	6-4
Table 6.1.2: I-75 Corridor Fortune 500 Companies Headquarters, 2011	6-5
Table 6.2.1: Florida Historic Visitor Numbers	6-8
Table 6.2.2: Historic Economic Impact of Tourism on Florida 2000-2010.....	6-8



List of Figures

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1.3.1: I-75 Alternatives Study Area	1-3
Figure 2.1.1: I-75 Corridor Urban Area Growth Rate Comparison	2-9
Figure 2.1.2: Urban Areas along I-75 Corridor	2-11
Figure 2.2.1: Florida Population Estimates and Projections	2-13
Figure 2.3.1: U.S. Emerging Megaregions	2-15
Figure 2.3.2: Florida Megaregion.....	2-16
Figure 2.3.3A: Population Density by Census Tract.....	2-17
Figure 2.3.3B: Population Density by Census Tract.....	2-18
Figure 3.2.1A: I-75 Exiting SIS Highway Connections	3-10
Figure 3.2.1B: I-75 Exiting SIS Highway Connections	3-11
Figure 3.2.2A: I-75 Existing Speed Limit	3-13
Figure 3.2.2B: I-75 Existing Speed Limit	3-14
Figure 3.2.3A: I-75 Existing Number of Through Lanes	3-15
Figure 3.2.3B: I-75 Existing Number of Through Lanes	3-16
Figure 3.3.1A: I-75 Corridor Existing ITS Coverage	3-19
Figure 3.3.1B: I-75 Corridor Existing ITS Coverage	3-20
Figure 3.4.1A: I-75 Existing Traffic Characteristics	3-23
Figure 3.4.1B: I-75 Existing Traffic Characteristics	3-24
Figure 3.4.2: Percent of Local vs. Regional and Inter-regional Trips along I-75	3-26
Figure 3.7.1A: I-75 2035 Future Traffic Characteristics	3-37
Figure 3.7.1B: I-75 2035 Future Traffic Characteristics	3-38
Figure 3.8.1A: Existing SIS Hubs	3-46
Figure 3.8.1B: Existing SIS Hubs	3-47
Figure 4.1.1: Study Products for Proposed Transportation Projects.....	4-2
Figure 4.2.1: Future Corridors Planning Process	4-4
Figure 4.2.2: ETDM Process Overview.....	4-8
Figure 4.3.1: Wetlands along I-75 Corridor	4-10
Figure 4.3.2: Endangered and Threatened Species Consultation Areas along I-75 Corridor	4-11
Figure 4.3.3: Outstanding Florida Waters along I-75 Corridor	4-13
Figure 4.3.4: State Parks and Manage Areas along I-75 Corridor	4-19
Figure 5.1.1: Study Area RPC Boundaries.....	5-2



List of Figures

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 5.1.2A: Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program Designated Evacuation Network	5-5
Figure 5.1.2B: Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program Designated Evacuation Network	5-6
Figure 5.1.3: Average Evacuation Trip Distributions for Regional RPC Evacuations along the I-75 Corridor	5-7
Figure 6.1.1: Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern Adjacent to or within I-75 Corridor	6-2

This page intentionally left blank.



Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Study Background and Purpose

The I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study was initiated in 2011 by the Florida Department of Transportation Systems Planning Office. The study will assess the travel demand from people and goods moving along the I-75 corridor in the State of Florida against five measures: demographics, transportation network, environmental considerations, emergency and security response, and economic development. Additionally, the study will identify an effective range of strategies to alleviate congestion, facilitate emergency and security response, and foster economic development in the State of Florida.

The Identification of Corridor Needs Technical Memorandum is the first in a series of documents describing the development of the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study. This document identifies existing conditions along the I-75 corridor from different perspectives, including transportation, demographic, emergency management, homeland security, and economic development. The document also describes deficiencies and corridor related needs for each perspective.

The Alternative Options and Policy Implications Technical Memorandum will be the second document in the series and will include a discussion of transportation alternatives or different approaches to solving the identified needs, along with the policy implications of implementing those alternatives. The second document will not discuss specific projects or recommend solutions, but will present a comprehensive list of alternative approaches to improving mobility, emergency response, and economic development while incorporating early considerations of human and natural environment conditions within the 15 county study area. A final report document, titled the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study, will summarize the full study and conclude the series.

1.2 Study Corridor

Development of the I-75 corridor has occurred over the last 50 years and still continues today. Construction of I-75 was initiated in north Florida with the opening of a short segment between Lake City and Genoa in 1962. During the 1960's, development of the corridor continued from both ends of the interstate, extending to the Florida/Georgia line and to the original southern terminus at I-4 in Tampa. I-75 was later extended to Naples, and eventually South Florida, ending at the Palmetto Expressway and Gratigny Parkway in Miami-Dade County.



Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.3 Study Area

The study corridor under evaluation includes 15 counties through north, central, and southwest Florida, as identified in **Figure 1.3.1**. The corridor spans 390 miles, beginning at SR 29 at the western end of Alligator Alley in Collier County and ending at the Florida/Georgia state line in Hamilton County. The I-75 corridor is one of the State's most important transportation facilities, providing for the movement of people and goods along the west coast of Florida and through north Florida. According to the 2010 Census, the 15 counties along the study corridor are home to just over 4.5 million residents, which constitute approximately 24% of Florida's total population.

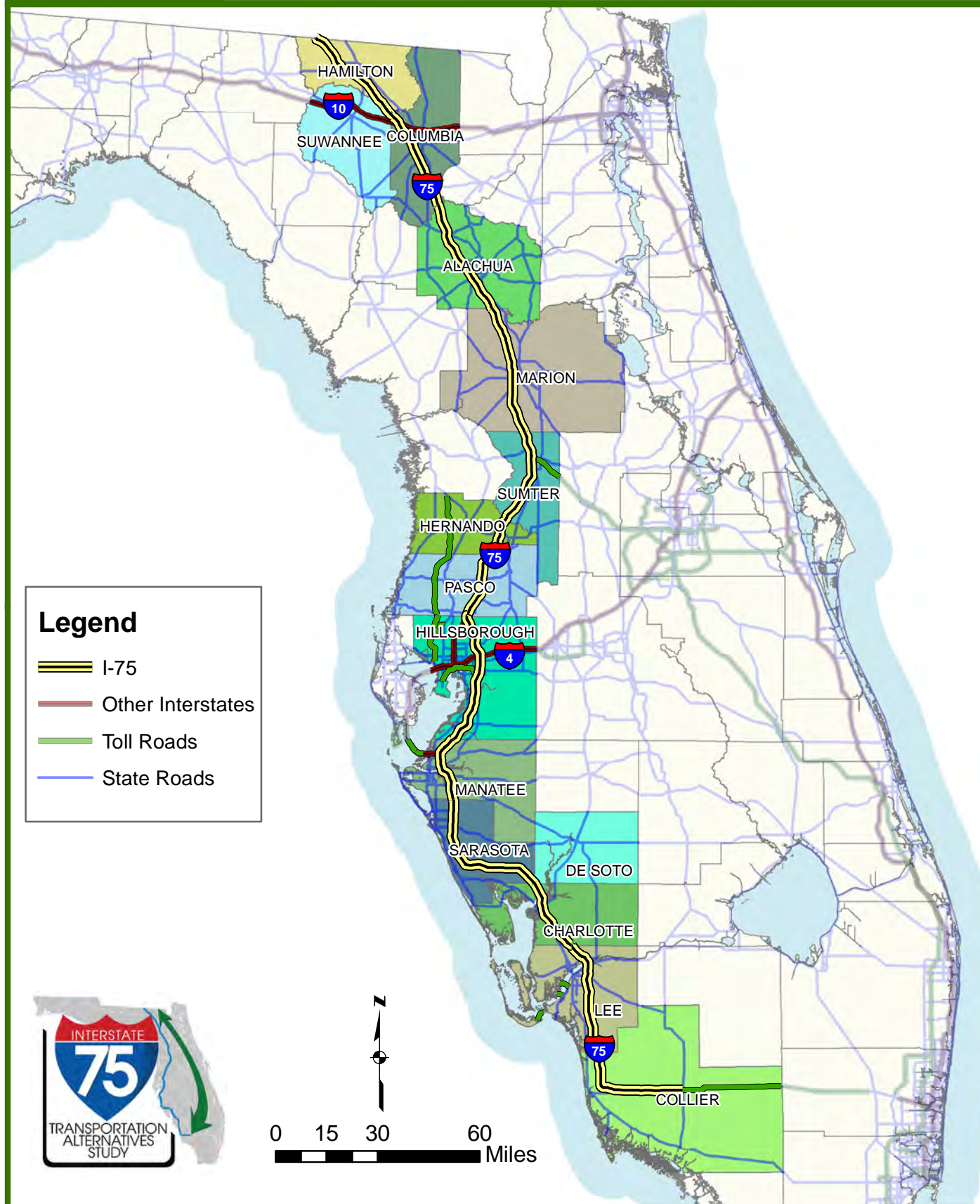
1.4 Study Participants

The study includes coordination and consultation with the following agencies and organizations:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)
- Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
- Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)
- Florida Division of Strategic Business Development (FDSBD), formerly the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED)
- Enterprise Florida
- Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations Advisory Council (MPOAC)
- Five Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) along the I-75 Corridor
 - North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
 - Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council
 - Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
 - Central Florida Regional Planning Council
 - Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
- Ten Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) along the I-75 Corridor
 - Gainesville Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization
 - Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization
 - Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Figure 1.3.1

I-75 Alternatives Study Area





Chapter 1 - Introduction

- Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization
- RACECs (Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern) not represented by an MPO
 - DeSoto County
 - Columbia County
 - Suwannee County
 - Hamilton County
- Multiple offices within the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
 - Districts One, Two, Five, and Seven
 - State Traffic Engineering and Operations Office
 - Office of Policy Planning
 - Emergency Management Office
 - Environmental Management Office
 - Office of Freight, Logistics, and Passenger Operations, and
 - Systems Planning Office.

The Florida Department of Transportation Systems Planning Office (SPO) is the lead office for the management of study activities and will coordinate the discussion between FDOT and its partners who will provide data and information for the study. All comments will be incorporated into the final study products.

The ten MPOs and five RPCs located along the study corridor, as well as DeSoto, Columbia, Suwannee, and Hamilton Counties, are also key organizations involved in transportation planning activities. The FDOT Districts located along the corridor will serve as the key points of contact between the MPOs, RPCs, and the study team.

During the refinement of the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study Needs Plan, MPOs and RPCs will be asked to provide data, information, and/or other input into the study process to ensure the study team is aware of local issues and activities impacting the I-75 Corridor. During subsequent phases of the study, MPOs and RPCs will be asked to review study products, assist with policy development activities relating to the I-75 corridor, and provide additional input to their FDOT District offices.

1.5 Project Information and Communications

Information regarding the progress of the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study can be found at the study website and SharePoint site established for the study (www.i-75alternatives.com). The study website will provide the ability for the



Chapter 1 - Introduction

general public to review study documents. The SharePoint site will function as the principal communication link between FDOT and its partner agencies during the course of the study.



Chapter 1 - Introduction

This page intentionally left blank.



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

The idyllic image of Florida's beaches may help explain why, for years, millions have come to Florida to vacation and then to stay. Florida as a whole has been at the forefront of a decades-long shift in population from the nation's traditional economic centers in the North and Midwest to the Sunbelt. The recent economic downturn in the state and rest of the country has temporarily halted this rapid growth, but forecasts indicate the growth will return in future years.

While much of northern I-75 bisects rural counties, portions of the area around the corridor have seen enormous growth to such an extent that alternative transportation options are becoming necessary. While the region's transportation infrastructure, principally its highways and its airports, have accommodated and even fueled much of the growth, there are rising concerns about congestion and level of service.

2.1 Existing Demographic Characteristics

The 2010 Census estimated Florida's population at over 18.8 million in April of 2010¹. **Table 2.1.1** shows current population estimates by county and city in the study area. Statewide, the ten counties with the largest population in 2010 were Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Hillsborough, Orange, Pinellas, Duval, Lee, Polk and Brevard¹. The I-75 corridor actually runs through two of these top ten counties, making the efficient movement of people and goods a priority for these areas. Hillsborough County's population was fourth highest in the state, at over 1.2 million, and Lee County came in eighth at just under 650,000.

From 1900 to 2000, Florida's ranking in population size increased more than any other state, from 33rd to 4th, and this impressive growth trend continued through the last decade². While the recent economic climate has halted this growth over the past few years, the growth is expected to continue as the economy rebounds.

Of the 67 counties in Florida, all but two experienced growth from 2000 to 2010, and 18 counties grew by 25% or more¹. These areas of rapid growth impact the I-75 corridor greatly, as three of the fastest growing counties in the state are in the study area. I-75 runs through Sumter County, which had the second highest growth rate during that timeframe with an impressive 75% growth¹. Other fast growing counties in the study area were Lee (+40%) and Pasco (+35%). **Table 2.1.2** illustrates the population growth rate of study area counties from 2000-2010.

¹ US Census Bureau, 2011

² Demographic Trends of the 21st Century: Census 2000 Special Reports (2002)



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Collier	251,377	321,520	70,143	27.9%
Chokoloskee	515	359	-156	-30.3%
Everglades	482	400	-82	-17.0%
Golden Gate	21,012	23,961	2,949	14.0%
Goodland	221	267	46	20.8%
Immokalee	19,410	24,154	4,744	24.4%
Island Walk	-	3,035	-	-
Lely	3,834	3,451	-383	-10.0%
Lely Resort	1,427	4,646	3,219	225.6%
Marco Island	14,980	16,413	1,433	9.6%
Naples	20,987	19,537	-1,450	-6.9%
Naples Manor	5,114	5,562	448	8.8%
Naples Park	6,811	5,967	-844	-12.4%
Orangetree	1,032	4,406	3,374	326.9%
Pelican Bay	5,643	6,346	703	12.5%
Pine Ridge (Collier)	1,856	1,918	62	3.3%
Plantation Island	213	163	-50	-23.5%
Verona Walk	-	1,782	-	-
Vineyards	2,270	3,375	1,105	48.7%
Lee	440,888	618,754	177,866	40.3%
Alva	2,041	2,596	555	27.2%
Bokeelia	1,933	1,780	-153	-7.9%
Bonita Springs	32,914	43,914	11,000	33.4%
Buckingham	3,910	4,036	126	3.2%
Burnt Store Marina	1,208	1,793	585	48.4%
Cape Coral	102,206	154,305	52,099	51.0%
Captiva	392	583	191	48.7%
Charleston Park	498	218	-280	-56.2%
Cypress Lake	12,099	11,846	-253	-2.1%
Estero	9,541	22,612	13,071	137.0%
Fort Myers	48,046	62,298	14,252	29.7%
Fort Myers Beach	6,539	6,277	-262	-4.0%
Fort Myers Shores	5,746	5,487	-259	-4.5%
Gateway	3,038	8,401	5,363	176.5%
Harlem Heights	1,032	1,975	943	91.4%
Iona	11,853	15,369	3,516	29.7%
Lehigh Acres	33,142	86,784	53,642	161.9%
Lochmoor				
Waterway Estates	3,857	4,204	347	9.0%
McGregor	7,067	7,406	339	4.8%
Matlacha	792	677	-115	-14.5%
Matlacha Isles-	271	229	-42	-15.5%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Matlacha Shores				
North Fort Myers	40,320	39,407	-913	-2.3%
Olga	1,478	1,952	474	32.1%
Page Park	561	514	-47	-8.4%
Palmona Park	1,285	1,146	-139	-10.8%
Pine Island Center	1,696	1,854	158	9.3%
Pineland	474	407	-67	-14.1%
Pine Manor	3,891	3,428	-463	-11.9%
Punta Rassa	1,675	1,750	75	4.5%
St. James	4,096	3,784	-312	-7.6%
San Carlos Park	16,120	16,824	704	4.4%
Sanibel	6,042	6,469	427	7.1%
Suncoast Estates	4,904	4,384	-520	-10.6%
Three Oaks	2,254	3,592	1,338	59.4%
Tice	4,641	4,470	-171	-3.7%
Villas	11,168	11,569	401	3.6%
Whiskey Creek	4,916	4,655	-261	-5.3%
Charlotte	141,627	159,978	18,351	13.0%
Charlotte Harbor	3,674	3,714	40	1.1%
Charlotte Park	2,270	2,325	55	2.4%
Cleveland	3,259	2,990	-269	-8.3%
Englewood	16,250	14,863	-1,387	-8.5%
Grove	2,107	1,804	-303	-14.4%
Harbour Heights	2,990	2,987	-3	-0.1%
Manasota Key	1,309	1,229	-80	-6.1%
Port Charlotte	46,469	54,392	7,923	17.1%
Punta Gorda	14,433	16,641	2,208	15.3%
Rotonda	6,697	8,759	2,062	30.8%
Solana	988	742	-246	-24.9%
DeSoto	32,209	34,862	2,653	8.2%
Arcadia	6,742	7,637	895	13.3%
Southeast Arcadia	5,941	6,554	613	10.3%
Sarasota	325,957	379,448	53,491	16.4%
Bee Ridge	8,862	9,598	736	8.3%
Desoto Lakes	3,239	3,646	407	12.6%
Englewood	16,250	14,863	-1,387	-8.5%
Fruitville	12,892	13,224	332	2.6%
Gulf Gate Estates	11,558	10,911	-647	-5.6%
Kensington Park	3,659	3,901	242	6.6%
Lake Sarasota	4,435	4,679	244	5.5%
Laurel	8,460	8,171	-289	-3.4%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Longboat Key	7,575	6,888	-687	-9.1%
Nokomis	3,388	3,167	-221	-6.5%
North Port	22,717	57,357	34,640	152.5%
North Sarasota	6,969	6,982	13	0.2%
Osprey	4,113	6,100	1,987	48.3%
Plantation	3,966	4,919	953	24.0%
Ridge Wood Heights	5,149	4,795	-354	-6.9%
Sarasota	52,537	51,917	-620	-1.2%
Sarasota Springs	15,848	14,395	-1,453	-9.2%
Siesta Key	7,051	6,565	-486	-6.9%
Southgate	7,526	7,173	-353	-4.7%
South Gate Ridge	5,627	5,688	61	1.1%
South Sarasota	5,154	4,950	-204	-4.0%
South Venice	13,510	13,949	439	3.2%
The Meadows	4,423	3,994	-429	-9.7%
Vamo	5,378	4,727	-651	-12.1%
Venice	17,850	20,748	2,898	16.2%
Venice Gardens	7,438	7,104	-334	-4.5%
Warm Mineral Springs	4,906	5,061	155	3.2%
Manatee	264,002	322,833	58,831	22.3%
Anna Maria	1,823	1,503	-320	-17.6%
Bayshore Gardens	17,383	16,323	-1,060	-6.1%
Bradenton	49,908	49,546	-362	-0.7%
Bradenton Beach	1,484	1,171	-313	-21.1%
Cortez	4,399	4,241	-158	-3.6%
Ellenton	3,084	4,275	1,191	38.6%
Holmes Beach	4,955	3,836	-1,119	-22.6%
Longboat Key	7,575	6,888	-687	-9.1%
Memphis	7,421	7,848	427	5.8%
Palmetto	12,334	12,606	272	2.2%
Samoset	3,295	3,854	559	17.0%
South Bradenton	21,425	22,178	753	3.5%
West Bradenton	4,491	4,192	-299	-6.7%
West Samoset	5,586	5,583	-3	-0.1%
Whitfield (Manatee)	3,091	2,882	-209	-6.8%
Hillsborough	998,948	1,229,226	230,278	23.1%
Apollo Beach	7,469	14,055	6,586	88.2%
Balm	-	1,457	-	-
Bloomingtondale	19,931	22,711	2,780	13.9%
Brandon	77,732	103,483	25,751	33.1%
Carrollwood	33,617	33,365	-252	-0.7%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Cheval	7,678	10,702	3,024	39.4%
Citrus Park	20,102	24,252	4,150	20.6%
Dover	2,809	3,702	893	31.8%
East Lake-Orient Park	5,560	22,753	17,193	309.2%
Egypt Lake-Leto	32,792	35,282	2,490	7.6%
Fish Hawk	2,058	14,087	12,029	584.5%
Gibsonton	8,760	14,234	5,474	62.5%
Keystone	14,725	24,039	9,314	63.3%
Lake Magdalene	28,832	28,509	-323	-1.1%
Lutz	17,054	19,344	2,290	13.4%
Mango	8,790	11,313	2,523	28.7%
Northdale	20,282	22,079	1,797	8.9%
Palm River-Clair Mel	17,598	21,024	3,426	19.5%
Pebble Creek	4,830	7,622	2,792	57.8%
Plant City	30,106	34,721	4,615	15.3%
Progress Village	2,365	5,392	3,027	128.0%
Riverview	12,003	71,050	59,047	491.9%
Ruskin	8,293	17,208	8,915	107.5%
Seffner	5,603	7,579	1,976	35.3%
Sun Center	16,286	19,258	2,972	18.2%
Tampa	303,512	335,709	32,197	10.6%
Temple Terrace	20,871	24,541	3,670	17.6%
Thonotosassa	6,091	13,014	6,923	113.7%
Town 'n' Country	72,397	78,442	6,045	8.3%
University (Hillsborough)	30,681	41,163	10,482	34.2%
Valrico	6,669	35,545	28,876	433.0%
Westchase	11,116	21,747	10,631	95.6%
Wimauma	4,252	6,373	2,121	49.9%
Pasco	344,765	464,697	119,932	34.8%
Aripeka	-	308	-	-
Bayonet Point	23,666	23,467	-199	-0.8%
Beacon Square	7,263	7,224	-39	-0.5%
Connerton	-	2,116	-	-
Crystal Springs	1,090	1,327	237	21.7%
Dade City	6,231	6,437	206	3.3%
Dade North	3,150	3,113	-37	-1.2%
Elfers	13,203	13,986	783	5.9%
Heritage Pines	-	2,136	-	-
Holiday	21,916	22,403	487	2.2%
Hudson	12,724	12,158	-566	-4.4%
Jasmine Estates	18,055	18,989	934	5.2%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Key Vista	-	1,757	-	-
Lacoochee	1,172	1,714	542	46.2%
Land O' Lakes	20,792	31,996	11,204	53.9%
Meadow Oaks	-	2,442	-	-
Moon Lake	-	4,919	-	-
New Port Richey	15,685	14,911	-774	-4.9%
New Port Richey East	10,120	10,036	-84	-0.8%
Odessa	3,337	7,267	3,930	117.8%
Pasadena Hills	-	7,570	-	-
Port Richey	2,986	2,671	-315	-10.5%
Quail Ridge	-	1,040	-	-
River Ridge	-	4,702	-	-
St. Leo	609	1,340	731	120.0%
San Antonio	615	1,138	523	85.0%
Shady Hills	7,779	11,523	3,744	48.1%
Trilby	-	419	-	-
Trinity	4,484	10,907	6,423	143.2%
Wesley Chapel	5,887	44,092	38,205	649.0%
Zephyrhills	10,690	13,288	2,598	24.3%
Zephyrhills North	2,535	2,600	65	2.6%
Zephyrhills South	4,642	5,276	634	13.7%
Zephyrhills West	5,165	5,865	700	13.6%
Hernando	130,802	172,778	41,976	32.1%
Aripeka	-	308	-	-
Bayport	24	43	19	79.2%
Brookridge	3,141	4,420	1,279	40.7%
Brooksville	7,250	7,719	469	6.5%
Garden Grove	-	674	-	-
Hernando Beach	2,150	2,299	149	6.9%
High Point	3,023	3,686	663	21.9%
Hill 'n Dale	1,569	1,934	365	23.3%
Istachatta	61	116	55	90.2%
Lake Lindsey	44	71	27	61.4%
Masaryk	881	1,040	159	18.0%
Nobleton	132	282	150	113.6%
North Brooksville	1,479	3,544	2,065	139.6%
North Weeki Wachee	4,171	8,524	4,353	104.4%
Pine Island	55	64	9	16.4%
Ridge Manor	4,122	4,513	391	9.5%
South Brooksville	1,339	4,007	2,668	199.3%
Spring Hill	69,196	98,621	29,425	42.5%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
Spring Lake	268	458	190	70.9%
Timber Pines	5,817	5,386	-431	-7.4%
Weeki Wachee	9	12	3	33.3%
Weeki Wachee Gardens	1,162	1,146	-16	-1.4%
Wiscon	-	706	-	-
Sumter	53,345	93,420	40,075	75.1%
Bushnell	2,160	2,418	258	11.9%
Center Hill	951	988	37	3.9%
Coleman	697	703	6	0.9%
Lake Panasoffkee	3,445	3,551	106	3.1%
Webster	812	785	-27	-3.3%
Wildwood	4,031	6,709	2,678	66.4%
Marion	258,916	331,298	72,382	28.0%
Bellevue	3,554	4,492	938	26.4%
Dunnellon	1,919	1,733	-186	-9.7%
McIntosh	430	452	22	5.1%
Ocala	45,622	56,315	10,693	23.4%
Reddick	567	506	-61	-10.8%
The Villages	-	51,442	-	-
Alachua	217,955	247,336	29,381	13.5%
Alachua	5,932	9,059	3,127	52.7%
Archer	1,282	1,118	-164	-12.8%
Gainesville	95,605	124,354	28,749	30.1%
Hawthorne	1,400	1,417	17	1.2%
High Springs	3,934	5,350	1,416	36.0%
La Crosse	130	360	230	176.9%
Micanopy	623	600	-23	-3.7%
Newberry	3,331	4,950	1,619	48.6%
Waldo	834	1,015	181	21.7%
Columbia	56,513	67,531	11,018	19.5%
Five Points	1,315	1,265	-50	-3.8%
Fort White	437	567	130	29.7%
Lake City	9,951	12,046	2,095	21.1%
Watertown	2,968	2,829	-139	-4.7%
Suwannee	34,844	41,551	6,707	19.2%
Branford	691	712	21	3.0%
Live Oak	6,558	6,850	292	4.5%
Hamilton	13,327	14,799	1,472	11.0%
Jasper	1,705	4,546	2,841	166.6%
Jennings	854	878	24	2.8%
White Springs	859	777	-82	-9.5%



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.1 Estimates of Population by County and City in Florida for the 15 County Study Area

County, City and State	April 1, 2000	April 1, 2010	Raw Change	Percent Change
I-75 Corridor	3,565,475	4,500,031	934,556	26.2%
Florida	15,982,378	18,801,310	2,818,932	17.6%

* New cities without data for 2000 are represented by "-" and do not have percent change information.
Source: US Census Bureau, 2011.

Table 2.1.2 County Level Population Trends 2000-2010

County and State	Percent Change 2000-2005	Percent Change 2005-2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
Collier	21.52%	5.25%	27.9%
Lee	22.74%	14.34%	40.3%
Charlotte	8.13%	4.46%	13.0%
DeSoto	5.82%	2.29%	8.2%
Sarasota	11.43%	4.47%	16.4%
Manatee	15.28%	6.07%	22.3%
Hillsborough	13.23%	8.68%	23.1%
Pasco	23.42%	9.21%	34.8%
Hernando	19.52%	10.52%	32.1%
Sumter	18.82%	47.39%	75.1%
Marion	16.42%	9.91%	28.0%
Alachua	6.15%	6.91%	13.5%
Columbia	13.05%	5.70%	19.5%
Suwannee	8.85%	9.55%	19.2%
Hamilton	3.48%	7.31%	11.0%
I-75 Corridor	15.72%	9.06%	26.2%
Florida Total	10.76%	6.21%	17.6%

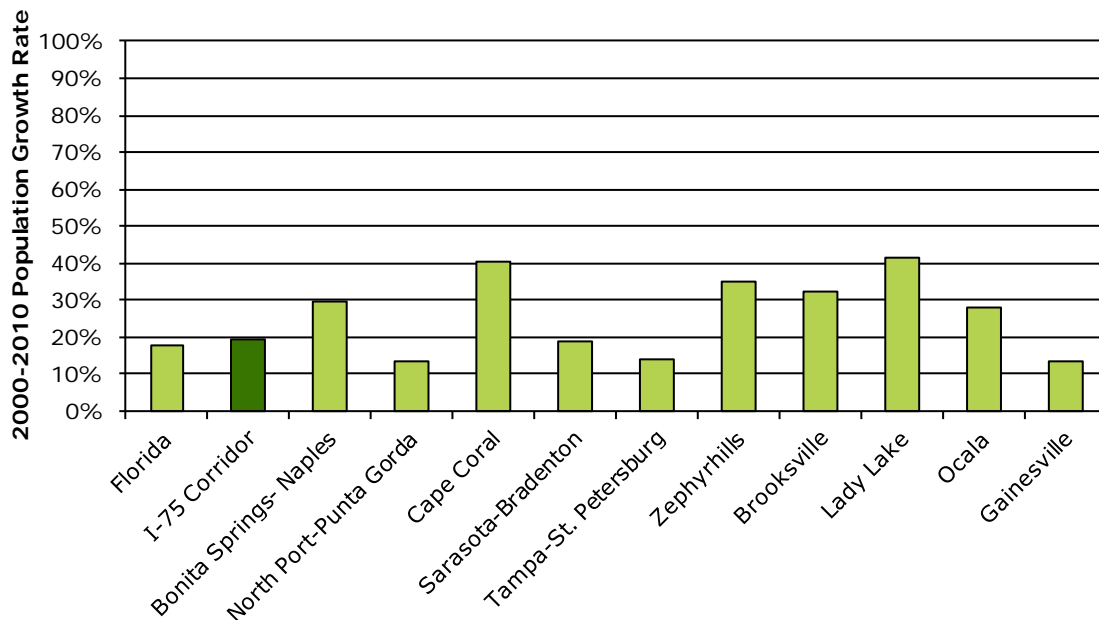
Source: US Census Bureau, 2011.



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Table 2.1.2 shows that the trends of population growth by county were often uneven for the last decade. With the economic downturn and other events, Florida grew faster from 2000 to 2005 than from 2005 to 2010. This was also true for the I-75 corridor when averaged. Collier, Lee, and Pasco counties boomed in the first half of the decade and saw much slower growth in the latter half. Sumter was the only county along the corridor to see a surge during the 2005 to 2010 timeframe, and the growth was substantial at nearly 50%. This growth was likely due to the recent popularity of The Villages, a retirement community and Census Designated Place with a population of around 8,000 in 2000 and around 50,000 in 2010.

Figure 2.1.1 I-75 Corridor Urban Area Growth Rate Comparison



Source: FDOT Office of Policy Planning, 2010

As seen in **Figure 2.1.1**, urban areas along the I-75 corridor with over 30% estimated growth from 2000-2010 were Cape Coral (Lee), Zephyrhills (Pasco-Hillsborough), Brooksville (Hernando-Pasco), and Lady Lake (Lake-Sumter)³. This correlates well with the high growth counties seen in **Table 2.1.2**. Urban areas near I-75 grew slightly faster than the state average at just under 20%.

³ FDOT Office of Policy Planning, 2010



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

In addition to the percent of growth, the sheer number of new people added to already large population centers is important to note. Statewide, the top ten counties with the highest total change in population between 2000 and 2010 were Orange, Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, Lee, Broward, Pasco, Polk, Osceola and Lake⁴.

I-75 counties with large growth were Hillsborough, Lee, and Pasco. In this short time period, the I-75 corridor added nearly a million new people. That growth translates to roughly the current population of Pinellas County; which was Florida's 6th largest county in 2010.

Table 2.1.3 Top County Raw Growth 2000-2010

County	Growth
Orange	249,612
Miami-Dade	243,073
Hillsborough	230,278
Palm Beach	188,950
Lee	177,866
Broward	125,048
Pasco	119,932
Polk	118,171
Osceola	96,192
Lake	86,524

Source: US Census Bureau, 2011.

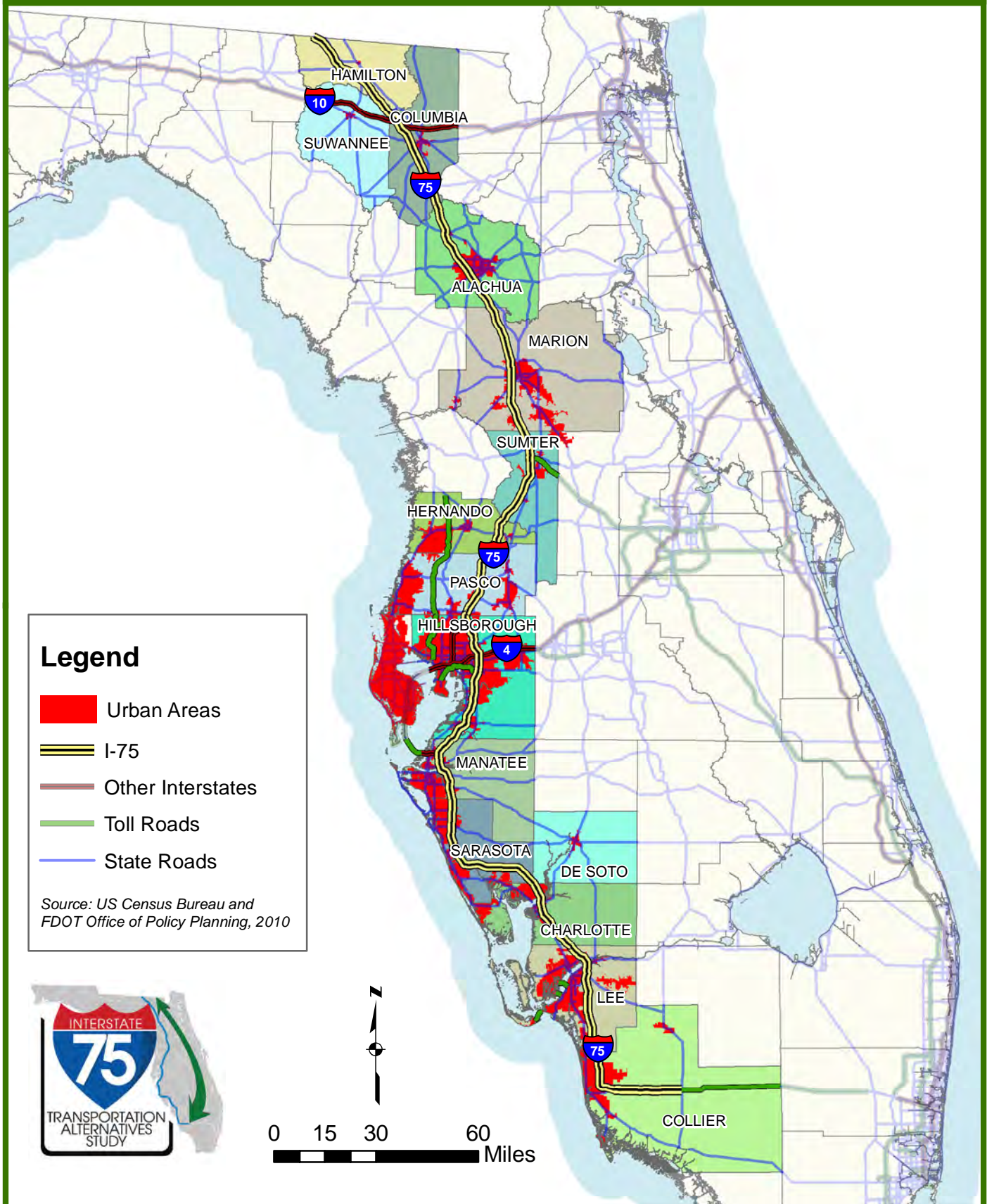
Figure 2.1.2 illustrates the designated urban areas⁵ within the study corridor. These population centers include both incorporated and unincorporated areas. The majority of the southern I-75 corridor is essentially clustered along the coast.

⁴ US Census Bureau, 2011

⁵ 2000 Census Bureau definition of urban areas

Figure 2.1.2

Urban Areas along I-75 Corridor





Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

2.2 Future Demographic Estimates

Florida's population is expected to grow to nearly 25 million in 2035, likely displacing New York as the third largest state in the country⁶. During this period, two I-75 corridor counties may be in the top ten for percent growth. Sumter County is projected to grow the fastest and could more than double in population by 2035 (+120%). Lee County is another county anticipated to grow quickly (+67%).

While quick growth plays an important role in shaping the transportation needs of an area, counties beginning from much larger base populations are expected to see large raw growth. Three I-75 corridor counties are forecast to have some of the highest numerical growth statewide: Hillsborough (+474,308), Lee (+410,676), and Pasco (+220,214).

Together, the fifteen I-75 Corridor counties could add over two million new residents within the span of a generation, growing at a rate of 46%. The state of Florida is expected to grow at a rate of 33%, or over 6 million by 2035. Over a third of that growth is projected to be along the I-75 corridor. Depending on the travel choices made, any new population may add significantly to the congestion already being experienced in Florida.

Population projections are incredibly useful tools, yet most methods rely on extrapolation of past trends. Florida's typical growth trends, for example, have changed recently with the downturn in the economy and other factors. The 2009 and 2010 FDOT Office of Policy Planning population estimates show the first decreases in county populations in years⁷. **Figure 2.2.1** shows the recent slowdown of Florida's growth, as well as the population forecasted to 2035. **Table 2.2.1** includes population projections through 2035 for the I-75 corridor by county, as well as expected numerical and percent change.

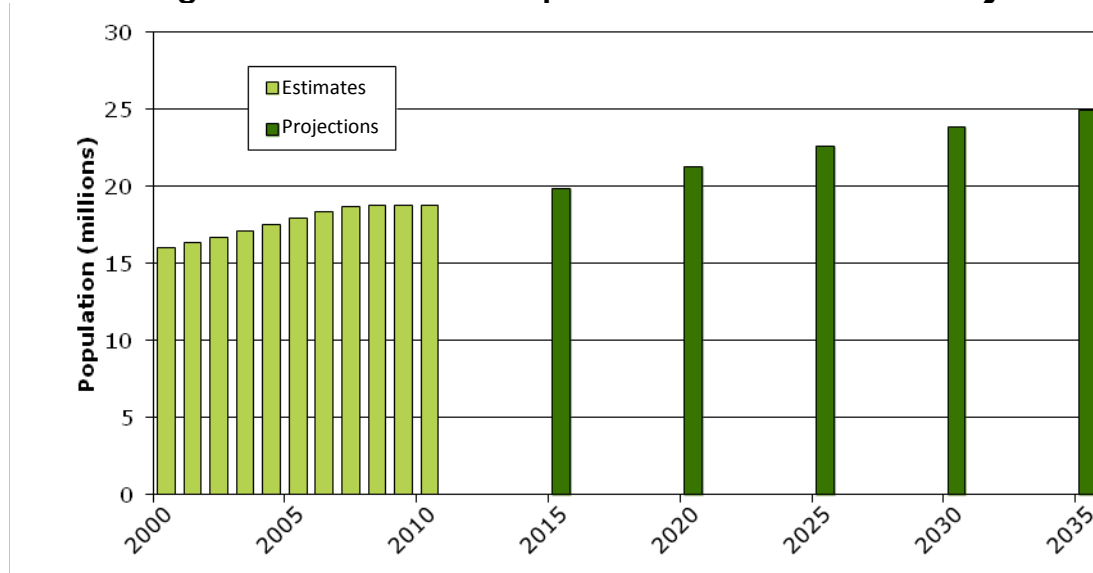
⁶ Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) and FDOT Office of Policy Planning, 2010

⁷ FDOT Office of Policy Planning, 2010



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Figure 2.2.1 Florida Population Estimates and Projections



Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) 2010 and US Census Bureau, 2011

Table 2.2.1 County Level Population Projections- BEBR Medium Series

County and State	April 1, 2010	Projection April 1 2035 *	Raw Change	Percent Change
Collier	321,520	518,100	196,580	61.1%
Lee	618,754	1,025,800	407,046	65.8%
Charlotte	159,978	223,500	63,522	39.7%
DeSoto	34,862	41,500	6,638	19.0%
Sarasota	379,448	534,700	155,252	40.9%
Manatee	322,833	441,400	118,567	36.7%
Hillsborough	1,229,226	1,671,200	441,974	36.0%
Pasco	464,697	660,000	195,303	42.0%
Hernando	172,778	247,600	74,822	43.3%
Sumter	93,420	209,800	116,380	124.6%
Marion	331,298	501,000	169,702	51.2%
Alachua	247,336	338,900	91,564	37.0%
Columbia	67,531	89,400	21,869	32.4%
Suwannee	41,551	55,500	13,949	33.6%
Hamilton	14,799	16,800	2,001	13.5%
I-75 Corridor	4,500,031	6,575,200	2,073,159	46.0%
Florida Total	18,801,310	29,970,700	6,169,390	32.8%

* Based on April 1, 2009 estimates

Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) 2010 and US Census Bureau, 2011



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

2.3 Special Population Considerations

A key focus of the new 2060 Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) is broader coordination in transportation planning. Megaregions are emerging as a new geographic unit, connected by economic relationships and shared infrastructure⁸. Common transportation systems are a large part of what makes a megaregion, as their populations must be connected within and to each other in order to compete. Analyzing the I-75 corridor as a whole for alternatives is an example of the expanded coordination in planning that will be more necessary in the future.

Megaregions are nationally significant networks of cities created by the expansion and conglomeration of multiple urban areas⁵. The strength of Florida's cities and transportation in the peninsula have made it a megaregion all its own. Many panhandle cities are part of another megaregion, labeled the Gulf Coast. **Figure 2.3.1** shows the 11 emerging megaregions, including Florida and the Gulf Coast.

America 2050, a national planning initiative led by regional planners, scholars, and policy makers, describes the Florida megaregion as fast-growing and diverse. It is dense and populous, with many new foreign residents. The population of the megaregion is projected to grow to over 21 million by 2025; a substantial 45% growth from the year 2000. Principal cities were listed as Miami, Orlando, Tampa, and Jacksonville, with other smaller nodes along I-75, I-95, and I-4. Obviously transportation corridors are important, given the locations of all highlighted areas. **Figure 2.3.2** shows the metro areas with the largest populations within the megaregion. Along the I-75 corridor from south to north, Cape Coral, Sarasota, and Tampa are the largest, with other significant cities including Naples, Port Charlotte, Ocala, and Gainesville. Reliable transportation between population centers along the I-75 corridor is essential to the success of the Florida megaregion.

As the shrinking world is changing the way we compete economically, development patterns are also changing to reflect new ideals. By 2060, Florida may be very different from today. Instead of the wide open trend of the last 50 years, new development may soon be focused in urban areas. This higher density will perhaps increase the feasibility of multimodal transportation options, as well as create opportunities to retain open spaces between urban areas.

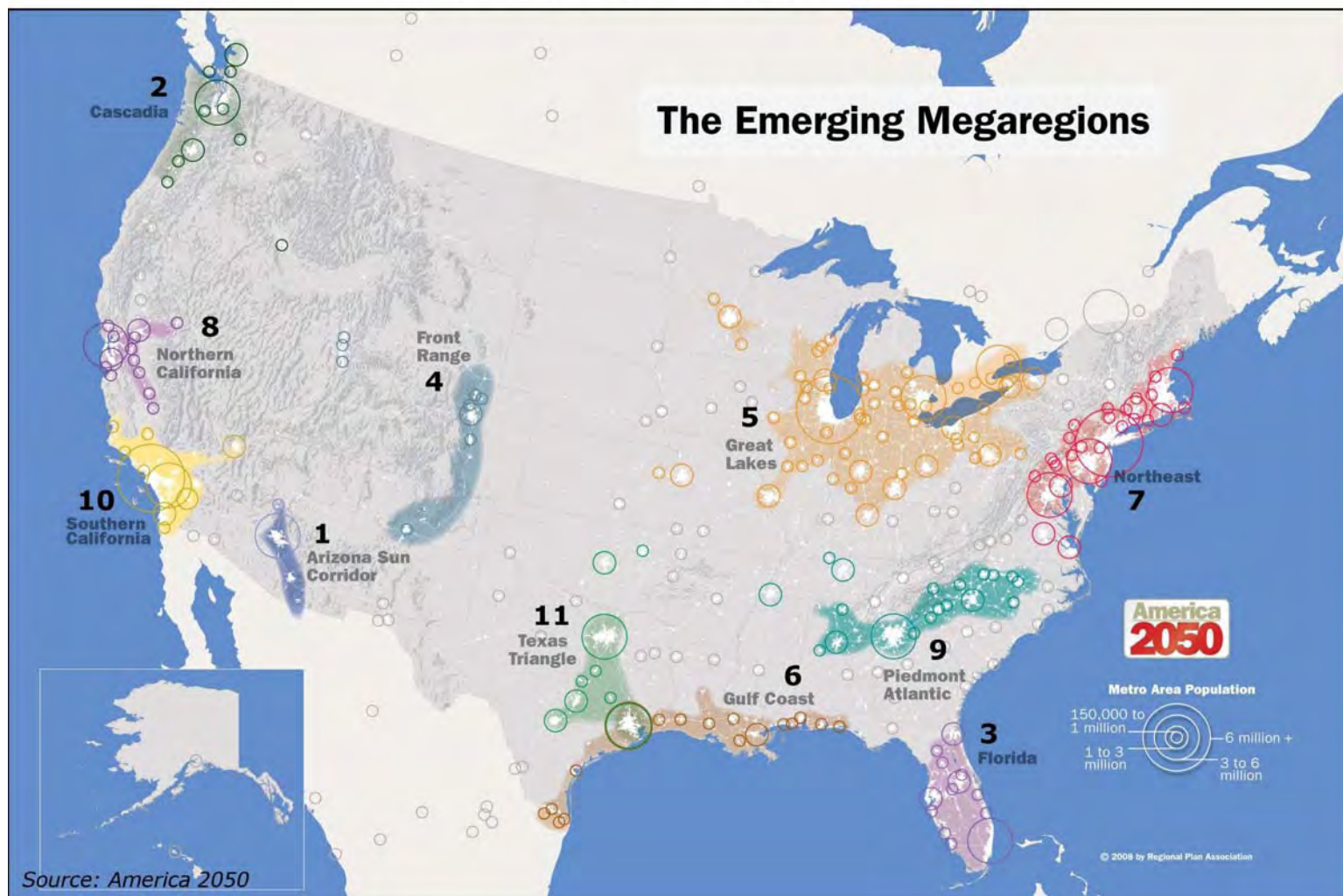
Another key emphasis will likely be more mixed use development and redevelopment. This will allow for easier access from homes to jobs, schools, shopping, and services, rather than the current trend of building an abundance of homes isolated from any other use. However, some uses are better left in isolation for a variety of reasons, and rural employment centers may become more popular in

⁸ 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, 2010



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Figure 2.3.1 U.S. Emerging Megaregions

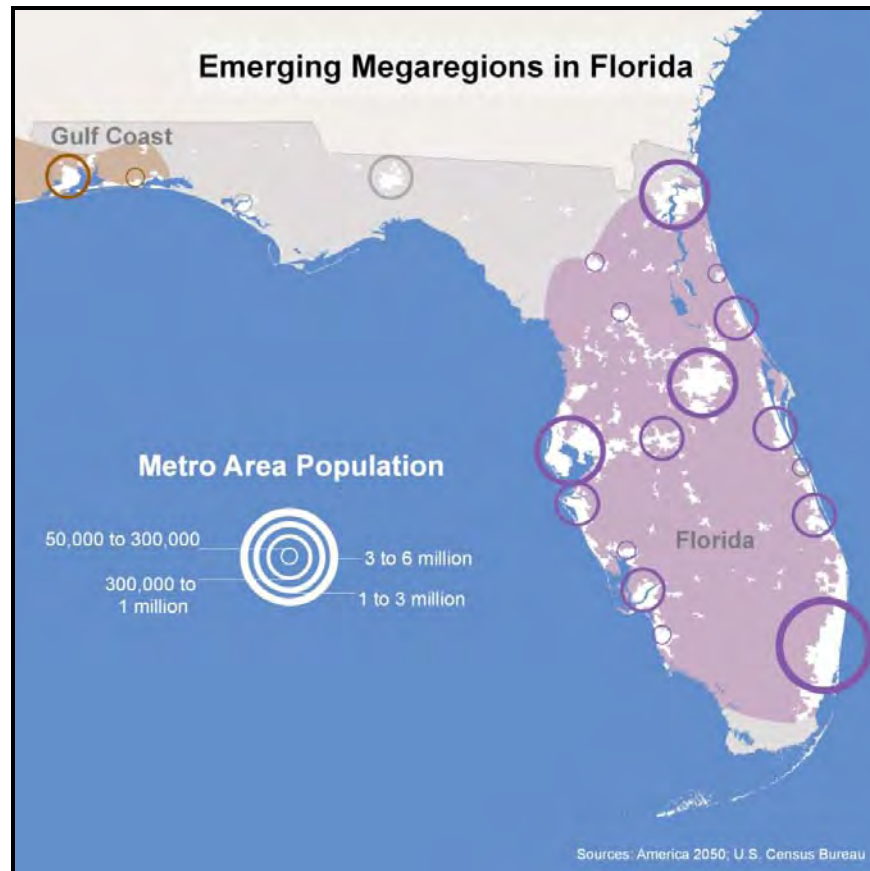


Source: America 2050



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Figure 2.3.2 Florida Megaregion



Source: America 2050

the future. In order to maintain a range of choices for Florida's diverse population to live, high-quality transportation between cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas will be absolutely necessary.

Development along the I-75 corridor is already fairly high density around Tampa, Sarasota, and Cape Coral. Due to a number of factors including the allure of the coastal areas and some environmental unsuitability for development, the population of many of these southern counties is clustered in urban areas along the I-75 corridor. This clustering of development may make alternative transportation options more cost feasible in these areas. The northern portions of the corridor are more rural, with only a few urban areas. The population density characteristics of the northern and southern portions of the corridor are quite different, and therefore will likely require different approaches in alternative options. **Figures 2.3.3A and 2.3.3B** show population density of the I-75 corridor counties by census tract.

Figure 2.3.3A

Population Density by Census Tract

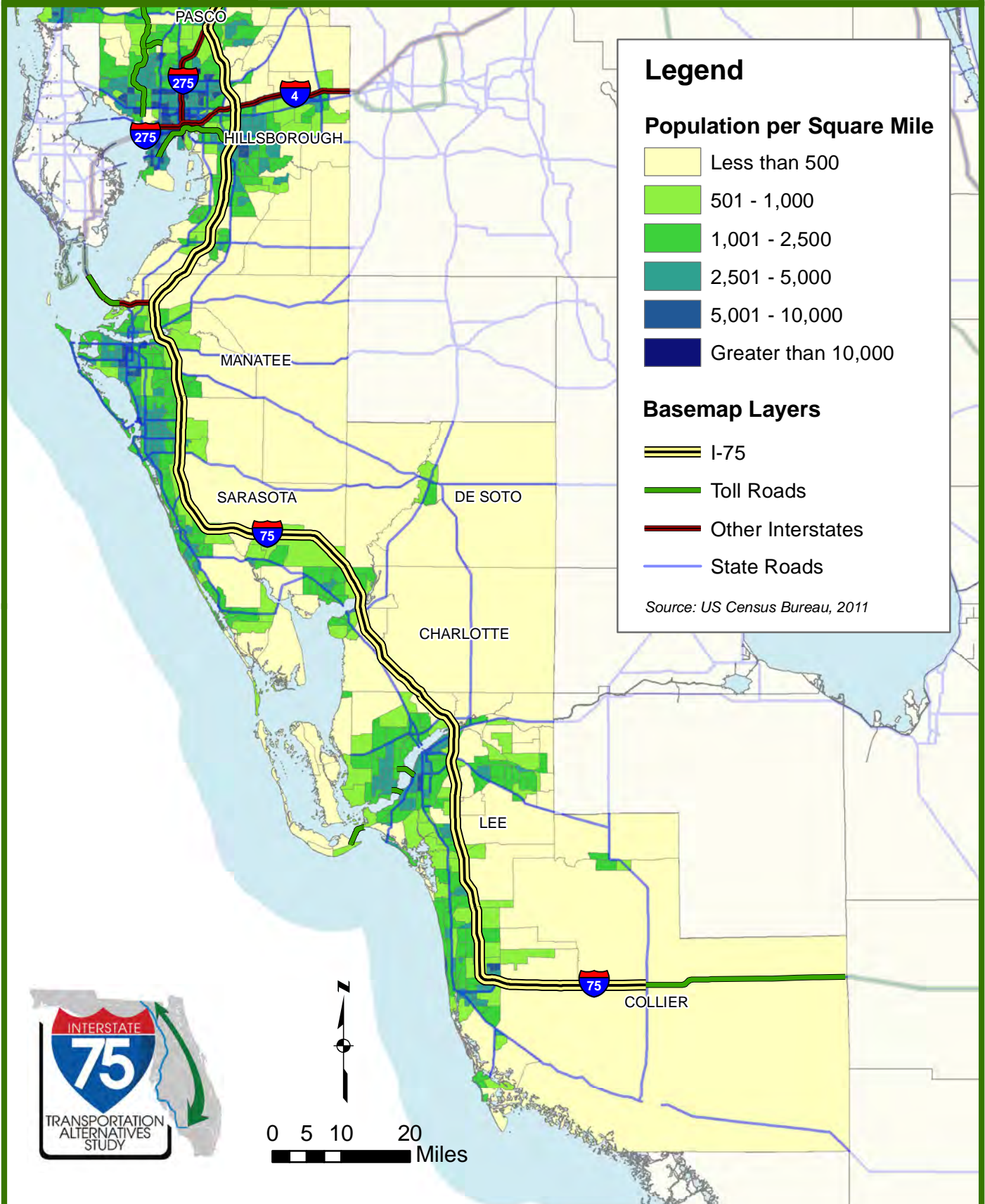
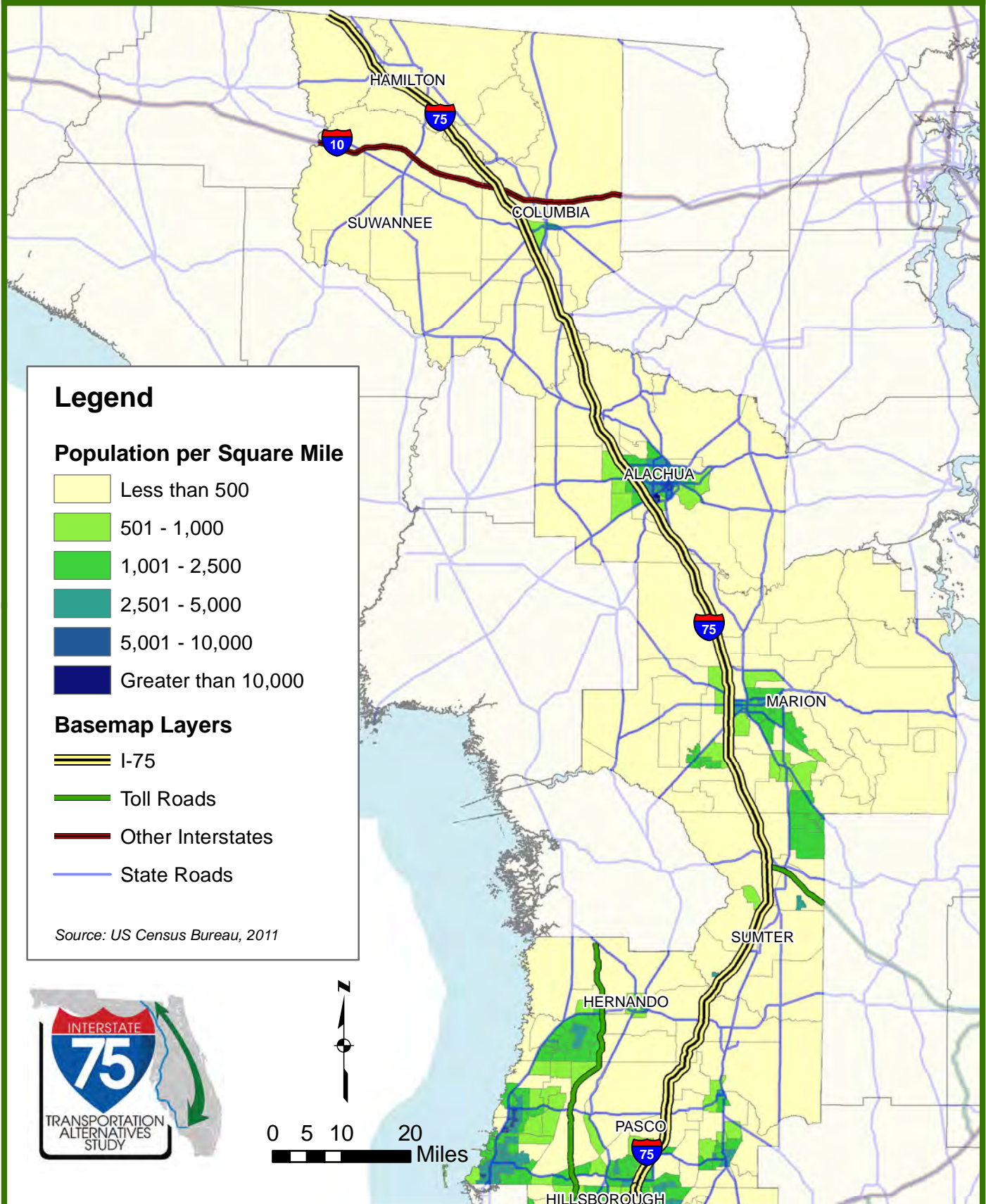


Figure 2.3.3B

Population Density by Census Tract





Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

Another key focus of the 2060 FTP is demographic change in Florida. In addition to the large tourist population present year-round in Florida, the number of students, disabled persons, and others with specific mobility needs will continue to grow⁹. For example, the 65+ age group has unique mobility needs and is projected to grow very quickly. Approximately 26% of Floridians are projected to be over the age of 65 by 2030, compared with about 20% nationally¹⁰. Along the I-75 corridor, over 40% of the population will be over the age of 65 in Charlotte, Sarasota, and Sumter counties by 2030.

As people age, they often become less able to drive safely. In many areas being an elderly non-driver means living in isolation, as there are no other means to participate in social interaction. Future alternative transportation options will be necessary in most I-75 counties to provide for an aging population; considerations must be given to accommodate their specific needs. **Table 2.3.1** shows the anticipated growth of the elderly as a proportion of the population from 2009 to 2030.

Table 2.3.1 Elderly (65+) Population by County

County	2009	2030	Percent of Population 2009	Percent of Population 2030
Collier	80,107	161,226	24.1%	33.3%
Lee	190,255	316,810	30.9%	33.4%
Charlotte	56,334	93,510	34.0%	44.0%
DeSoto	6,419	9,733	18.4%	24.2%
Sarasota	122,567	221,760	31.5%	43.7%
Manatee	72,230	125,292	22.7%	29.9%
Hillsborough	147,574	308,277	12.3%	19.5%
Pasco	104,126	199,538	23.7%	32.2%
Hernando	48,098	92,066	29.1%	39.7%
Sumter	30,029	76,298	31.5%	40.6%
Marion	80,787	161,558	24.4%	33.7%
Alachua	26,123	58,980	10.2%	18.2%
Columbia	10,593	22,796	16.0%	26.8%
Suwannee	7,854	14,515	19.5%	27.2%
Hamilton	1,810	3,336	12.2%	20.4%

⁹ 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, 2010

¹⁰ 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, 2010



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

County	2009	2030	Percent of Population 2009	Percent of Population 2030
I-75 Corridor	651,791	1,284,416	19.7%	28.5%
Florida Total	3,283,390	6,194,272	17.5%	26.0%

Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) 2010

Special population considerations must also include a discussion of minority and low income populations present in the I-75 corridor counties. Minority and low-income populations have unique mobility needs such as cost of transportation options and access to transit that must be considered in the planning process. **Table 2.3.2** shows minority population and poverty levels as a percentage of populations within each county. When future transportation alternatives are proposed, it is important to ensure that these groups are not affected disproportionately.

Table 2.3.2 Minority Population and Population Below Poverty Level

County	Total Population	Minority Population	Percent of Total Population	Estimated Population Below Poverty Level	Percent of Total Population
Collier	321,520	51,924	16.1%	38,196	11.9%
Lee	618,754	105,258	17.0%	72,075	11.6%
Charlotte	159,978	15,919	10.0%	16,543	10.3%
DeSoto	34,862	11,768	33.8%	8,708	25.0%
Sarasota	379,448	37,358	9.8%	38,849	10.2%
Manatee	322,833	58,511	18.1%	40,182	12.4%
Hillsborough	1,229,226	353,089	28.7%	167,388	13.6%
Pasco	464,697	54,913	11.8%	55,327	11.9%
Hernando	172,778	18,180	10.5%	19,803	11.5%
Sumter	93,420	12,527	13.4%	8,594	9.2%
Marion	331,298	63,014	19.0%	48,749	14.7%
Alachua	247,336	75,180	30.4%	53,992	21.8%
Columbia	67,531	14,920	22.1%	9,837	14.6%
Suwannee	41,551	7,252	17.5%	6,918	16.6%
Hamilton	14,799	5,948	40.2%	2,492	16.8%
Corridor Total	4,500,031	885,761	19.7%	587,653	13.1%

Source: Census 2010; American Community Survey 2006-2010 5-year estimates



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

The review of the data presented in this section should not be considered a complete analysis of the study area, but rather the initial step in identifying demographic issues. More detailed, precise information may be necessary in future phases of this study. If any projects advance, impacts to the general population and special populations will be assessed following FDOT processes and procedures and will be coordinated with appropriate resource and regulatory agencies.



Chapter 2 - Demographic Elements

This page intentionally left blank.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Interstate 75 is a principal arterial interstate that runs through north, central, and southwest Florida covering 15 counties. The study limits begin at SR 29 the western end of Alligator Alley in Collier County and extend to the terminus at the Florida/Georgia state line in Hamilton County. Identifying transportation conditions along the corridor helps to determine existing conditions and known traffic needs and demands along the corridor. The sections of this chapter provide further detail on various elements of transportation conditions in the corridor, including the following areas:

- Previous studies in the I-75 corridor and proposed improvements
- Transportation network system characteristics including existing SIS highway connections, speed limits, number of through lanes, and right-of-way
- Existing Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure and capabilities
- Existing traffic characteristics and operations
- Planned improvements
- Future traffic operations
- Existing freight mobility system, including and an inventory of intermodal
- locations and characteristics

3.1 Previous Transportation Studies

This section presents the existing conditions, physical description, and environmental considerations of the I-75 corridor. It is necessary to gather and evaluate data from a variety of sources, which include previous studies, reports, and transportation plans. This section provides a comprehensive summary of the most recent and relevant studies produced for the project corridor. The time period of review for the studies is from 2002 to 2011 and reflects available data at the time of this analysis. **Table 3.1.1** contains the summaries of the studies completed in the corridor.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
1	Collier County MPO	Collier County 2035 LRTP	Nov-10	I-75 is a big part of the regional ITS framework, and portions are listed as having a high number of crashes. Segments of I-75 are also included in the deficient roadway segments to be addressed in the 2035 Needs Plan. Collier Boulevard (CR 951) and Everglades Boulevard at I-75 are listed as Critical Need Intersections. Many segments are referenced in the Freight and Goods Movement section, stressing the importance of I-75 in that regard. The Needs Plan section mentioned the options to provide an alternative to I-75 for hurricane evacuation.
1	Collier	East of Collier Boulevard (SR 951) to Collier/Lee County Line PD&E	Oct-02	This segment of I-75 is approximately 13.6 miles in length and is located in Collier County. Two phases of transportation improvements have been recommended for this segment of I-75: (1) Mobility 2000 Expansion, which proposes adding one lane in each direction to the existing four-lanes from Golden Gate Parkway to the Collier-Lee County Line; and (2) the 2030 Ultimate Improvements which proposes improvement for a future expansion into a six-, eight-, and ten-lane divided rural expressway.
1	Collier/ Lee	Collier and Lee County Managed Lane Study	-07	A study was conducted to evaluate a proposed express toll lane on I-75 through Collier and Lee Counties. Toll lanes were evaluated over a 35-mile study area along I-75, extending from the new interchange at Golden Gate Parkway (SR 881) to Palm Beach Boulevard (SR 80).



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
1	Lee County MPO	Lee County 2035 LRTP	Dec-10	Forecasts using the LC model on the Existing Plus Committed (E+C) Network showed I-75 from Ft. Myers south would have vehicle to capacity (v/c) ratios of between 1.25-2. Several very small segments near interchanges were shown with a future v/c ratio over 2.5. The Congestion Management Plan focused on the I-75 Incident Management System and other ITS. Under future strategies, it listed HOV/HOT lanes as a possibility. I-75 is also listed many times on the Prioritized Freight Corridors list.
1	Lee	Collier/Lee County Line to North of Bayshore Road (SR 78) PD&E	Nov-02	This segment of I-75 extends the Collier/Lee County line to north of Bayshore Road (SR 78). The segment is approximately 27.9 miles long and is located in Lee County. The proposed improvements for this segment of I-75 would occur in two stages: Mobility 2000 Expansion and 2030 Ultimate Improvements.
1	Lee/ Charlotte	North of Bayshore Road (SR 78) to north of Kings Highway PD&E	Oct-06	This segment of I-75 spans approximately 27 miles in length and is located in Lee and Charlotte counties. Recommended improvements for this segment consist of widening the mainline from four to eight general-use lanes. These improvements have been recommended for construction in two phases. The recommendation for the I-75/US 17 interchange includes a new directional ramp in the northwest quadrant, a dual loop ramp in the southeast quadrant, and modification to the existing traffic control, and lanes for southbound and eastbound right-turn movements.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
1	Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO	Charlotte County 2035 LRTP	Dec-10	The LRTP emphasizes a shift from highway capacity to investments that provide economic stability and sustainability. The I-75 corridor regional projects include express bus and managed lanes. There is also a push to make US 41 more multimodal so freight will move to US 301 and perhaps to I-75. Two new bridges over the Manatee River should substantially improve travel conditions on I-75.
1	Charlotte/Sarasota	North of Kings Highway to North River Road PD&E	Oct-06	This segment of I-75 is approximately 21 miles in length and is located in both Charlotte and Sarasota Counties. FDOT recommends widening I-75 from four lanes to eight lanes in two phases. Three major interchanges would also be improved within this segment, including Toledo Blade Boulevard and North River Road. No additional right-of-way is anticipated for the mainline widening; however, right-of-way acquisition would be necessary for stormwater treatment facilities. No new interchanges were evaluated in the PD&E study.
1	Sarasota	North River Road to SR 681 PD&E	Oct-03	This segment of I-75 is approximately 9.4 miles in length and is located in Sarasota county. The proposed improvements for this segment of I-75 include widening North River Road to Jacaranda Boulevard from four lanes to six lanes and widening the segment from Jacaranda Boulevard to SR 681 from four lanes to eight lanes.
1	Sarasota/Manatee MPO	Sarasota-Manatee 2035 LRTP	Jan-11	The needs assessment lists ITS along all of I-75, as well as a few added interchanges. Much of I-75 is projected to be 'severely congested' with a v/c ratio of over 1.20 by 2035.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
1	Sarasota/ Manatee	SR 681 to Moccasin Wallow Road (CR 675) PD&E	Sept-08	This segment of I-75 spans approximately 30.2 miles in length and is located in Sarasota and Manatee counties. Proposed improvements for this segment of the I-75 southern corridor fall into three categories: short-term, mid-term, and long-term. The improvements include changes to the mainline, ramps, and interchanges. The ultimate geometry is a combination of eight-lane freeway segments, four roadway system segments, and two-lane on-/off ramps. The ultimate recommendation also includes grade separations and flyover ramps for some locations.
1 and 7	Manatee/ Hillsborough	Moccasin Wallow Road (CR 675) to south of US 301 PD&E	May-10	This segment of I-75 is approximately 25 miles in length and is located in Manatee and Hillsborough counties. The preferred alternative for this study contains three 12-foot general use lanes (GULs) in each direction on the outside and two special use lanes (SULs) in each direction on the inside. The GULs and SULs would be separated by a 6-foot buffer in each direction. This section of I-75 is currently a six-lane limited access facility.
7	Hillsborough County MPO	Hillsborough County 2035 LRTP	Jan-11	The plan focuses on multimodal options and changing land use patterns. I-75 north of Tampa should be expanded to 6 lanes and receive ITS improvements by 2035.
7	Hillsborough	South of US 301 to north of Fletcher Ave (CR 582 A) PD&E	May-10	This segment of I-75 is approximately 15.5 miles in length and is located in Hillsborough County. The preferred alternative for this study contains three 12-foot general use lanes (GULs) in each direction on the outside and three 12-foot special use lanes (SULs) in each direction on the inside. The GULs and the SULs would be separated by a 6-foot buffer in each direction.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
7	Pasco County MPO	Pasco County 2035 LRTP	Dec-09	The Cost Affordable Plan intends nearly 82% of available revenues to be spent on highway expansion projects, with approximately 11% going towards transit-related expenditures (operations and capital). Proposed roadway improvements include six-laning I-75 north of SR 56 to Hernando County, and reconstructing I-75 interchanges at SR 56 and SR 52.
7	Hernando County MPO	Hernando County 2035 LRTP	Dec-09	In the financial overview, Hernando County lists highway costs as nearly 94% of the distribution, with other money going to transit and ITS projects. Improvements to I-75 include expanding to six lanes and interchange improvements at SR 50.
7 and 5	Pasco/ Hernando/ Sumter	SR 52 to CR 476B PD&E	Jun-07	This segment of I-75 is approximately 20.8 miles in length and is located in Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter counties. It is recommended that the proposed improvements for this segment of the I-75 corridor be implemented in two phases. In Phase 1, the mainline of I-75 will be widened to provide six lanes. In Phase 2, the mainline of I-75 will be widened to provide 8 lanes and construction improvements at the CR 41 and SR 50.
5	Lake-Sumter MPO	Lake-Sumter County 2035 LRTP	Dec-10	MPO Needs Plan projects focused mainly on widening of state roads and other arterials. I-75 projects include new interchanges at CR 475 and CR 468 (Monarch Ranch).
5	Marion	I-75 Interchange Operational Analysis in Ocala Area	Jul-08	A System Operational Analysis Report (SOAR) was completed for several interchanges along I-75 in the Ocala area including I-75 and CR 484, SR 200, SR 40, US 27, SR 326, and CR 318. The report analyzed the existing conditions and recommended low cost improvements to extend the operational lifespan of the interchanges. Future interchange improvements were analyzed for their potential to maintain or exceed the adopted LOS at the study intersections through the year 2017.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
5	Ocala-Marion TPO	Marion County 2035 LRTP	Nov-10	I-75 expansion is unfunded, and cost feasible projects are new or modified interchanges at US 27, SR 40, SW 95 th Street, and CR 484.
2	Gainesville MTPO	Gainesville Metropolitan Area Year 2035 Livable Community Reinvestment Plan	Oct-10	The 2035 Update includes modifications to I-75 interchanges at Williston Road, Archer Road, Newberry Road, and NW 39 th Avenue. ITS is also recommended from the Marion County line to the Columbia County line, with additions of dynamic message signs, surveillance cameras, and automatic traffic detection technology.
1 and 7	Statewide	I-75 Sketch Interstate Plan South	Dec-09	A review of previous studies and other transportation data indicates that the transportation needs of the area significantly outstrip available funding. Specifically, in Collier and Lee counties, the combination of natural features, protected lands, and the capacity of the parallel facilities indicates a need for a comprehensive investment strategy to complete the identified improvements. Of the more than 50 interchanges along the study area, improvement recommendations were made for 25. Due to the location, number, and proximity of SIS-designated hubs, additional analysis of future freight movements may be warranted in Manatee, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties. Four ITS projects are programmed in Charlotte, Hillsborough, and Pasco Counties. In a generalized level of service analysis, six segments were found to be operating at unacceptable levels. Those segments were in Lee, Sarasota, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
2 and 5	Statewide	I-75 Sketch Interstate Plan North	Aug-10	An examination of the existing I-75 interstate corridor reveals several general problem areas including lack of capacity, specifically between I-10 and the Turnpike. I-75 south of the Turnpike is currently planned to be widened. There is heavy congestion in the urbanized areas of Ocala and Gainesville due to local traffic. Safety concerns exist at the Turnpike, rural Sumter County, Ocala, and Gainesville. Increased truck demand may result in future truck traffic projections being underestimated. There is a lack of sufficient limited access, high speed, and high volume east west and parallel facilities, specifically between the Turnpike and Ocala.
2	Statewide	I-75 Interstate Master Plan	May-09	The preferred alternative option for the I-75 corridor includes adding basic freeway lanes. The additional general purpose lanes will increase the capacity of the interstate. Additional considerations for separating I-75 mainline through traffic and local traffic in the Gainesville area may be warranted in the future based on actual traffic increases and safety issues in this area. The preferred mobility alternative also includes improvements to existing interchanges within the study corridor. A new interchange is proposed at NW 23 rd Avenue in Alachua County.
All	Statewide	2040 SIS Unfunded Needs Plan	Oct-11	Identifies the SIS network's unfunded multimodal project needs through 2040. The Unfunded Needs Plan identifies transportation projects on the SIS which help meet mobility needs, but where funding is not expected to be available during the 25-year time period of the SIS Funding Strategy. Projects in the Unfunded Needs Plan could move forward into the SIS Cost Feasible Plan as funds become available.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.1.1 Previous Transportation Studies I-75 Corridor

FDOT District	MPO/ County	Plan/Study	Date	Overview
All	Statewide	2035 Cost Feasible Plan	Dec-09	The CFP illustrates projects on the SIS which are considered financially feasible during the last fifteen years (Years 11 to 25) of the State's Long Range Plan, based on current revenue forecasts. Projects in this plan could move forward into the Work Program as funds become available. They may also move backwards into the Unfunded Needs Plan if revenues fall short of projections, or the cost estimates and/or priorities change.
All	Statewide	SIS Connector Plan	-05	Identifies all of the SIS Connectors projects that were planned on the network.

3.2 Transportation Network System Characteristics

The transportation network characteristics identify major qualities of the physical roadway system of I-75 and its connections. The following section provides details of the existing roadway conditions and includes descriptions of SIS highway connections, speed limit, number of through lanes, and right-of-way.

Existing SIS Highway Connections

I-75 is a key facility of the Strategic Intermodal System. The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) encompasses transportation facilities of statewide and interregional significance, and focuses on the efficient movement of passengers and freight. SIS connectors are also important components of the system. The connectors are selected based on importance in linking major transportation corridors and hubs.

Figures 3.2.1A and 3.2.1B display the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facilities and characteristics in the corridor. The maps are intended to illustrate major highway connections to the I-75 corridor including those existing and emerging SIS links and connectors. As reflected in the figures, I-75 intersects several major roadway facilities including I-275, I-4, the Florida Turnpike, and I-10. In each of the counties of the corridor, I-75 links other SIS corridors and numerous state roads. The high connectivity of I-75 to these other corridors delivers an essential avenue to alternative routes.

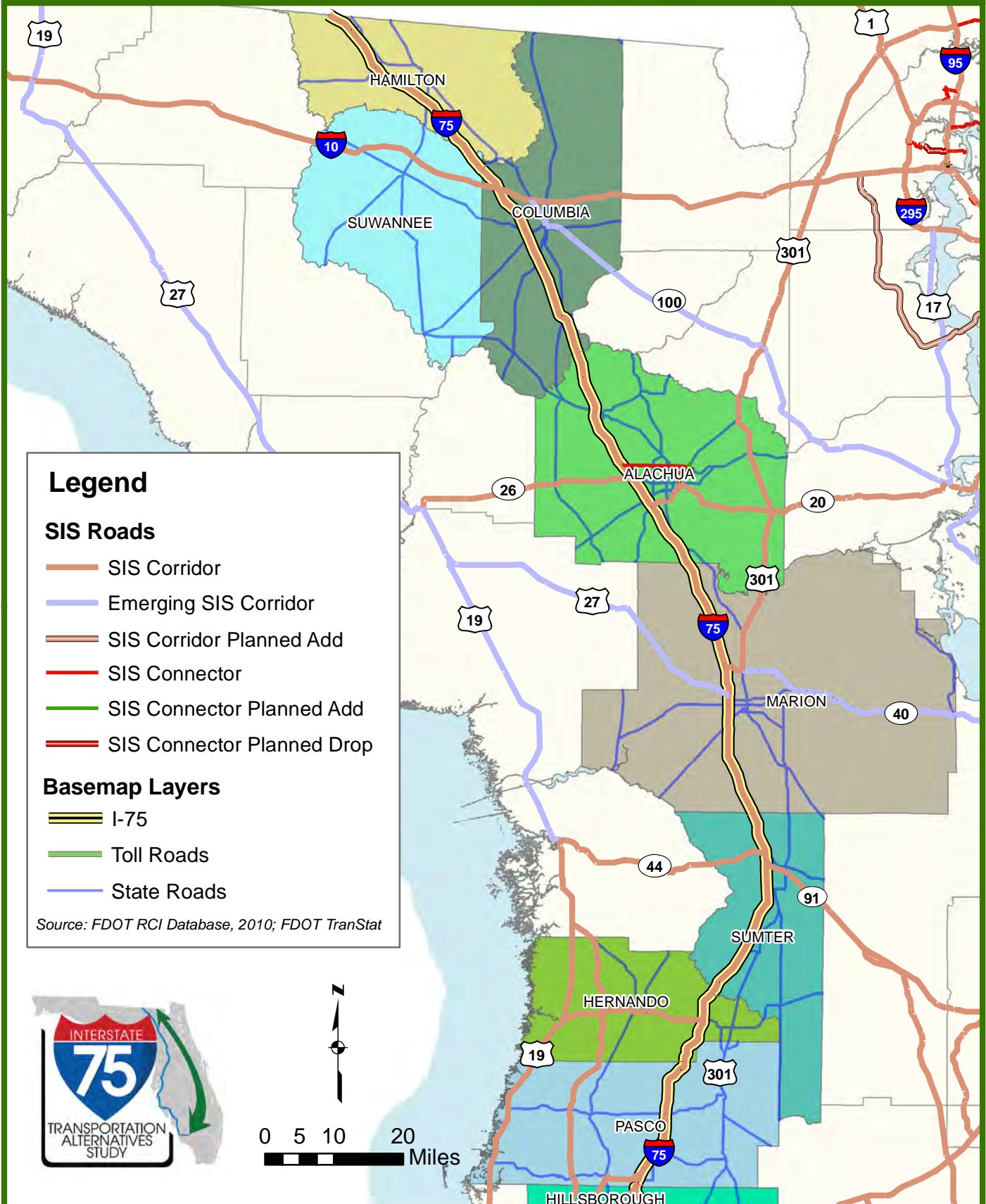
Figure 3.2.1A

I-75 Existing SIS Highway Connections



Figure 3.2.1B

I-75 Existing SIS Highway Connections





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Existing Speed Limits

The existing speed limits along the I-75 corridor are portrayed in **Figures 3.2.2A** and **3.2.2B**. The figures depict speed limits using color coded line segments for the actual posted speed limit.

I-75 maintains a posted speed of 70 mph for most of its length in both the southern and northern portions of the study area. There is only one segment in the corridor that has a posted speed of less than 70 mph: the convergence of I-75 and I-275 in Pasco County, which has a speed limit of 65 mph. Posted speeds along the I-75 corridor may vary due to construction; however, the variable construction speeds are not depicted in the figures.

Existing Number of Through Lanes

Figure 3.2.3A and **Figure 3.2.3B** display the existing number of through lanes for I-75. Please note that auxiliary lanes are excluded. The existing number of through lanes does not include projects under construction which include:

- South of Lockett Rd in Lee County to south of SR 78 - Add two lanes to build six lanes with anticipated completion in 2012
- South of Fowler Ave in Hillsborough County to CR 54 in Pasco County - Add two lanes to build six lanes with anticipated completion in 2012

From SR 29 at Alligator Alley to the north curve of I-75 at CR 886 in Collier County, the interstate maintains a four lane configuration. At this point, I-75 becomes six lanes and continues into Lee County to just south of SR 82 where it decreases to four lanes. I-75 remains four lanes through Charlotte County, but does increase briefly to six lanes for the portion of the interstate that crosses the Charlotte Harbor estuary. When I-75 reaches SR 681 in Sarasota County, the number of lanes increases to six lanes. In Manatee County, there are six lanes except for two short segments where I-275 connects to I-75 where the number goes up to eight. For most of the length of I-75 in Hillsborough, there are six lanes. Between Gibsonton Dr and US 301, there are six through lanes plus two auxiliary lanes. North of US 301, near Fowler Ave, the number of lanes decreases to four.

At the convergence of I-75 and I-275 north, the number of lanes increases briefly; however, I-75 remains four lanes through the rest of Pasco and Hernando Counties. At the Hernando/Sumter County line, the interstate increases to a six lanes and carries this configuration to the end of the study limits at the Florida/Georgia border in Hamilton County.

Figure 3.2.2A

I-75 Existing Speed Limit

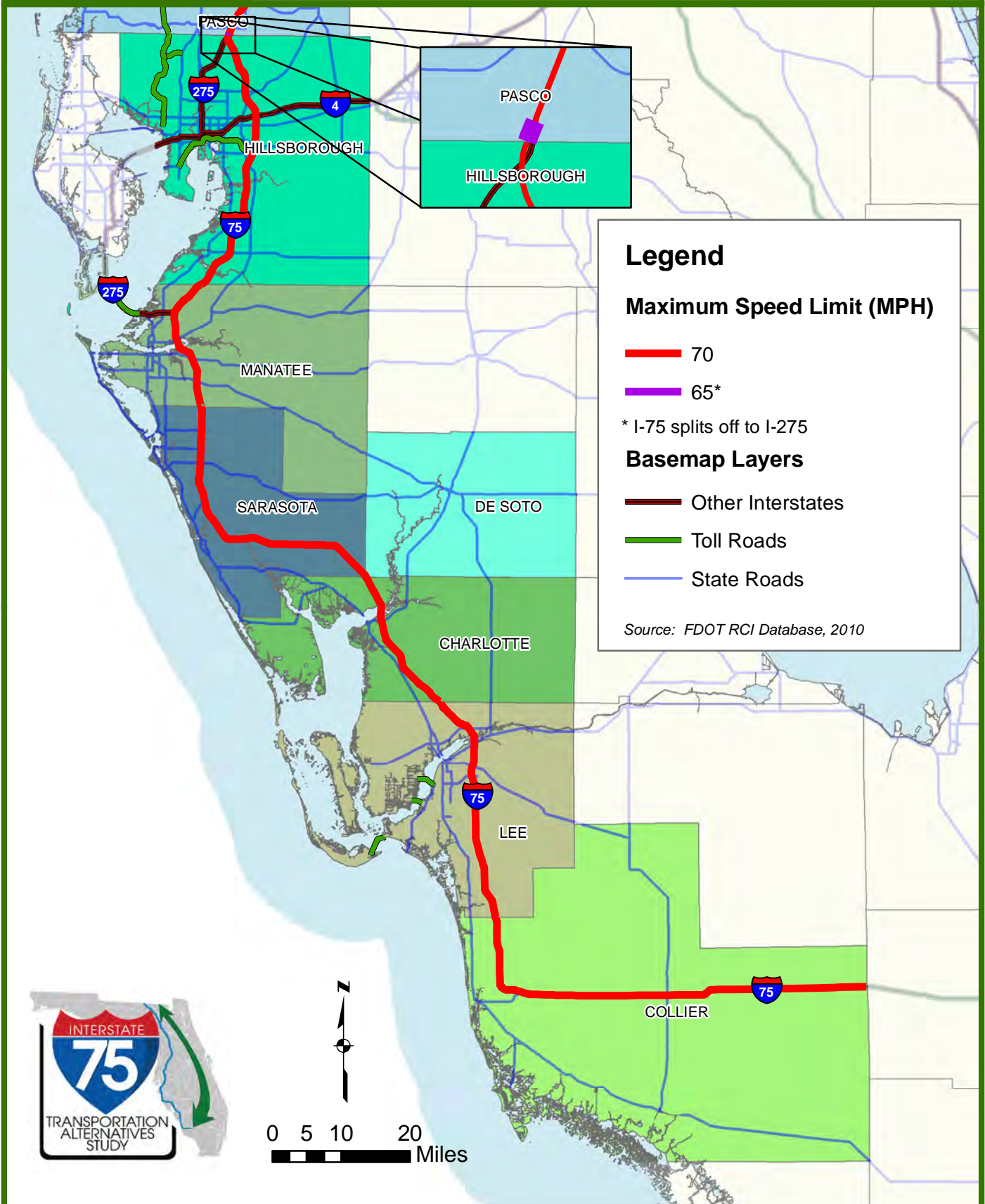


Figure 3.2.2B

I-75 Existing Speed Limits

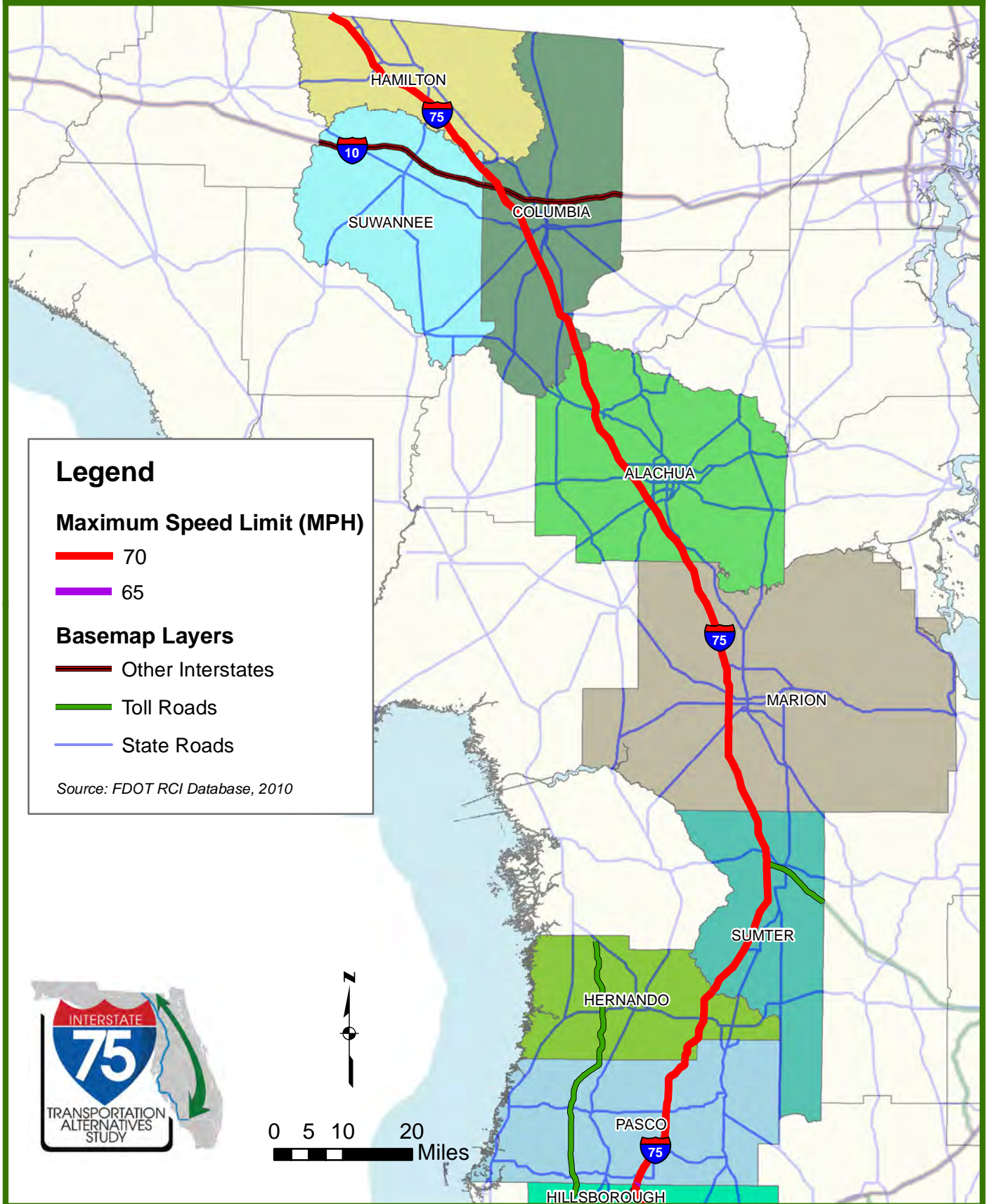


Figure 3.2.3A

I-75 Existing Number of Through Lanes

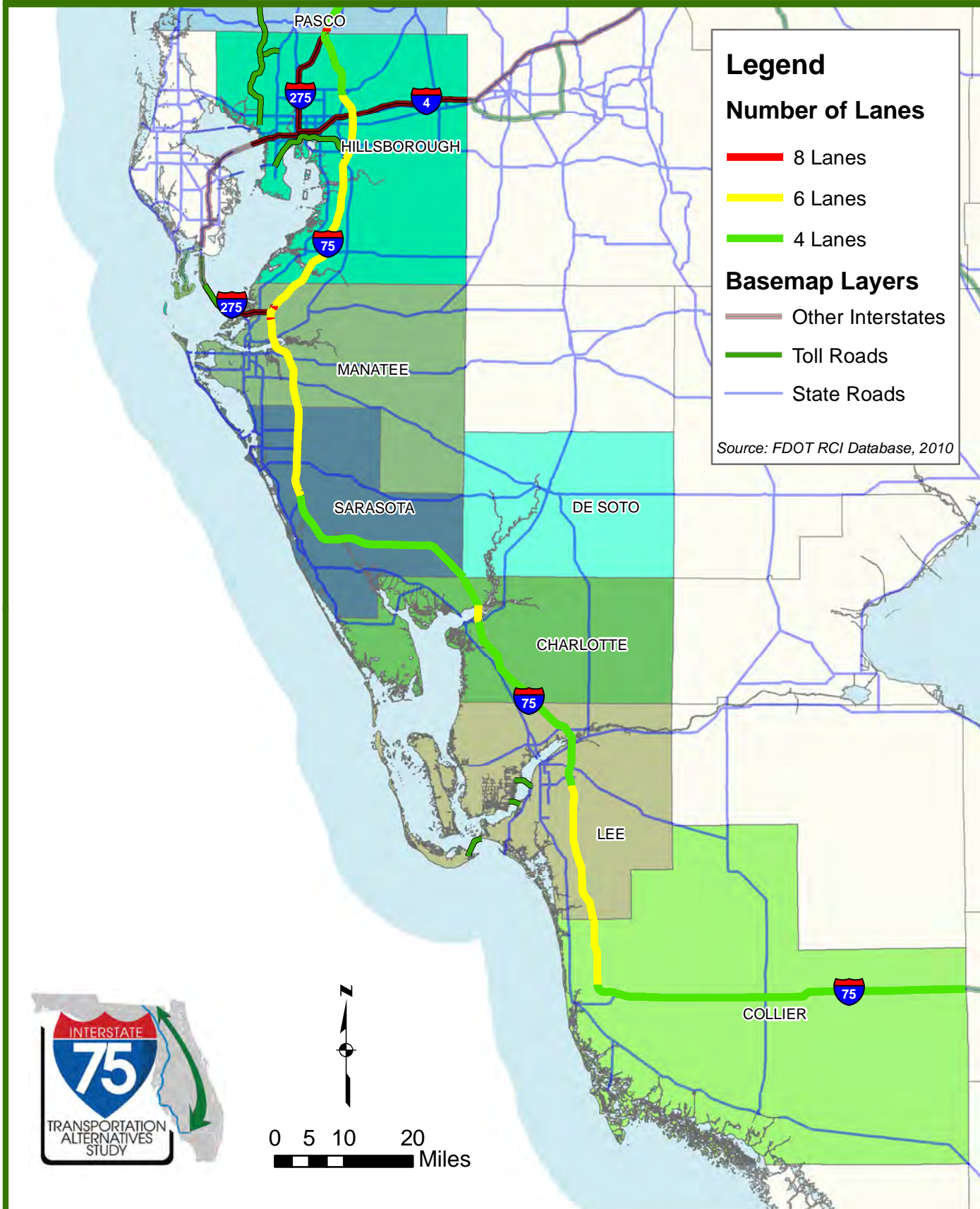
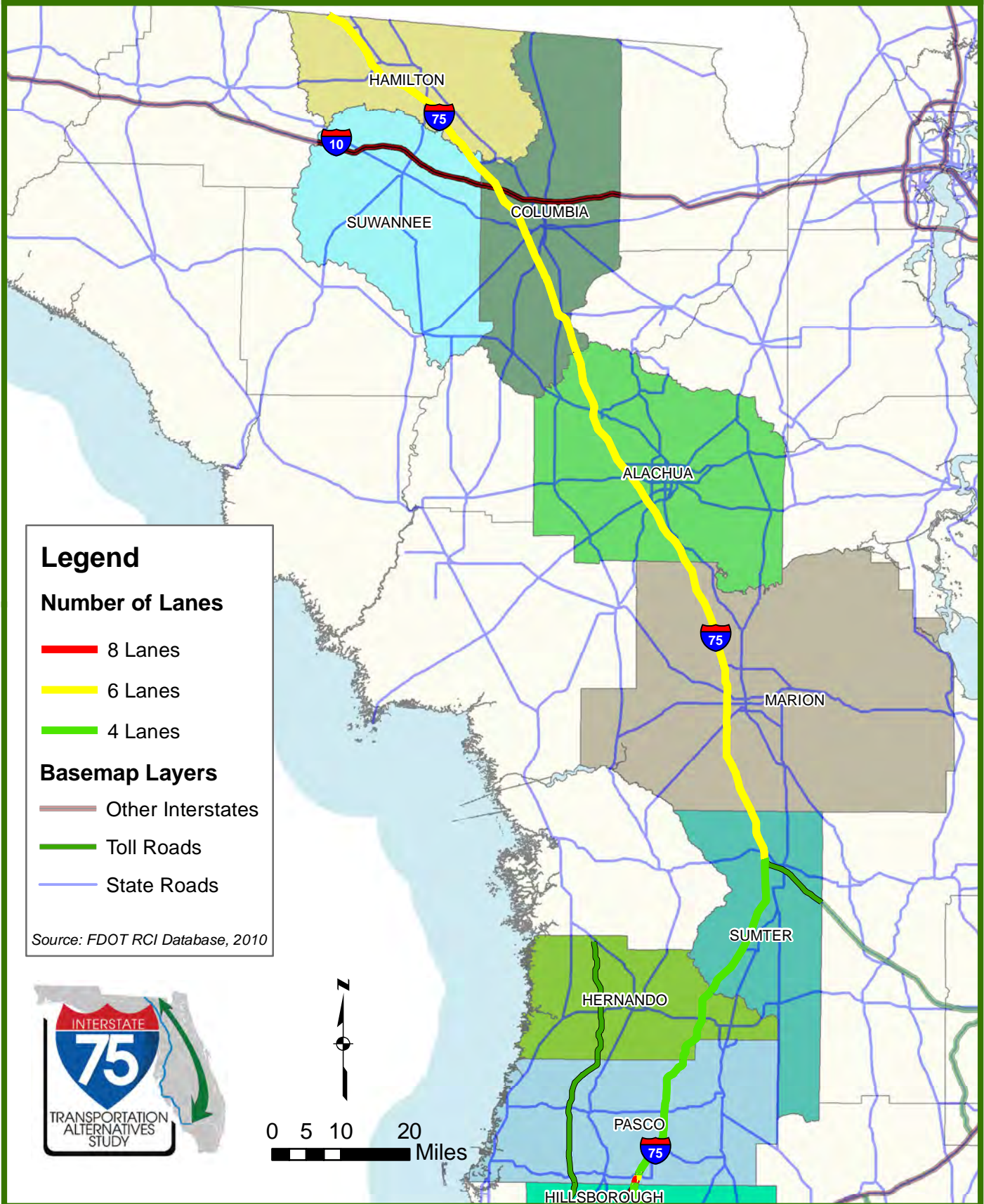


Figure 3.2.3B

I-75 Existing Number of Through Lanes





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Existing Right-of-Way

Increasing demand for both passenger and freight transportation poses an important challenge for the I-75 facility. In order to improve functionality on the interstate, it is important to understand the existing right-of-way characteristics. The interstate system was constructed under uniform guidelines; however, deviations from these standard guidelines do occur given various constraints from the surrounding environment. Constraints may include either natural or land use restrictions that limit right-of-way. **Table 3.2.1** provides an overview of the right-of-way characteristics for the I-75 corridor based upon the average right-of-way in each county.

Table 3.2.1 Existing Right-of-Way Widths by County

District	County	Average Right-of-Way (ft)
1	Collier	324
	Lee	324
	Charlotte	324
	DeSoto	324
	Sarasota	324
	Manatee	348
7	Hillsborough -Manatee CL to Gibsonton Rd -Gibsonton Rd to US 301 -US 301 to Selmon Expy -Selmon Exp to SR 60 -SR 60 to Fowler Ave -Fowler Ave to Fletcher Ave -Fletcher Ave to Pasco CL	302 to 348 301 to 372 636 536 348 427 324
	Pasco	300
	Hernando	300
5	Sumter	300
	Marion	300
2	Alachua	300
	Columbia	300
	Suwannee	300
	Hamilton	300

Source: I-75 South SIP, I-75 North SIP, 2010, Multiple I-75 PD&E Studies: Moccasin Wallow to US 301, US 301 to Fletcher Ave, Fowler Ave to CR 54



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Right-of-way consists of the strip of land that is normally owned and maintained by the governing agency, in this case, the Florida Department of Transportation. The space provides for the existing system, maintenance access, and future expansion. The minimum right-of-way width along the southern portion of I-75, from Collier County through Hillsborough County, ranges from 300 feet to 636 feet; the widest section is in Hillsborough County. From Pasco County to Hamilton County, the right-of-way for I-75 is approximately 300 feet across. The right-of-way is typically wider at areas with horizontal curves, at interchange locations, or where northbound and southbound travel lanes follow independent alignments. In general, I-75 consists of a grassed median which allows for future widening to be done to the inside, therefore accommodating improvements within the existing right-of-way.

3.3 Corridor Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the corridor intelligent transportation systems (ITS) network coverage along I-75. **Figures 3.3.1A** and **3.3.1B** depict the status of the existing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) along the I-75 corridor. The ITS status is designated as being full coverage when complete with Closed Circuit Television, Changeable Message Signs, and Detection Systems. Other areas include partial coverage of ITS design where fiber optics infrastructure is more sporadic along the corridor.

As illustrated in **Figures 3.3.1A** and **3.3.1B**, ITS coverage varies throughout the corridor. Charlotte and Hillsborough Counties have invested more heavily in ITS infrastructure, while Manatee, Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter Counties have minimal ITS infrastructure. All counties are equipped with a free cellular telephone number for reporting incidents. ITS coverage through the I-75 corridor includes the following:

Collier County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow
- Highway Advisory Radio Available
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Lee County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow
- Highway Advisory Radio Available
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Figure 3.3.1A

I-75 Corridor ITS Coverage

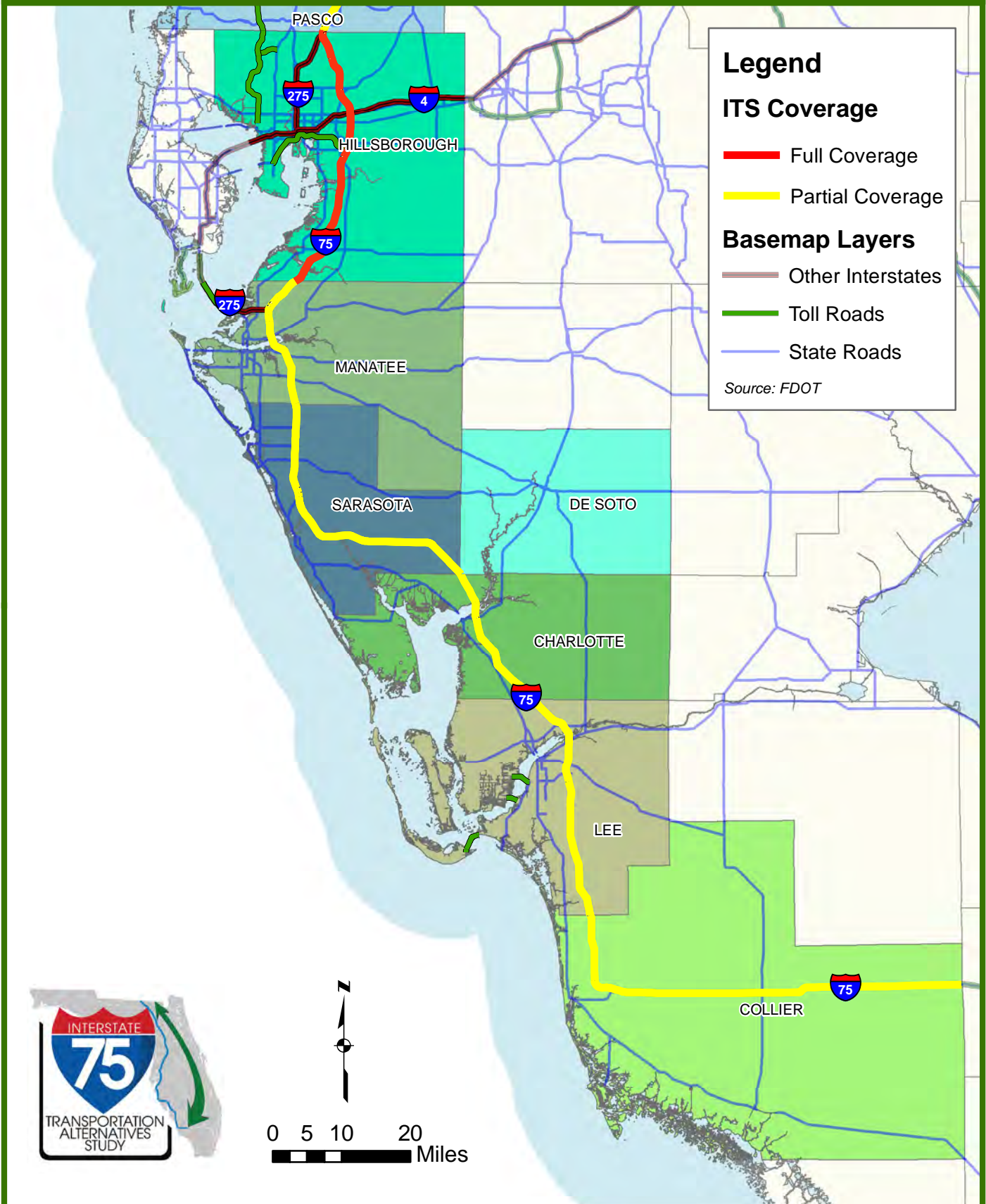
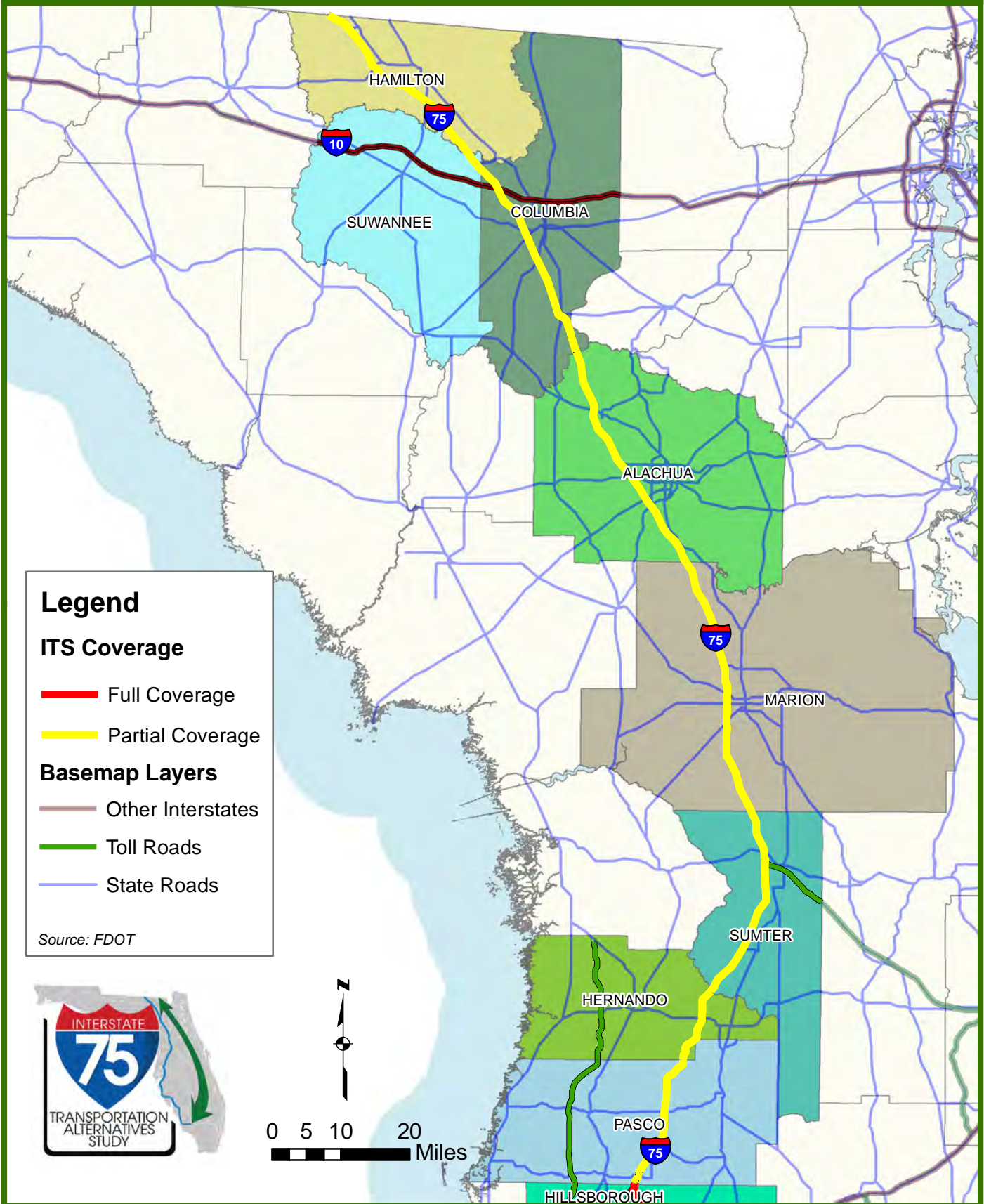


Figure 3.3.1B

I-75 Corridor ITS Coverage





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Charlotte County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow
- Highway Advisory Radio Available
- Equipped to Provide in-Vehicle Signing Information
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

DeSoto County

- Surveillance Cameras in Use

Sarasota County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow
- Highway Advisory Radio Available
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Manatee County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Highway Advisory Radio Available
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Hillsborough County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow
- Surveillance Cameras in Use
- Permanent Variable Messaging Sign
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Pasco County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Hernando County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Sumter County

- Free Cell Phone Number for Reporting Incidents
- Motorist Aid Call Boxes
- Surveillance Cameras in Use

Marion County

- Motorist Aid Call Boxes
- Electronic Surveillance of Traffic Flow



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

- Surveillance Cameras in Use

Alachua County

- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Columbia County

- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Suwannee County

- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

Hamilton County

- Motorist Aid Call Boxes

3.4 Existing Traffic Characteristics

Existing traffic volumes for the I-75 corridor were gathered for 2011 from the Florida Department of Transportation TranStat office. The existing Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes are illustrated in **Figure 3.4.1A** and **Figure 3.4.1B**. Fourteen of the 28 sites evaluated are located in urban areas. Eight of the sites have a rural designation and are all located in the northern half of the study area. The following sites are located in transitioning/urbanized areas under 500,000:

- Site 1 (Count Station 030351) - Collier County, west of Everglades Blvd;
- Site 5 (Count Station 120062) - Lee County, northwest of SR 78/Bayshore;
- Site 7 (Count Station 170040) - Sarasota County, east of Sumter Blvd;
- Site 8 (Count Station 170043) - Sarasota County, south of SR 681;
- Site 17 (Count Station 140094) - Pasco County, north of CR 41; and,
- Site 18 (Count Station 080037) - Hernando County, north of SR 50/US 98.

Existing AADT along the I-75 corridor ranges from a high of 134,500 vehicles per day (vpd) north of SR 574 in Hillsborough County to a low of less than 20,000 vpd in Collier County along Alligator Alley. The portion of the I-75 corridor that is generally the most heavily traveled is located on the stretch between Sarasota, Manatee, and Hillsborough Counties, with AADT exceeding 100,000 vehicles per day in several parts of Hillsborough and Sarasota Counties. Traffic volumes are significantly higher along I-75 north and south of Interstate 4 in Tampa where traffic volumes are 127,500 and 134,500, respectively. The northern section of the I-75 corridor, from Sumter County to Hamilton County, is primarily rural in nature with AADT ranging from 35,500 vpd in Hamilton County to 75,100 vpd in Marion County near Ocala.

Figure 3.4.1A

I-75 Existing Traffic Characteristics

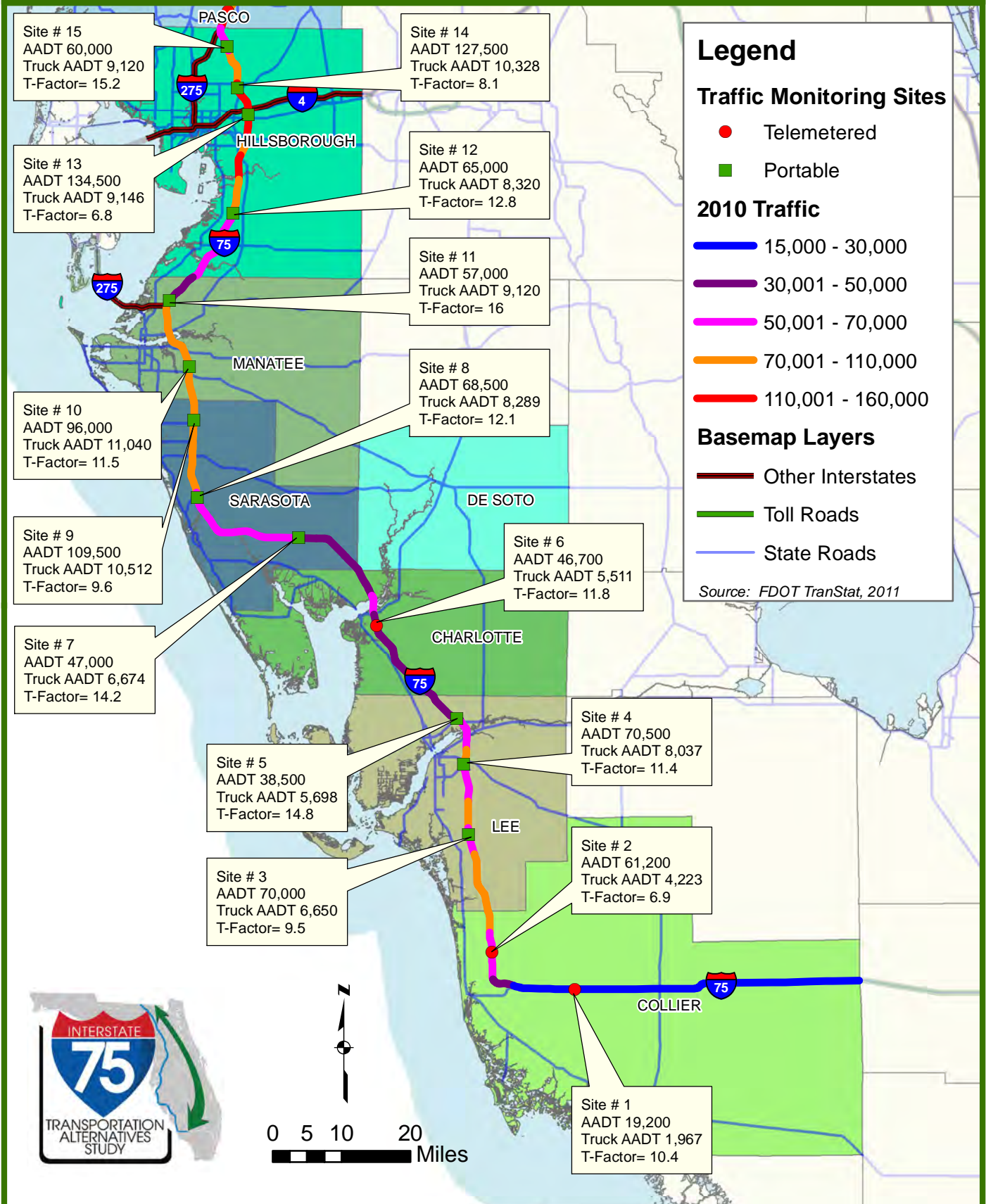
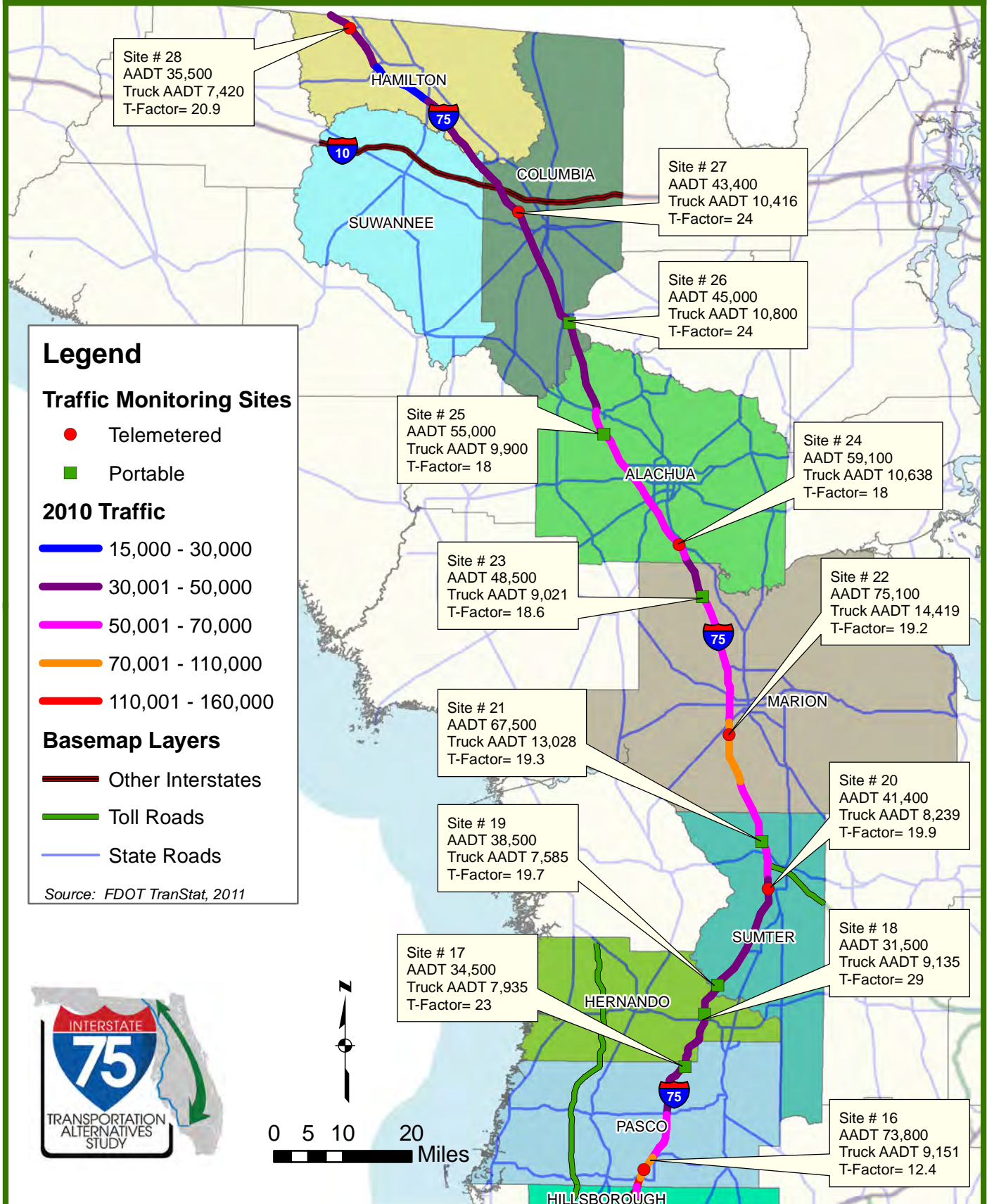


Figure 3.4.1B

I-75 Existing Traffic Characteristics





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Increasing truck volume throughout the I-75 corridor has created a need for FDOT to evaluate and begin planning to identify future truck traffic and its impact to the overall traffic situation. Truck AADT ranges from a high of more than 14,400 trucks per day (tpd) in Marion County to a low of less than 2,000 tpd in Collier County. Truck percentages also vary throughout the corridor, with trucks accounting for only 6.8 percent of the traffic stream in Hillsborough County north of SR 574 and almost 30 percent of the traffic stream in Hernando County north of US 98/SR 50. The truck percentages are indicated by the T-factor in **Figures 3.4.1A** and **3.4.1B**.

There are several factors that contribute to continued truck demand throughout the I-75 corridor. Based upon the Florida Statewide Freight Model and the *2002 Florida Commodity Flow Survey*, there has been a significant increase in through truck traffic for truckload pickup or delivery to regional big box retailers and intermodal facilities adjacent to or connected to the I-75 corridor. As the north, central, and southwest Florida areas continue to grow, the I-75 corridor anticipates an increase in truckloads and overall trips associated with the emerging growth areas.

Regional Trip Patterns

Regional trip patterns vary along the I-75 corridor, depending upon the selected location, as illustrated in **Figure 3.4.2**. In Collier, Lee, and Hillsborough Counties, a large percentage of trips along I-75 are considered local trips, starting and ending within each respective county. This trend indicates that I-75 in urban areas, such as Ft. Myers and Tampa, is predominantly used for local trips. Notably, in Lee County, more than 75 percent of trips are local trips.

Regional trips, those trips between the county of origin and any surrounding county, represent a small percentage of trips for each of the counties in Figure 3.4.2 with the exceptions of Collier and Manatee Counties. In Collier County, the trips are fairly well split between local trips and regional trips, with local trips making up 53 percent of trips and regional trips comprising 40 percent of trips. This is most likely due to the high volume of commuters between Collier County and Lee County. In Manatee County, 39 percent are regional trips in nature while the other trips are almost equally divided between local trips and inter-regional trips. The trip distribution for Manatee County can be attributed to the number of commuters between Manatee County and Hillsborough County, as well as those persons passing through to Hillsborough from counties south of Manatee.

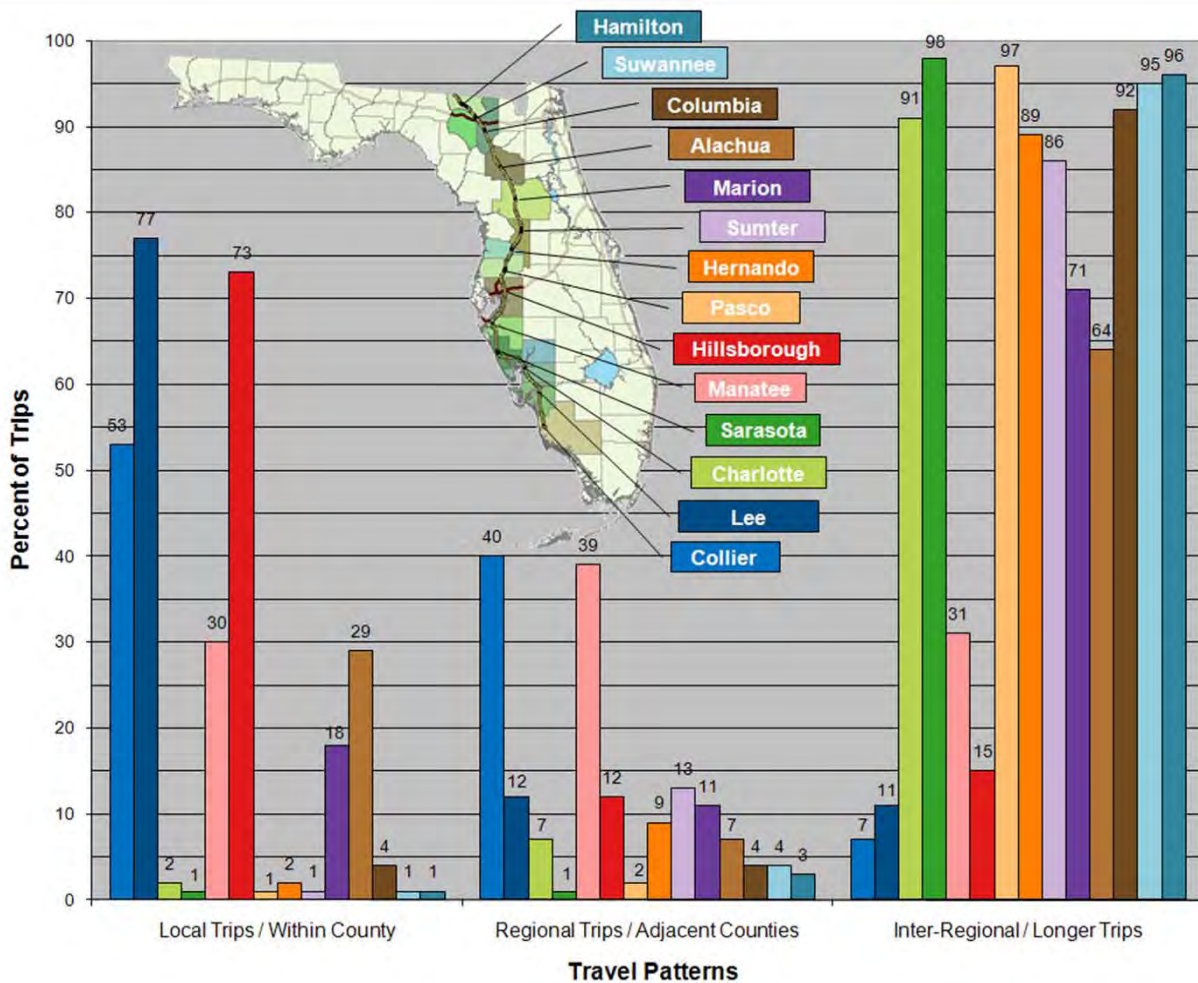
In ten of the selected locations, most of them north of Hillsborough County, at least 50 percent or more of the trips are inter-regional in nature. Notably, in Charlotte, Sarasota, Pasco, Columbia, Suwannee, and Hamilton Counties, inter-regional trips make up 90 percent or more of all trips. This emphasizes the difference in trip characteristics in different areas of the state where I-75 is used more for long distance trips in some areas and used more for local trips in other areas. Trip



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

characteristics of the corridor have large impact on the types of alternatives that should be considered for improving mobility along the I-75 corridor.

Figure 3.4.2 Percent of Local vs. Regional and Inter-regional Trips along I-75



Note: For the purposes of this figure, local trips are defined as trips within the county. Regional trips are defined as trips between the county of origin and any surrounding county. Inter-Regional trips are defined as trips between the county and other areas of the state or out-of-state.

Source: FDOT Statewide Travel Demand Model



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

3.5 Existing Traffic Operations

Existing traffic operations are most often described in terms of volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio and level of service (LOS). A standard measure of travel demand, the v/c ratio describes whether a roadway is operating at a congested condition at a given point in time. A v/c ratio of less than 1.0 indicates that a roadway is operating at volume levels less than capacity, while a v/c ratio of 1.0 or greater indicates that a roadway has reached or exceeded its theoretical operating capacity, and any additional traffic volume will result in a breakdown in traffic flow.

LOS is an indication of roadway operating conditions and can be calculated using numerous measures such as delay (for signalized intersections), free flow travel speed (for arterial roadways), or v/c (for freeways/expressways). LOS is similar to the grading scale of a report card and identifies roadway operating conditions as follows:

- LOS A through C indicates operating conditions where traffic can move relatively freely. These operating conditions most frequently occur in rural areas;
- LOS D signifies that vehicle speed and freedom of movement is beginning to decline slightly due to increasing traffic volume;
- LOS E indicates the traffic volumes are approaching the capacity of the roadway, but do not exceed the capacity; and,
- LOS F is the point at which a significant breakdown in vehicular flow occurs. This condition exists when the demand for space on the roadway exceeds the capacity of the roadway.

For the purposes of this study, existing Level of Service (LOS) was determined at 28 different locations along I-75 using existing Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes compared to statewide minimum Level of Service (LOS) standards. These LOS standards and capacities were obtained from the Generalized Level of Service (LOS) tables based on the 2009 FDOT Quality/Level of Service Handbook. Existing LOS along the I-75 Corridor is summarized in **Table 3.5.1**.

The intention of Table 3.5.1 is to provide an existing overview of the LOS operating conditions along I-75. The existing year is based upon the availability of traffic data. The number of lanes identified in Table 3.5.1 references the number of completed through lanes on I-75 as of 2011. Because only 2011 traffic data is available, the existing lane configuration within Table 3.5.1 represents 2011 conditions and does not reflect improvements completed after that time including lanes currently under construction.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.5.1 2011 Traffic Operations

Site #	Count Station	Description	Area Type	Existing Conditions		LOS Std	LOS Standard Capacity	Operating LOS
				AADT	Lanes			
1	030351	W of Everglades Blvd, Collier County	Transition	19,200	4	C	57,600	B
2	030191	N of CR 896, Collier County	Urbanized	61,200	6	D	110,300	B
3	120055	S of Alico Rd, Lee County	Urbanized	70,000	6	D	110,300	C
4	120058	S of SR 82/Immokalee Rd, Lee County	Urbanized	70,500	4	D	73,600	D
5	120062	NW of SR 78/Bayshore Rd, Lee County	Transition	38,500	4	C	57,600	B
6	010350	At Airport Rd/Punta Gorda, Charlotte County	Urbanized	46,700	4	D	73,600	C
7	170040	E of Sumter Blvd/North Port, Sarasota County	Transition	47,000	4	C	57,600	C
8	170043	S of SR 681/Venice Connector, Sarasota County	Transition	68,500	4	C	57,600	D
9	170047	N of SR 780/Fruitville Rd, Sarasota County	Urbanized	109,500	6	D	110,300	D
10	130040	N of SR 70, Manatee County	Urbanized	96,000	6	D	110,300	D
11	130043	SW of Moccasin Wallow Rd, Manatee County	Urbanized	57,000	8	D	146,500	B
12	100143	S of CR 672 (Big Bend Rd), Hillsborough County	Urbanized	65,000	6	D	110,300	B
13	100150	N of SR 574, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	134,500	6	D	110,300	F
14	100151	S of SR 582/Fowler Ave, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	127,500	6	D	110,300	F
15	100154	N of Bruce B Downs Blvd, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	60,000	4	D	73,600	D



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.5.1 2011 Traffic Operations

Site #	Count Station	Description	Area Type	Existing Conditions		LOS Std	LOS Standard Capacity	Operating LOS
				AADT	Lanes			
16	140190	S of SR 54, Pasco County	Urbanized	73,800	4	D	73,600	E
17	140094	N of CR 41 & S of Hernando Co Line, Pasco County	Transition	34,500	4	C	57,600	B
18	080037	N of SR50/700/US 98, Hernando County	Transition	31,500	4	C	57,600	B
19	180208	S of CR 476B, Sumter County	Rural	38,500	4	C	49,900	C
20	189920	S of Turnpike, Sumter County	Rural	41,400	4	C	49,900	C
21	180188	N Of SR 44, Sumter County	Rural	67,500	6	C	74,600	C
22	360317	N of Williams Rd, Marion County	Urbanized	75,100	6	D	110,300	C
23	360436	N Of CR 318, Marion County	Rural	48,500	6	C	74,600	B
24	269904	N of Marion/Alachua County Line	Rural	59,100	6	C	74,600	C
25	260454	S of SR 20, Alachua County	Urbanized	55,000	6	D	110,300	B
26	290257	S Of SR 25, Columbia County	Rural	45,000	6	C	74,600	B
27	290320	B/w I-10 & US 90, Columbia County	Rural	43,400	6	C	74,600	B
28	320112	At State Line/ N OF SR 143, Hamilton County	Rural	35,500	6	C	74,600	B

Sources: 2009 FDOT Quality/Level of Service Handbook; 2011 FDOT TranStat Office

*Auxiliary lanes are not included

The results illustrate that I-75 possesses existing capacity challenges and concerns, especially in Hillsborough County north of SR 574 where I-75 has an unacceptable LOS. The operating LOS at SR 681 in Sarasota County and south of SR 54 in Pasco County are also worse than the LOS standard for those areas. Even though the majority of the sites are currently operating within the statewide LOS standards or better, only a moderate increase in future traffic would be enough to cause a worsening of operating conditions (e.g., Sites 9 and 10 in Sarasota and Manatee Counties are both very near the upper limit of the threshold for LOS D).



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

3.6 Planned Improvements

FDOT and its partner agencies continue to improve the I-75 corridor as funding permits. Numerous improvement projects are anticipated between 2011 and 2035, as identified in **Table 3.6.1**. Projects were identified from several sources including the FDOT Work Program, FDOT SIS First Five Year Plan, and the FDOT SIS Second Five Year Plan. They are listed by county and include a project location (description), project type, funding year, phase, and estimated cost. The costs were retrieved from the FDOT Financial Accounting System by the Systems Planning Office in December of 2011 and do not reflect changes after that time.

It should be understood that updates to the FDOT Adopted Work Program and SIS First and Second Five Year Work Programs are ongoing. This summary provides a snapshot in time of the recommendations for the corridor. As improvements occur and additional updates to planning documents are made, conditions on the segments identified may change.

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
COLLIER	(SR 93) AT EVERGLADES BOULEVARD INTERCHANGE	NEW INTERCHANGE	2015	PD&E, PE	\$7.9 M
COLLIER	(SR 93) AT COLLIER BLVD/SR 84 INTERCHANGE MODIFICATION	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2011	PD&E	\$380 K
COLLIER	AT SR 951	DESIGN	2013	PD&E, PE	\$11.1 M
COLLIER	MM 63 REST AREA SOUTH	REST AREA	2012	DSB, PE	\$12 M
COLLIER	FROM N OF SR 951 TO S OF GOLDEN GATE	DESIGN	2012	PE	\$4.3 M
COLLIER	@ GOLDEN GATE PARKWAY	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2014	PE, CON	\$38 M
LEE	AIRPORT ACCESS AT SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INT'L AIRPORT CD SYSTEM	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2014	PE, ROW, CON	\$113.5 M



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
LEE	(SR 93) FROM SOUTH OF SR 78 TO CHARLOTTE COUNTY LINE	DESIGN	2011	PE, CON	\$29 M
LEE	FROM N OF SR 80 TO SOUTH OF SR 78	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2015	PE, ROW, CON	\$185 M
LEE	@ SR 80 INTERCHANGE	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2011	PE/CON	\$32 M
LEE	FROM S OF LUCKETT ROAD TO S OF SR 80	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	PE, ROW, CON	\$24.2 M
LEE	FROM S OF 82 TO S OF LUCKETT ROAD	RIGHT OF WAY	2013	ROW	\$9.8 M
LEE	FROM N OF DANIELS PKWY TO S OF COLONIAL BLVD	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	PE/ROW	\$2.8 M
LEE	FROM S OF CORKSCREW ROAD TO S OF DANIELS PARKWAY	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	ROW	\$46 M
LEE	@ CORKSCREW INTERCHANGE	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2011	PE	\$5.2 M
LEE	FROM CORKSCREW ROAD TO LUCKETT ROAD	OVERHEAD SIGNING	2013	PE, CON	\$1.6 M
LEE	FROM S OF BONITA BCH RD TO S OF CORKSCREW ROAD	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	PE	\$140.2 M
LEE	FROM S OF BONITA BCH RD TO SR 78	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & Environment	2011	PDE	\$5.3 M
LEE	@ DANIELS PARKWAY INTERCHANGE	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2011	PE	\$4.2 M
LEE	@ SR 884 (COLONIAL BLVD)	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2012	PE	\$8.3 M
CHARLOTTE	FROM TUCKER'S GRADE TO N JONES LOOP ROAD	DESIGN	2011	PE, CON	\$18.7 M



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
CHARLOTTE	FROM LEE C/L TO TUCKERS GRADE	DESIGN	2011	PE	\$7.9 M
CHARLOTTE	FROM N OF S JONES LOOP ROAD TO S OF N JONES LOOP ROAD	BRIDGE PAINTING	2015	PE, CON	\$2 M
CHARLOTTE	FROM S OF N JONES LOOP TO N OF US 17	DESIGN	2012	PE	\$4.5 M
CHARLOTTE	FROM KINGS HIGHWAY TO JONES LOOP ROAD	OVERHEAD SIGNING	2013	PE, CON	\$1.6 M
CHARLOTTE	FROM S OF HARBORVIEW ROAD TO N OF KINGS HIGHWAY	DESIGN	2012	PE	\$4.5 M
SARASOTA	FROM RIVER ROAD TO SR 681	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & Environment	2011	PDE	\$1.4 M
SARASOTA	FROM SR 681 TO UNIVERSITY PARKWAY	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & Environment	2011	PD&E	\$2.1 M
SARASOTA	FROM N OF SUMTER BLVD TO N OF RIVER ROAD	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2020	PE, ROW, CON	\$133.8 M
SARASOTA	@ UNIVERSITY PARKWAY	DESIGN	2012	PE	\$1.3 M
SARASOTA	FROM N OF KINGS HIGHWAY TO S OF TOLEDO BLADE	DESIGN	2015	PE	\$6.6 M
SARASOTA	FROM S OF TOLEDO BLADE TO N OF SUMTER BLVD	DESIGN	2015	PE	\$5.1 M
SARASOTA	FROM CHARLOTTE CO/L TO MANATEE CO/L	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2012	DSB, PE	\$274 K
SARASOTA	@ FRUITVILLE ROAD/CR 780	DESIGN	2014	PE	\$5.9 M
SARASOTA	FROM TOLEDO BLADE BLVD TO LAUREL BLVD	OVERHEAD SIGNING	2013	PE, CON	\$26 K



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
MANATEE	FROM UNIVERSITY PARKWAY TO MOCCASIN WALLOW ROAD	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT	2011	PD&E	\$2.8 M
MANATEE	@ SR 70 INTERCHANGE	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2012	PE	\$7.5 M
MANATEE	@ UNIVERSITY INTERCHANGE	DESIGN	2012	PE	\$4 M
MANATEE	FROM I-275 TO HILLSBOROUGH CO/L	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2015	PE, CON	\$4.7 M
MANATEE	FROM SARASOTA CO/L TO I-275	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2012	DSB, PE	\$10.9M
MANATEE	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CENTER	TMC SOFTWARE AND SYSTEM INTEGRATION	2012	DSB	\$2.4 M
MANATEE	FROM SR 70 TO SR 64	OVERHEAD SIGNING	2013	PE, CON	\$2.6 M
MANATEE	@ UNIVERSITY PARKWAY	SIDEWALK	2013	PE, CON	\$360 K
HILLSBOROUGH	FROM S OF US 301 TO N OF FLETCHER	MASTER PLAN	2011	PD&E	\$6.7 M
HILLSBOROUGH	FROM N OF BB DOWNS (CR 581) TO SR 56	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	PE, CON	\$1.4 M
HILLSBOROUGH	FROM S OF SR 582 (FOWLER AVE) TO N OF CR 581 (BB DOWNS)	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2011	PE, ROW, CON	\$107.1 M
HILLSBOROUGH	FROM MANATEE/HILLS CO/L TO PROGRESS/ BLOOMINGDALE	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2016	CON	\$10.2 M
PASCO	FROM N OF SR 52 TO PASCO/HERNANDO CO/L	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2012	PD&E, ROW	\$11 M
PASCO	FROM N OF SR 52 TO S OF CR 476B (SUMTER)	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENGINEERING	2011	PD&E	\$3 M



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
PASCO	FROM S OF SR 56 TO N OF CR 54	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6	2012	PE, ROW, CON	\$43.4 M
PASCO	FROM N OF SR/CR 54 TO N OF SR 52	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6	2012	PE, ROW	\$154.8 M
PASCO	FROM SR 56 TO SR 54	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2016	PE	
PASCO	FROM SR 54 TO HERNANDO CO/L	ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT	2015	PE, CON	\$7 M
HERNANDO	FROM N OF SR 50 TO HERNANDO/SUMTER CO/L	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2013	PE, ROW	\$6 M
SUMTER	FROM HERNANDO CO LINE TO SOUTH OF SR 44	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT	2011	PD&E	\$1.3 M
SUMTER	FROM HERNANDO CO LINE TO SR 44	ITS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM	2014	DSB	\$1.4 M
SUMTER	FROM HERNANDO CO LINE TO SR 470	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2015	PE, ROW	\$21.8 M
SUMTER	FROM SR 470 TO SR 91 (FLORIDA TURNPIKE)	ADD 2 LANES TO BUILD 6 LANE	2015	PE, ROW	\$15.5 M
SUMTER	FROM HERNANDO CO LINE TO PANASOFKEE CREEK BRIDGE	RESURFACING	2013	CON	\$16.6 M
MARION	FROM SW 95 TH ST TO SW 49 TH AVE	PD&E/EMO STUDY	2014	PD&E	\$1.3 M
ALACHUA	@ US 441 OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2015	PE, ROW, CON	\$12.2 M
ALACHUA	IMPROVEMENT @ SR 26	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2011	PE, CON	\$3.9 M
ALACHUA	@ SR 26 INTERCHANGE OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT	2011	PD&E	\$3 K



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.6.1 Planned 2013-2035 Improvements *

COUNTY	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT TYPE	FUNDING YEAR	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
ALACHUA	@ US 441 OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2019	CON	\$12.2 M
ALACHUA	FRONTAGE ROAD FROM US 441 TO 1.5 MILES NORTH	RESURFACING	2012	CON	\$1.5 M
ALACHUA	RAMP ACCESS RD FROM 39 TH AVE. TO END OF ROADWAY	RESURFACING	2013	CON	\$872 K
COLUMBIA	@ US 90	MODIFY INTERCHANGE	2019	PE, ROW	\$4.8 M
COLUMBIA	FROM US 441 INTERCHANGE TO SR 47 INTERCHANGE	LANDSCAPING	2014	PE, CON	\$7.3 M
SUWANNEE	@ SUWANNEE RIVER BR# 370023 & 370030	BRIDGE-PAINTING	2014	PE, CON	\$2 M
HAMILTON	WIM STATION	RIGID PAVEMENT REHABILITATION	2012	PE	\$303 K
HAMILTON	FROM SR 6 TO GEORGIA S/L	RESURFACING	2014	CON	\$13.9 M
HAMILTON	FROM SUWANNEE C/L TO US 129	RESURFACING	2012	CON	\$14.8 M

Sources: FDOT Adopted Work Program, July 2010; FDOT SIS First Five Year Plan, July 2010; FDOT SIS Second Five Year Plan, March 2011.

* Important Note: Projects listed in Table 3.6.1 are current as of the publication dates for each individual report (July 2010 for the Adopted Work Program or March 2011 for the SIS Second Five Year Plan). It is important to note that the anticipated completion dates for any of these projects could change. As State revenues change, projects may move up or down in priority, or be removed from this list. Likewise, new projects could be added as additional revenue becomes available or as implementation priorities changes.

3.7 Future Traffic Operations

The future traffic operations section provides a snapshot of the I-75 mainline mobility needs without the detailed operational analysis typically found in Master Plans and Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) studies. Results for sites along the mainline are provided as Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) along with



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

corresponding capacity thresholds. The primary purpose of the I-75 traffic forecast is to summarize the demand along the mainline only. Ramp and cross street traffic demand is not taken into account for the purposes of this section.

Traffic forecast data is usually available from several sources. In urbanized areas with a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), a regional travel demand model which complies with the Florida Statewide Urban Transportation Model Structure (FSUTMS) is a good resource for future traffic forecasts. In rural areas, historic growth trends from FDOT's Florida Traffic Information (FTI) DVD together with the Florida Statewide Model provide future traffic information.

The future traffic information used for the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study is based on the future traffic forecasts provided in the I-75 Sketch Interstate Plans for the southern and northern portions of I-75. The Sketch Interstate Plan (SIP) for I-75 South used historical trend analysis, HPMS trend line analysis, SIS forecasts, and PD&E traffic forecasts for the south corridor. The volumes were projected to 2035 and then averaged. In the I-75 North SIP, the data sources consisted of both historical trends and travel demand models for the Central Florida Regional Planning Model (CFRPM), the Gainesville Metropolitan Planning Organization Model, and the Florida Statewide Model. The AADT volumes from the various models were extrapolated to year 2035 to match the historic trend line year from the FTI CD. Future demand results for the I-75 North SIP were the product of a constrained demand analysis, where the travel demand was estimated by averaging the AADT forecast from multiple data sources. The resulting project year 2035 future traffic characteristics are presented in **Figure 3.7.1A** and **Figure 3.7.1B**.

Future year 2035 traffic volumes along I-75 are forecasted to increase significantly throughout the corridor, with the largest increase in Pasco County north of CR 41 where AADT is projected to increase by nearly 120 percent from 34,500 vehicles per day (vpd) in 2011 to 75,700 vpd in 2035. Two other locations, including one site in Hillsborough County and one in Hernando County, increased by 100 percent or more. Of the sites that experienced an increase of more than 100 percent, the location in Hillsborough County north of Bruce B Downs Blvd experienced the largest absolute change in volumes with an increase of more than 66,000 vpd between 2011 and 2035. The lowest absolute change is in Collier County west of Everglades Blvd where the AADT is expected to increase by 17,900; nonetheless, this change represents significant growth in traffic at 93 percent.

Figure 3.7.1A

I-75 2035 Future Traffic Characteristics

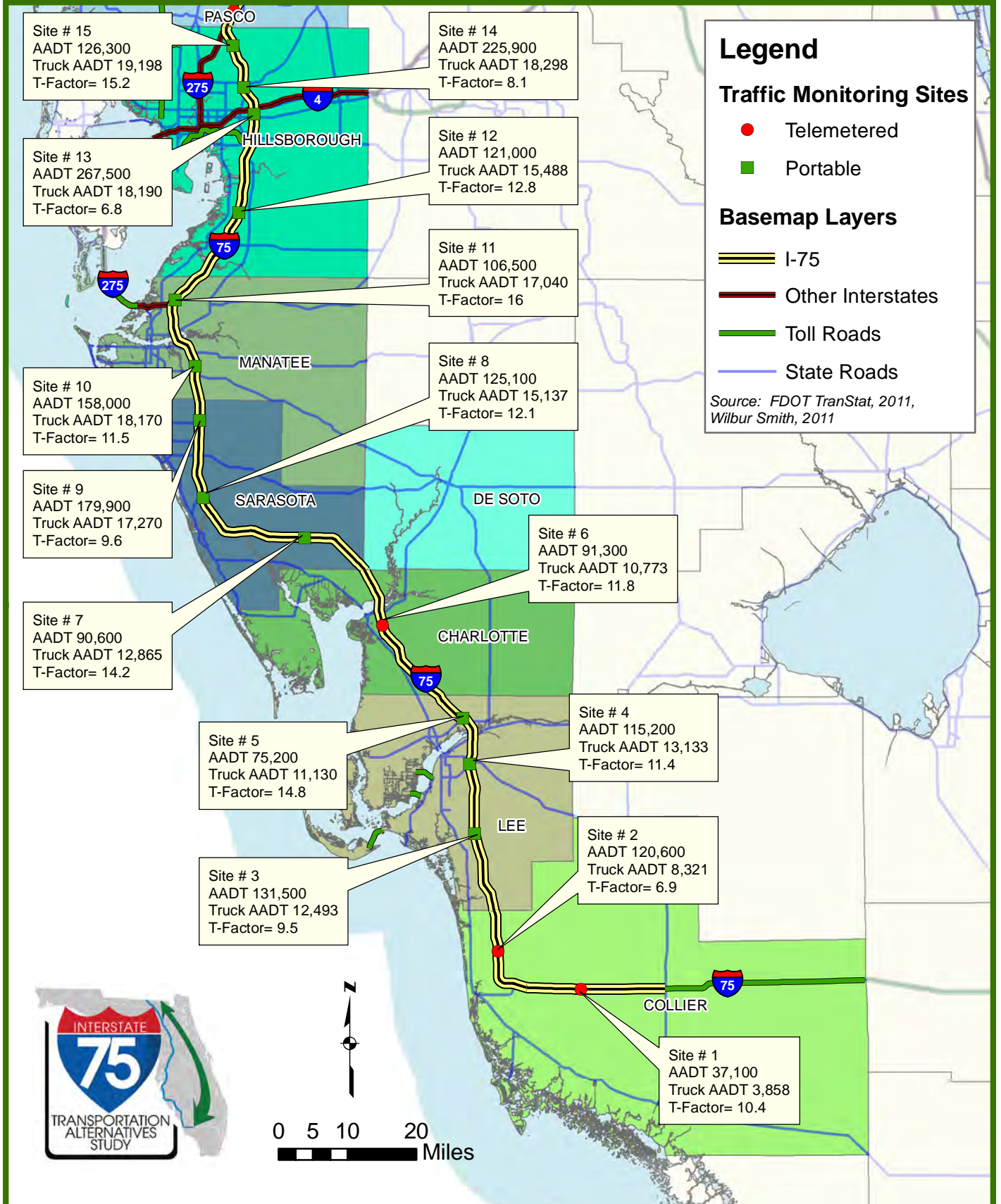
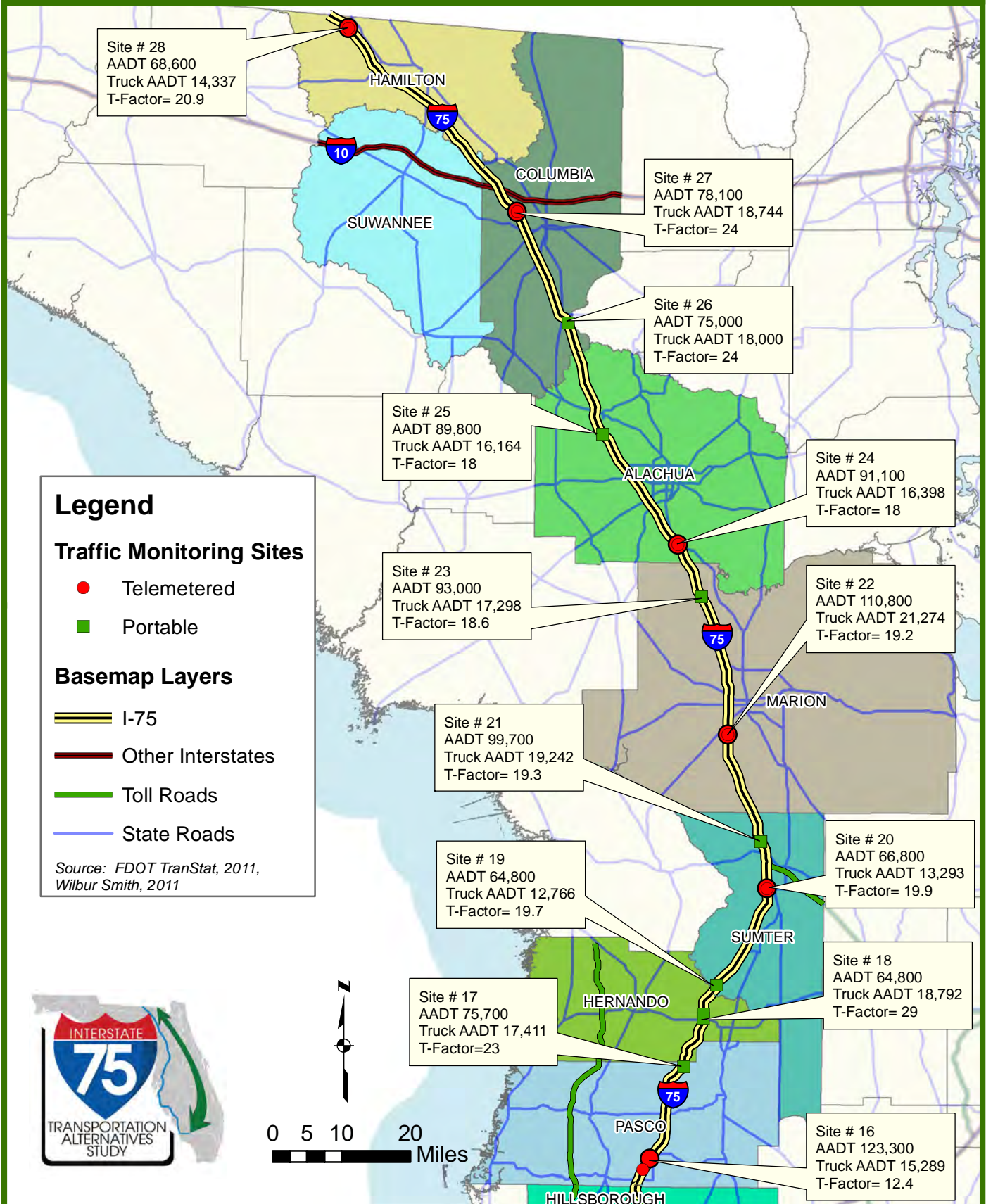


Figure 3.7.1B

I-75 2035 Future Traffic Characteristics





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Truck traffic is also projected to increase throughout the corridor, with truck AADT climbing in all counties. The largest absolute increase in truck volume occurs in Hillsborough County north of Bruce B Downs Blvd, where truck AADT is predicted to increase from less than 10,000 trucks per day to over 19,000 trucks per day in year 2035. The large projected increases in truck traffic throughout the corridor demonstrate the continued importance of the I-75 corridor to freight movement throughout Florida in the years to come.

The capacity thresholds for determining generalized planning level-of-service (LOS) were obtained from the FDOT's Generalized LOS tables based on the 2009 Quality/Level-of-Service Handbook. The future year 2035 forecasts for the 28 site locations along I-75 are shown in **Table 3.7.1**, along with projected future year level-of-service. Future year LOS was determined using the generalized LOS tables and assumed the planned projects identified in Section 3.3 were implemented where applicable.

By 2035 more than half of the corridor will be operating at failing LOS conditions after planned improvements have been implemented. Even with an increase from 4 to 6 lanes at SR 681 in Sarasota County, the projected LOS is F. The only locations in the corridor that will operate at the accepted LOS standards include:

- Site 1- W of Everglades Blvd in Collier County,
- Site 11 - SW of Moccasin Wallow Rd in Manatee County,
- Site 25 - S of SR 20 in Alachua County, and
- Site 28 - N of SR 143 in Hamilton County.

Model output data incorporates regional demand based upon a multitude of factors including growth projections, land use, alternative routes, etc. Extremely high model output volumes, which can be seen at multiple sites, suggest that even parallel facilities are at capacity or the traffic would have shifted to these alternative routes.



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.7.1 Future Year 2035 Projected Traffic Operations

Site #	Count Station	Description	Area Type	2011 AADT	2011 Lanes	2011 LOS	Projected 2035 AADT	Planned Lanes by 2035	Projected 2035 LOS w/Planned Lanes
1	030351	W of Everglades Blvd, Collier County	Urbanized	19,200	4	B	37,100	4	B
2	030191	N of CR 896, Collier County	Urbanized	61,200	6	B	120,600	6	E
3	120055	S of Alico Rd, Lee County	Urbanized	70,000	6	C	131,500	6	F
4	120058	S of SR 82/Immokalee Rd, Lee County	Urbanized	70,500	4	D	115,200	4	F
5	120062	NW of SR 78/Bayshore Rd, Lee County	Urbanized	38,500	4	B	75,200	4	F
6	010350	At Airport Rd/Punta Gorda, Charlotte County	Urbanized	46,700	4	C	91,300	4	F
7	170040	E of Sumter Blvd/North Port, Sarasota County	Urbanized	47,000	4	C	90,600	4	F
8	170043	S of SR 681/Venice Connector, Sarasota County	Urbanized	68,500	4	D	125,100	6	F
9	170047	N of SR 780/Fruitville Rd, Sarasota County	Urbanized	109,500	6	D	179,900	6	F
10	130040	N of SR 70, Manatee County	Urbanized	96,000	6	D	158,000	6	F
11	130043	SW of Moccasin Wallow Rd, Manatee	Urbanized	57,000	8	B	106,500	8	C



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.7.1 Future Year 2035 Projected Traffic Operations

Site #	Count Station	Description	Area Type	2011 AADT	2011 Lanes	2011 LOS	Projected 2035 AADT	Planned Lanes by 2035	Projected 2035 LOS w/Planned Lanes
		County							
12	100143	S of CR 672 (Big Bend Rd), Hillsborough County	Urbanized	65,000	6	B	121,000	6	E
13	100150	N of SR 574, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	134,500	6	F	267,500	6	F
14	100151	S of SR 582/Fowler Ave, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	127,500	6	F	225,900	6	F
15	100154	N of Bruce B Downs Blvd, Hillsborough County	Urbanized	60,000	4	D	126,300	6	F
16	140190	S of SR 54, Pasco County	Urbanized	73,800	4	E	123,300	4	F
17	140094	N of CR 41 & S of Hernando Co Line, Pasco County	Urbanized	34,500	4	B	75,700	4	F
18	080037	N of SR50/700/US 98, Hernando County	Urbanized	31,500	4	B	64,800	4	D
19	180208	S of CR 476B, Sumter County	Rural	38,500	4	C	64,800	4	F
20	189920	S of Turnpike, Sumter County	Rural	41,400	4	C	66,800	4	F
21	180188	N Of SR 44, Sumter County	Rural	67,500	6	C	99,700	6	F
22	360317	N of Williams Rd, Marion County	Urbanized	75,100	6	C	110,800	6	E
23	360436	N Of CR 318, Marion County	Rural	48,500	6	B	93,000	6	E



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Table 3.7.1 Future Year 2035 Projected Traffic Operations

Site #	Count Station	Description	Area Type	2011 AADT	2011 Lanes	2011 LOS	Projected 2035 AADT	Planned Lanes by 2035	Projected 2035 LOS w/Planned Lanes
24	269904	N of Marion/Alachua County Line	Rural	59,100	6	C	91,100	6	E
25	260454	S of SR 20, Alachua County	Urbanized	55,000	6	B	89,800	6	C
26	290257	S Of SR 25, Columbia County	Rural	45,000	6	B	75,000	6	D
27	290320	B/w I-10 & US 90, Columbia County	Rural	43,400	6	B	78,100	6	D
28	320112	At State Line/ N OF SR 143, Hamilton County	Rural	35,500	6	B	68,600	6	C

Sources: 2009 FDOT Quality/Level of Service Handbook; 2011 FDOT TranStat Office

**Projected 2035 AADT and Planned Lanes come from the I-75 Sketch Interstate Plans.*

**Auxiliary lanes are not included in projected 2035 LOS*

The results illustrate that alternative routes must be available by the 2035 planning horizon to capture the growing demand. I-75 will not be operating at sufficient levels, and model results imply that parallel facilities may be facing a similar growth problem. Alternative transportation routes and modal choices must become readily available to ensure safe and efficient movement of passenger and freight travel.

3.8 Existing Freight Mobility System

The key characteristics of the existing freight mobility system are discussed in this section and are based on the recently completed I-75 Sketch Interstate Plans. Freight transportation is an essential component of the economy in each of the counties in the study area and to the whole of Florida's economy. The state's most strategic highways, rail lines and freight terminals, as well as other freight routes, terminals and distribution centers are crucial for completing door-to-door freight movements between the shipper and receiver.

The shipment of freight is also a large source of travel demand for the State. According to the *Trends and Conditions Reports*, prepared by the FDOT's Office of



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Policy Planning, freight travel demand is increasing at rates faster than personal travel demand growth. Several key state trends were identified:

- Trucks are the dominant mode for freight shipments; this is in both value and tons. In 2006, trucks handled 85 percent of the freight tonnage and 84.1 percent of the total freight value. Trucks are also a growing share of daily traffic. The shift of the economy to services and high value consumer goods, the change to just-in-time inventory systems, the dispersion of population and the expansion of services, such as overnight delivery, and even internet purchasing, have accentuated the growth of roadway-based truck freight transportation.¹
- The aviation system handles a relatively small share of Florida's total freight trade. The aviation system is typically used to transport valuable, fragile, and/or time sensitive items, such as mail and sophisticated manufactured items. Even with post 9-11 security concerns, airline restructuring, and higher fuel costs, the demand for air cargo has experienced moderate growth; the fundamental attractiveness of air travel remains.²
- Most international freight arrives by water. In Fiscal Year 2006/2007, Florida seaports handled 121.2 million tons of cargo, of which 19.1 million tons of international exports and 51.3 million tons of international imports were handled at the seaports. The international and domestic commodities coming through the seaports included automobiles, apparel, steel, bananas, petroleum, and computer products.³
- Florida's rail system is dominated by bulk commodities and short-haul movements. Intrastate tonnage contributes to nearly half of the yearly tonnage movements. The majority of freight carried on Florida's railroads (as measured by weight) includes nonmetallic minerals, namely phosphates, followed by chemicals and food products.⁴ Rail freight has been gaining market due to improved rail services and increasing costs of trucking operations.
- Except air deliveries, there were declines in all freight categories in 2007. These declines can be attributed to the slowing economy and the significant slowdown in residential and hurricane recovery construction activities.

The remainder of this section assesses freight trends and the importance of intermodal freight and freight operations in the I-75 corridor. This includes truck freight on the interstate itself, as well as rail, air, and water freight and other truck freight that connect to the corridor.

¹ Trends and Conditions Report-2008 Travel Demand: Trade and Freight Transportation

² Trends and Conditions Report-2009 Transportation Systems: Air Facilities-Passengers and Freight

³ A Five-Year Plan to Achieve the Mission of Florida's Seaports: 2007/2008-2011/2012, p 22, as cited in Trends and Conditions Report-2009 Transportation Systems: Seaports-Freight and Cruise Activity

⁴ Trends and Conditions Report-2007 Transportation Systems: Rail Facilities-Freight and Passengers



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

Intermodal Freight Locations and Characteristics

Numerous intermodal freight facilities are located within the 15 county study area, and each supports trucks as a mode type in addition to those locations with air, rail, or maritime/port modes. **Table 3.8.1** lists the names and locations of various intermodal facilities along the corridor and indicates the primary function as well as all modes affiliated with each facility.

Table 3.8.1 Intermodal Freight Facility Locations

Name	Function	Mode Types	Location
Cargill, Inc.-Tampa	Rail	Truck-Port-Rail	Tampa
CSX Intermodal-Tampa	Rail	Rail & Truck	Tampa
Emery Customs Brokers-Tampa	Air	Air & Truck	Tampa
Emery Forwarding-Tampa	Air	Air & Truck	Tampa
Gainesville Regional Airport	Air	Air & Truck	Gainesville
GATX Terminals Corporation-Tampa	Rail	Rail & Truck	Tampa
Port of Manatee	Port	Port & Truck	Palmetto
Port of Tampa	Port	Port & Truck	Tampa
Sarasota Bradenton International Airport	Air	Air & Truck	Sarasota
Seaboard Tampa Terminals-Tampa	Rail	Rail & Truck	Tampa
Southern Reload	Rail	Rail & Truck	Lake City
Southwest Florida International Airport	Air	Air & Truck	Fort Myers
Tampa International Airport	Air	Air & Truck	Tampa
TRANSFLO-Tampa	Rail	Rail & Truck	Tampa
United Airlines Cargo	Air	Air & Truck	Fort Myers
USPS-P and DC-P and DF-Fort Myers	Truck	Truck & Truck	Fort Myers
USPS-P and DC-P and DF-Gainesville	Truck	Truck & Truck	Gainesville
Yellow-Fort Myers Terminal	Truck	Rail & Truck	Fort Myers
Yellow-Ocala Terminal	Truck	Rail & Truck	Ocala
Yellow-Tampa Terminal	Truck	Rail & Truck	Tampa

Sources: Bureau of Transportation Statistics National Transportation Atlas Database 2011; FDOT Systems Planning Office 2011.

Figures 3.8.1A and **3.8.1B** illustrate the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) hubs along the I-75 corridor. The SIS hubs include: major airports, intermodal freight-rail terminals, passenger terminals, and seaports. The facilities include both SIS and Emerging SIS hubs. These hubs are places where different transportation modes converge and interact. For example in a passenger terminal, people enter the facility by one mode of access (e.g. on foot, riding a bicycle, by car, by bus or



Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

train, etc.) and leave by another. I-75 serves and connects key SIS hubs that are on or adjacent to the corridor. Maintaining and strengthening the intermodal connections which serve these hubs are critical to enhancing the economic competitiveness of Florida. Any improvements to I-75 should consider potential impacts to these facilities.

In the southern part of the I-75 corridor, shown in Figure **3.8.1A**, there are three passenger terminals, one located in Lee County and the other two in Hillsborough County. There are also two deepwater ports and four international airports (including St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport in Pinellas County). Figure **3.8.1B** indicates a small concentration of SIS facilities in the Tampa Bay area of Hillsborough County, which can be attributed to the heavy urban basis of that county, as well as the accessibility to I-75, I-275, and I-4.

The northern portion of the I-75 corridor is host to a regional airport and a passenger terminal, both of which are located in Gainesville in Alachua County. The northern segment contains a limited number of intermodal facilities due to its primarily rural nature; however, the interstate does play an important role as a connector.

Freight Mobility Summary

Information presented in this summary is based on the Freight Mobility Reports completed in 2010 for the Sketch Interstate Plans for I-75 North and South. Both reports reviewed existing industrial and trucking patterns and analyzed existing and future commodity flow data.

Travel data from the reports indicate that freight most efficiently utilizes the I-75 corridor for shorter and intrastate trips rather than for interstate travel. In contrast, most interstate freight trips utilize I-95 or the Florida Turnpike. Long haul freight travel is primarily conducted along the corridor to link South Florida and Tampa. This is an important link within the state as both Tampa and Miami-Dade are primary shipping hubs that import and export goods internationally.

Significant increased freight tonnage on I-75 is expected by 2035. The commodity flow analysis revealed that Georgia is projected to be the state's top national trading partner by 2035, with total trading tonnage forecasted to increase by approximately 175 percent. Total tonnage for the top five commodities inbound for Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) regions in the study area (Tampa, Orlando, and South Florida) is projected to have growth of nearly 200 percent by 2035. In this same time, total tonnage originating from Tampa is expected to increase by nearly 100 percent.

Figure 3.8.1A

Existing SIS Hubs

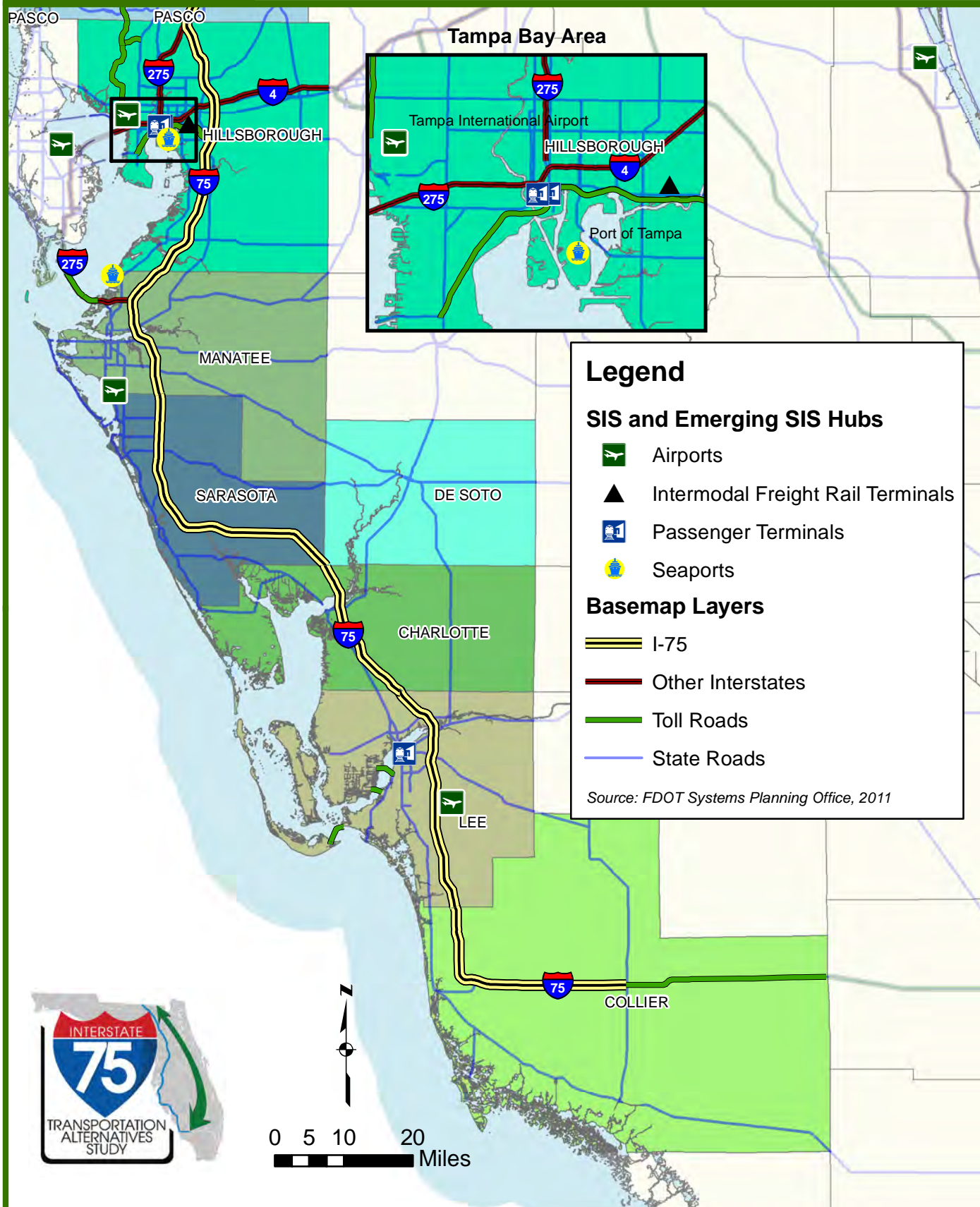
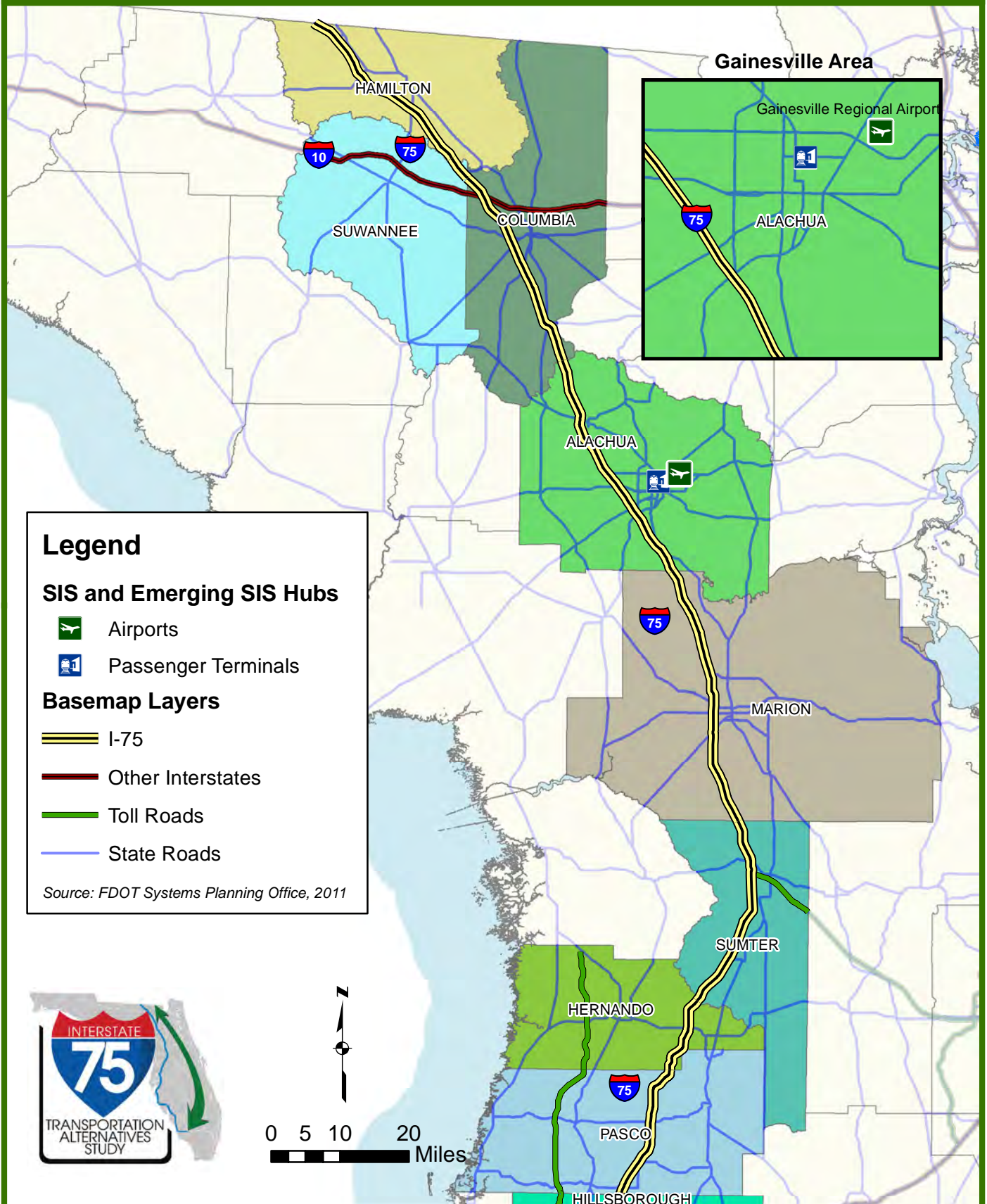
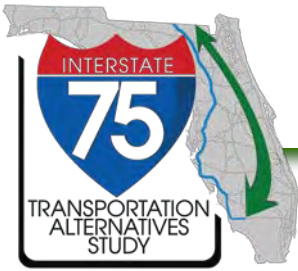


Figure 3.8.1B

Existing SIS Hubs





Chapter 3 – Transportation Network

In addition to increased freight tonnage, truck volumes are also projected to increase significantly by 2035. In the southern segment of the I-75 corridor from Collier County to Sumter County, truck volumes are projected to grow within a range of 50 percent to over 160 percent with corresponding volumes ranging from 3,500 trucks per day (tpd) to over 16,000 tpd. In the northern section, from Sumter County to the Florida/Georgia state line, truck volumes are projected to grow within a range of 66 percent to over 90 percent with volumes ranging from 14,500 tpd to over 27,000. Additionally, it should be noted that findings indicate that southbound truck volumes are predominately loaded trucks while northbound trucks consist of both loaded and unloaded trucks.



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

As the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study moves forward to develop alternatives to relieve congestion, improve emergency and security response, and encourage economic development, environmental issues may need to be considered. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and partner agencies are instrumental in identifying environmental issues and setting a path for preservation of the State's valuable natural resources.

It is important to note that I-75 is a Federal Interstate Highway; therefore, coordination with FHWA is required when considering the use of or modifications to the interstate or its right-of-way. As the I-75 corridor is evaluated, the FDOT will coordinate with FHWA.

4.1 The Federal NEPA Process

FHWA requires that the NEPA process be followed for environmental review regardless of funding source used for activities on the interstate. NEPA is the all-encompassing “umbrella” law that guides environmental protection at the federal level. By requiring environmental documentation at this level, NEPA establishes an overall process that ensures the integration of natural, social and environmental considerations into the planning and decision-making process.

Because NEPA analysis is more detailed and technically more specific than state and local planning-level analyses, traditionally NEPA environmental analysis has been conducted separately from the transportation analysis used to develop long-range plans, statewide/metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs/TIPs), and/or planning-level corridor and subarea studies.¹ Over time, this separate process has often resulted in unnecessary duplication of work, additional expense, confusion for the public and policymakers, and a potential delay in project implementation.

If NEPA reviewers become involved in transportation planning studies and use planning information for informing future NEPA review, the result may be better and more efficient project delivery and documented decision-making. Prior to NEPA, transportation planning studies should be developed in a manner consistent with NEPA, so results will be suitable for use in the NEPA process.

It is important to emphasize that analyses done during the transportation planning process does not need to be done to the NEPA compliance level. However, the products of the transportation planning process – especially if appropriately documented and coordinated – can inform an environmental assessment (EA) or

¹ *Guidance on Using Corridor and Subarea Planning to Inform NEPA, April 2011.*



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

environmental impact statement (EIS) greatly enhancing the NEPA effort by allowing the project sponsors to rely on and use previous planning work.²

The transportation planning regulations governing the use of transportation planning materials to inform project development (23 CFR 450.212 and 450.318) identify the following five items among the products that corridor or subarea studies may produce for a proposed transportation project (**Figure 4.1.1**):

Figure 4.1.1 Study Products for Proposed Transportation Projects

Purpose and need or goals and objectives statement(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Defining the <i>goals and objectives</i> or vision statement for a particular area or corridor and, •Framing the <i>scope</i> of the problem to be addressed by a future project.
General travel corridor and/or general mode(s) definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This is not the specific alignment, but does direct future study of the corridor into one general area. •Focus on what modes can meet the goals and objectives identified for the area or corridor.
Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Level of detail in the analysis will be higher •Eliminated alternatives should have a rational basis that has been thoroughly documented, including documentation of the necessary and appropriate public involvement processes.
Basic description of the environmental setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide enough detail to support the analyses conducted in the study, and as much as possible document the project-level environmental setting.
Preliminary identification of environmental impacts and environmental mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Detailed enough to support planning-level decisions for environmental impact avoidance, minimization, early and compensatory mitigation.

Source: *Guidance on Using Corridor and Subarea Planning to Inform NEPA*, April 2011

These products may be incorporated directly or by reference into NEPA documents, provided certain conditions are met.

An essential component in linking planning activities to the NEPA process is making sure that activities, coordination and decisions are documented and that the information developed is carried through to project development. Therefore it is important to properly document how the planning study meets the conditions set out by the regulations for incorporation of planning products, and build relationships between planning agencies, resource agencies, and the stakeholders

² *Guidance on Using Corridor and Subarea Planning to Inform NEPA*, April 2011.



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

that will be preparing and reviewing the environmental documentation. This will help ensure that the planning study can be used to inform NEPA.

4.2 Study Environmental Process

This transportation alternatives study process provides an early opportunity for general conceptual transportation options to be reviewed at the statewide level by our agency partners. Those options will be presented in the Alternative Options and Policy Implications Technical Memorandum, which follows this document. Following the completion of this study, if more specific alternative strategies are selected for implementation, environmental considerations will be driven by the Future Corridors Program. Once specific projects are identified for implementation through the Future Corridors Program, those projects will be screened through the ETDM process.

Future Corridors Process

As listed in Florida's Future Corridors Action Plan, one of the goals for the Program is Environmental Stewardship, which includes the following policy objectives:

- Plan, design, construct, and operate transportation facilities in a manner that preserves or, where feasible, restores the function and character of the natural environment.
- Promote efficient and appropriate use of land and water.
- Design, build, and maintain corridors in a manner that is consistent with the conservation and management of surrounding natural resources and protects nonrenewable resources.
- Offset unavoidable impacts to natural resources through mitigation.

In order to fulfill these objectives, the Future Corridors Program will coordinate with Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Enterprise Florida to build upon and help harmonize long-range statewide planning activities. Through consensus around a shared vision, these partners will identify where new transportation corridors will be needed.

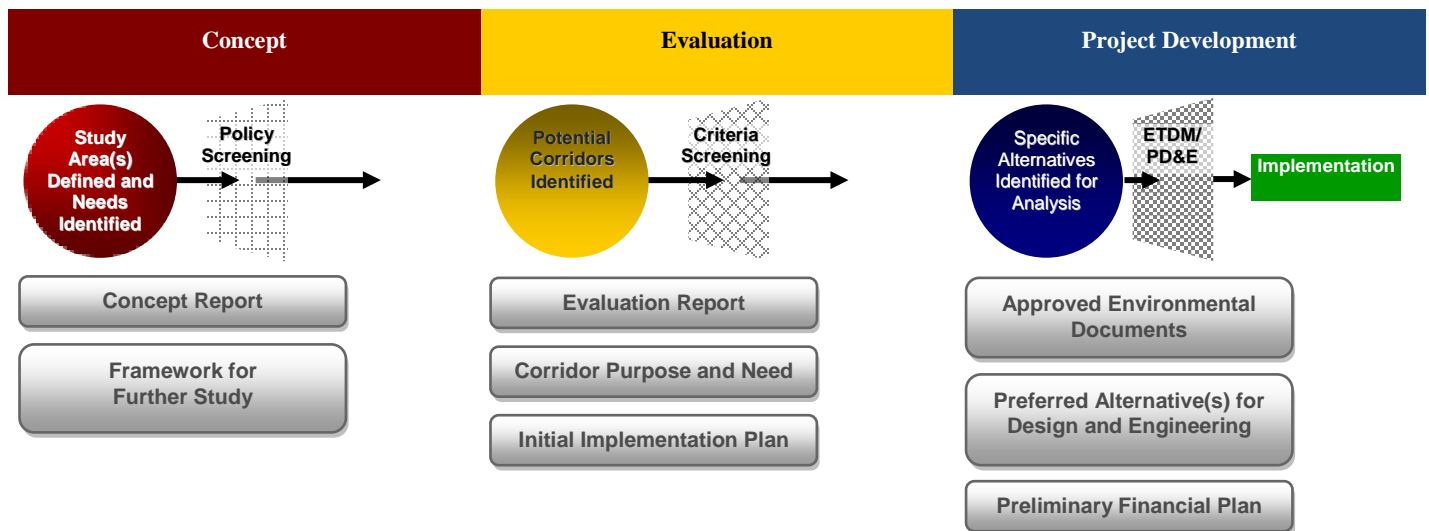
According to the Future Corridors Action Plan, the Future Corridors Program utilizes a three-stage planning process, which is illustrated in **Figure 4.2.1** below. The process includes the Concept stage, the Evaluation Stage, and Project Development stage. Each stage leads to decisions about which corridors should move forward, which should wait for additional information, and which should potentially move no



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

further. These screens get progressively finer, as the criteria and data become more detailed. The basic progression is from high-level policy analyses to detailed technical analyses.

Figure 4.2.1 Future Corridor Planning and Screening Process



Source: Florida's Future Corridor Initiative, July 2012

The approach for the planning process is designed to:

- Use objective criteria related to the Florida Transportation Plan and other statewide planning goals to guide decision-making;
- Integrate the corridor planning with established ETDM and PD&E processes;
- Involve partners early and often throughout the planning process so that mobility, economic, environmental, and community needs are balanced as soon as possible; and
- Advance reasonable corridors or segments to the next phase of development.

Criteria for evaluating potential statewide corridors include mobility and connectivity, economic competitiveness, community livability, and environmental stewardship. Environmental stewardship criteria will identify areas where impacts should be avoided, minimized, or may need to be mitigated. Emphasis will be on conservation lands, surface waters, wetlands, coastal and marine environments, threatened and endangered species and their habitats, cultural and historic resources, air quality and energy consumption.



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

At the statewide level, FDOT will work with state agencies, statewide commissions, statewide associations, and other partners to set the context for planning future corridors. Participating agencies and commissions include:

- Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Department of Economic Opportunity
- Department of Elder Affairs
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of State
- Enterprise Florida
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Division of Strategic Business Development (formerly OTTED)
- Public Service Commission
- Visit Florida

FDOT will also work with MPOs, regional visioning groups, regional planning councils, county and city governments, water management districts, modal partners, transportation authorities, economic development organizations, other interested parties, and the public to guide Future Corridor planning and to integrate corridor planning with other planning activities in each region.

The expectation is that once projects have been identified through the Future Corridors Process, the qualifying projects will be screened through ETDM EST (Environmental Screening Tool) to assist in:

- Developing or refining the project's purpose and need
- Defining or refining the existing environment information
- Providing the opportunity for early input from federal and state regulatory and resource agencies
- Possible Alternative Corridor Evaluation process for qualifying projects
- Screening of some of the alternatives, as appropriate

Project Level Process

At the project level, environmental issues can be identified through FDOT's coordinated early project scoping process called the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. The process fosters early identification and consideration of potential environmental impacts on qualifying transportation projects and facilitates open and continuous engagement among planners, regulatory and resource agencies, and Native American tribes during the planning stage of project development. The participating planning, regulatory and resource



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

agencies, as well as involved Native American Tribes compose an Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT).

The ETAT members serve as agency experts and remain as contacts throughout the project development process. The ETAT perform multidisciplinary reviews of transportation projects at prescribed points in the Planning and Programming Phases. These reviews assist in the determination of the feasibility of proposed project alternatives (if developed), focus studies for Project Development and Environment (PD&E), and allow for early identification of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation opportunities. In addition to ETAT reviews, potential effects on communities are also identified through the public involvement process and project level analysis of sociocultural effects.

This coordination assists the FDOT in planning and developing the project while considering the environmental issues which may include:

- Community
 - Aesthetics Effects
 - Land Use Changes
 - Relocation Potential
 - Economic
 - Farmlands
 - Mobility
 - Social
- Cultural
 - Section 4(f)
 - Historic and Archaeological Sites
 - Recreation Areas
- Natural
 - Coastal and Marine
 - Wetlands
 - Water Quality and Quantity
 - Floodplains
 - Wildlife and Habitat
- Physical
 - Noise
 - Air Quality
 - Contamination
 - Navigation
 - Infrastructure
- Special Designations



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

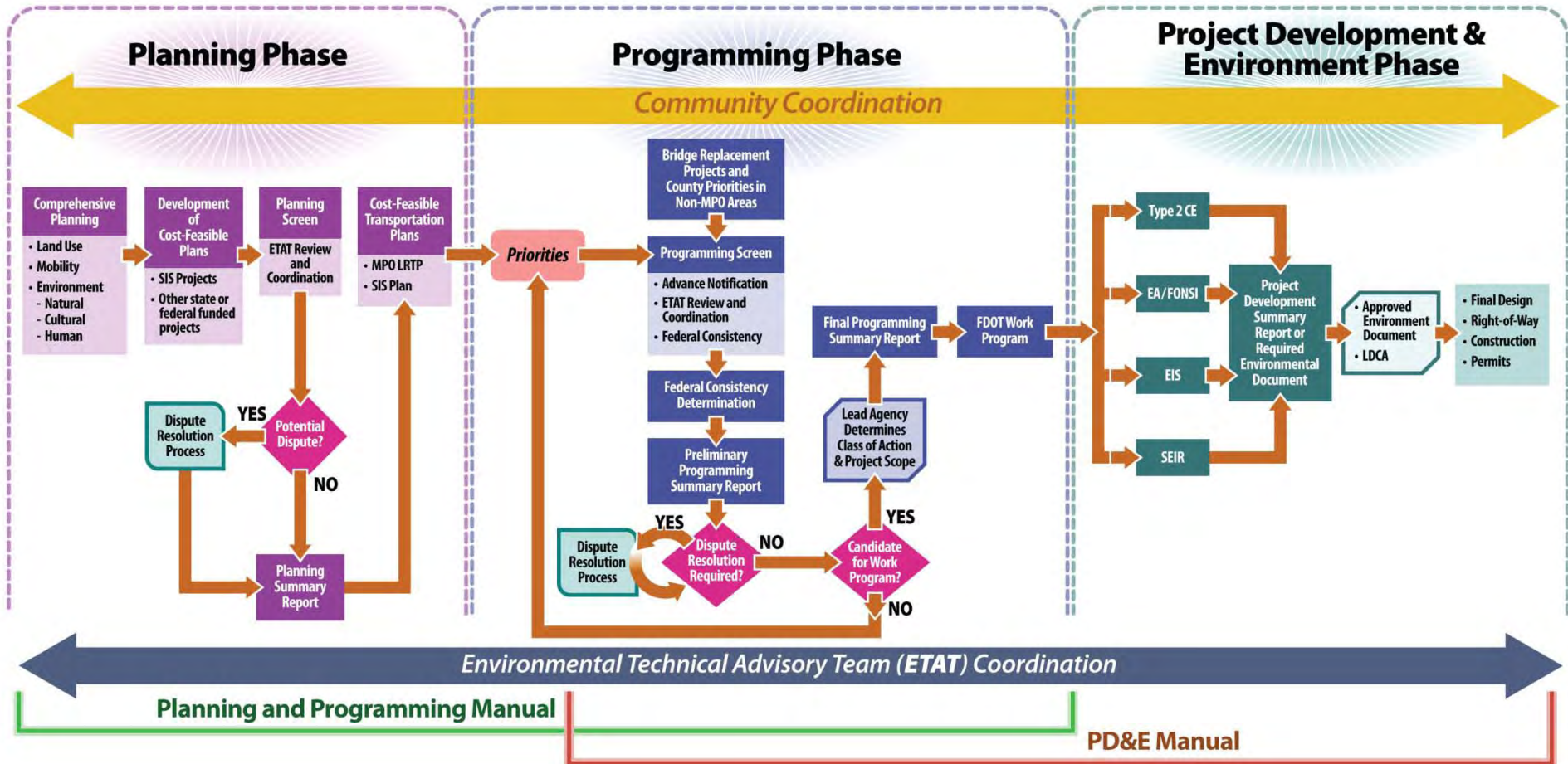
As illustrated in **Figure 4.2.2**, the ETDM Process involves two project screenings during the transportation project delivery process, the Planning and Programming Screens. During the Planning Screen, ETAT comments assist FDOT and the applicable MPO (if in an MPO area) in their assessment of projects for their adopted Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP). During the Programming Screen, qualifying priority projects under consideration for funding and inclusion in FDOT's Work Program or MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are screened. The resulting agency comments assist with scoping the project. Information gathered in the Planning and Programming Screens gives FDOT the opportunity to identify project-specific potential environmental issues, consider avoidance, minimization, and mitigation opportunities early, identify fatal flaws, and inform and support PD&E activities.

Coordination with the ETAT and public is facilitated through the Environmental Screening Tool (EST), an Internet-accessible interactive database and mapping application. The EST provides the vehicle for information exchange to and from ETAT members regarding project details, potential effects, and agency recommendations or requirements. Project information is made available to the public through the EST's public access website (<http://etdmpub.flas-etat.org>).



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Figure 4.2.2 ETDM Process Overview



Source: FDOT Environmental Management Office, 2012



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

4.3 General Environmental Considerations

The following section and associated figures provide general environmental considerations in the corridor. The focus is on environmental resources at the entire county level as impacts from the development of transportation alternatives will not be concentrated solely along the I-75 facility. Natural resources, such as water resources, wetlands and floodplains, sensitive habitats, and conservation and recreational areas, are summarized and illustrated. The social environment and economic environment are further described in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6, respectively.

Wetlands

Wetland impacts are quite common in Florida, and naturally there are wetlands found along much of the I-75 study area. **Figure 4.3.1** shows the wetlands in each county along the I-75 corridor. Those wetlands in the northern part of the corridor, and in much of Collier County, are forested/shrub. There are smaller scattered freshwater emergent wetlands inland and estuarine wetlands along the coast. Many of the wetland areas near I-75 are also protected public lands.

Endangered and Threatened Species

Figure 4.3.2 presents endangered and threatened species with consultation areas in the counties included along I-75 corridor. A variety of different sources for biological data exist, and consultation areas are one way to determine if there may be an impact to surrounding wildlife. Included in species present in the consultation areas are the American crocodile, the Florida panther, and five bird species. One consideration to future development of the southern portion of I-75 is the abundance of endangered and threatened species populations. Additional evaluation must be given to this issue in future study phases.

Figure 4.3.1

Wetlands along I-75 Corridor

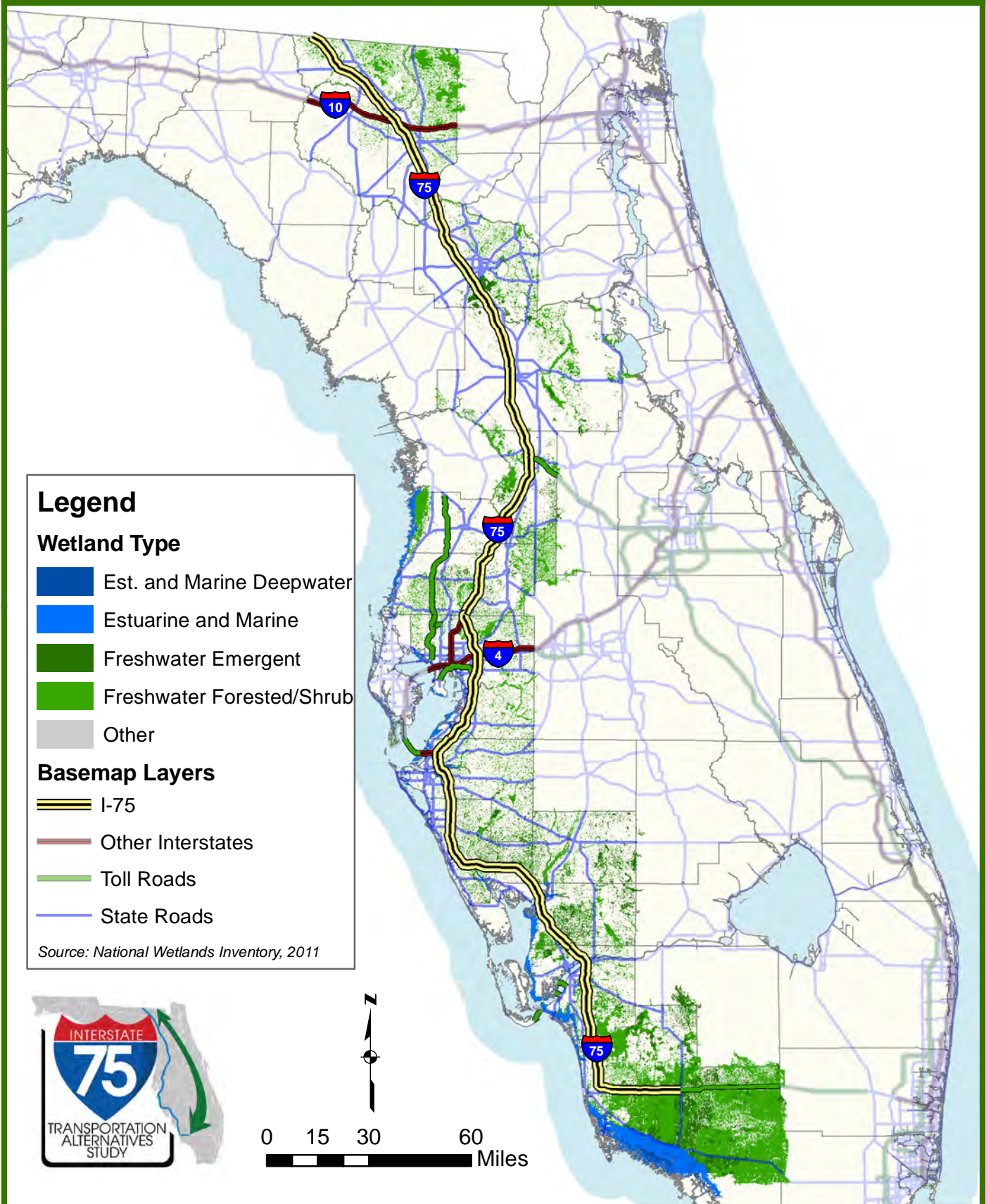
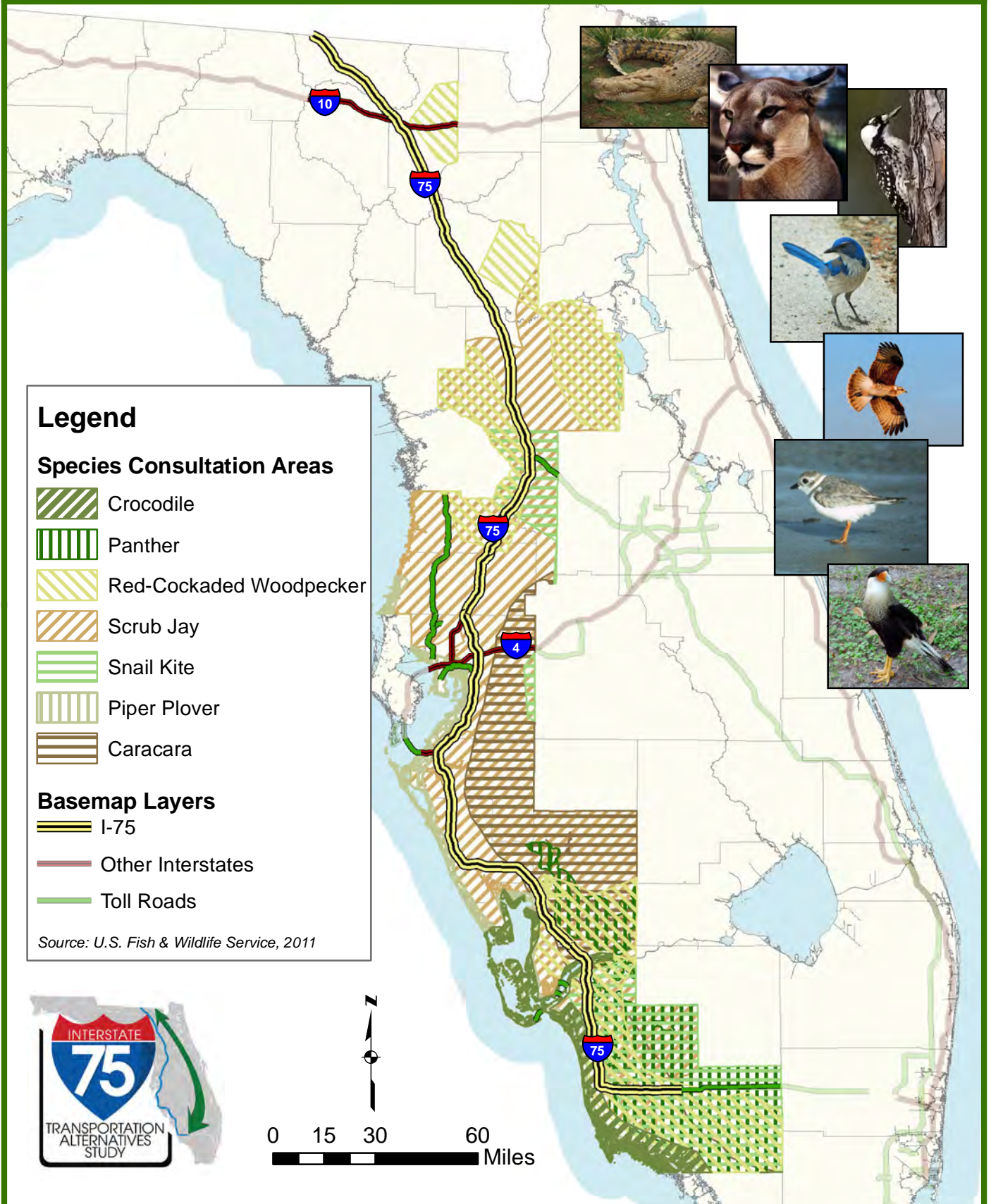


Figure 4.3.2

Endangered and Threatened Species Consultation Areas along I-75 Corridor





Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Outstanding Florida Waters

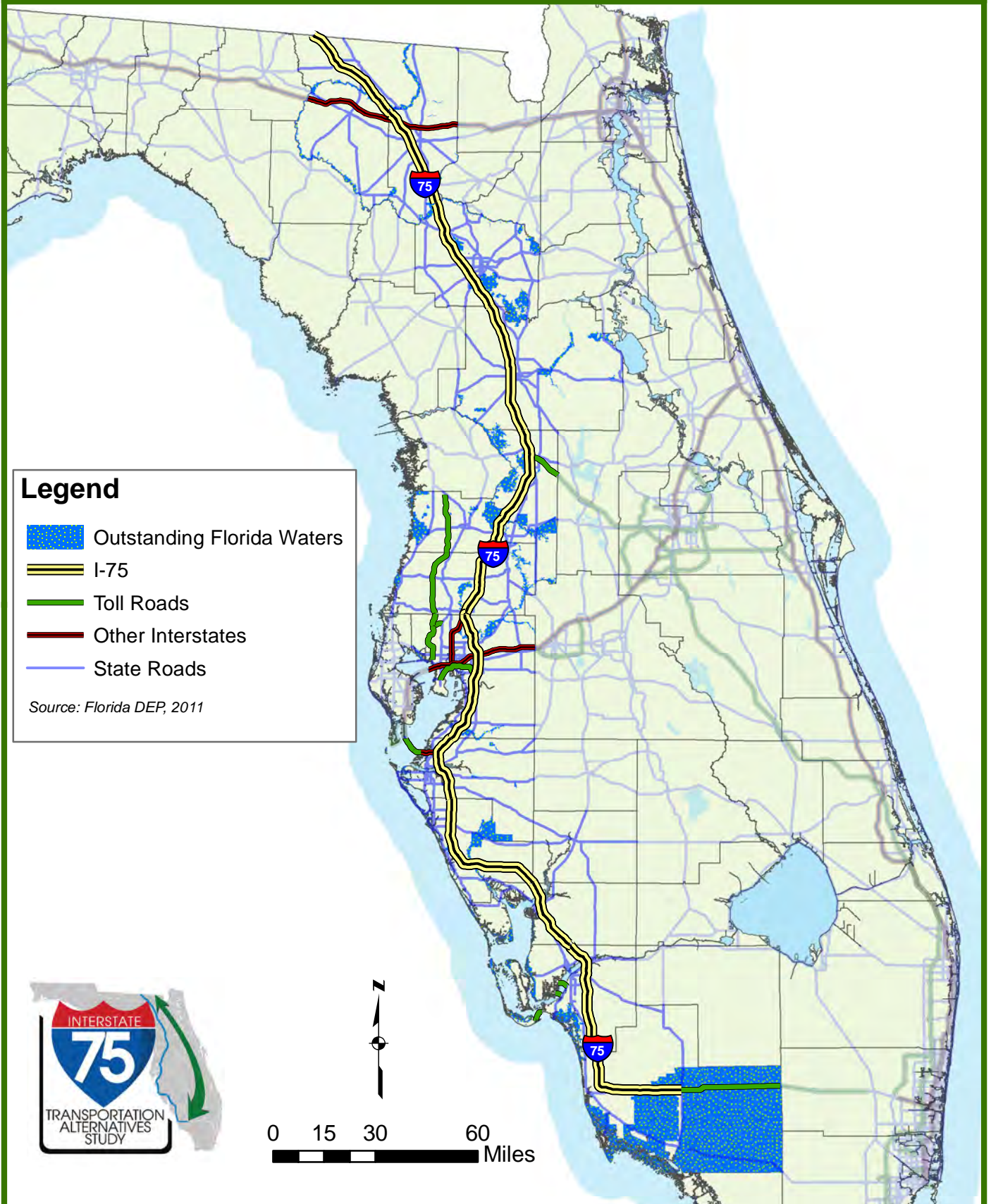
“Outstanding Florida Waters” (OFWs) in each county of the I-75 corridor are shown in **Figure 4.3.3**. Section 403.061(27), Florida Statutes, grants the Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) the power to establish rules that provide for a special category of water bodies within the state, to be referred to as “Outstanding Florida Waters,” which shall be worthy of special protection because of their natural attributes. This special designation is applied to certain waters and is intended to protect and maintain existing acceptable quality standards. Many of the OFWs are contained within the boundaries of publicly-owned lands managed for conservation and/or recreation so that the extent of the water features that are protected can be defined by the legal boundary of the park, recreation area, preserve, or other publicly-owned property.

Outstanding Florida Waters generally include surface waters in the following areas:

- National Parks
- National Wildlife Refuges
- National Seashores
- National Preserves
- National Marine Sanctuaries and Estuarine Research Reserves
- National Forests (certain waters)
- State Parks & Recreation Areas
- State Preserves and Reserves
- State Ornamental Gardens and Botanical Sites
- Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, Conservation and Recreational Lands Program, and Save Our Coast Program Acquisitions
- State Aquatic Preserves
- Scenic and Wild Rivers (both National and State)
- Other Waters (waters not already in a state or federal managed area)

Figure 4.3.3

Outstanding Florida Waters along I-75 Corridor





Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Nearly 100 OFWs exist in part or wholly in the 15 county I-75 corridor. **Table 4.3.1** lists the OFWs and corresponding counties.

Table 4.3.1 Outstanding Florida Waters along I-75 Corridor

Name	County
ANCLOTE KEY STATE PRESERVE	PASCO
BAREFOOT BEACH	COLLIER
BEKER (DESIGNATION UNDETERMINED)	MANATEE
BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE	COLLIER
BIG SHOALS (DESIGNATION UNDETERMINED)	COLUMBIA, HAMILTON
BOWER TRACT	HILLSBOROUGH
CALOOSAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	LEE
CAPE HAZE AQUATIC PRESERVE	CHARLOTTE, LEE
CAPE ROMANO - TEN THOUSAND ISLANDS AQUATIC PRESERVE	COLLIER
CARAVELLE RANCH	MARION
CARLTON HALF MOON RANCH	MARION, SUMTER
CAYO COSTA STATE PARK	LEE
CHARLOTTE HARBOR STATE RESERVE	CHARLOTTE
CHASSAHOWITZKA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	HERNANDO, SUMTER
CHASSAHOWITZKA RIVER SYSTEM	HERNANDO
COCKROACH BAY AQUATIC PRESERVE	HILLSBOROUGH
COLLIER-SEMINOLE STATE PARK	COLLIER
DEEP CREEK	COLUMBIA
DELNOR-WIGGINS PASS STATE REC. AREA	COLLIER
DEVIL'S MILLHOPPER STATE GEOLOGICAL SITE	ALACHUA
DON PEDRO ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA	CHARLOTTE
EGMONT KEY NWR	HILLSBOROUGH
ESTERO BAY	LEE
ESTERO BAY AQUATIC PRESERVE	LEE
ESTERO BAY TRIBUTARIES	LEE
EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK	COLLIER
FAKAHATCHEE STRAND STATE PRESERVE	COLLIER
FALLING CREEK	COLUMBIA
FLORIDA'S FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS	HERNANDO, SUWANNEE
FLORIDA PANTHER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	COLLIER
GASPARILLA ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA	LEE
GASPARILLA SOUND-CHARLOTTE HARBOR AQUATIC PRESERVE	CHARLOTTE, LEE
GILLS TRACT	PASCO
HILLSBOROUGH RIVER	HILLSBOROUGH, PASCO



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Name	County
HILLSBOROUGH RIVER STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK	COLUMBIA, SUWANNEE
ISLAND BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	CHARLOTTE
J.N."DING" DARLING WILDLIFE REFUGE	LEE
JUNIPER CREEK	LAKE, MARION
JUNIPER SPRINGS	MARION
KORESHAN STATE HISTORIC SITE	LEE
LAKE KERR	MARION
LAKE MANATEE STATE RECREATION AREA	MANATEE
LAKE ROUSSEAU STATE REC. AREA	MARION
LEMON BAY AQUATIC PRESERVE	CHARLOTTE, SARASOTA
LEVY COUNTY FOREST/SANDHILLS	MARION
LITTLE LAKE KERR	MARION
LITTLE MANATEE RIVER	HILLSBOROUGH, MANATEE
LITTLE MANATEE RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA	HILLSBOROUGH
LOCHLOOSA LAKE	ALACHUA
LOVERS KEY STATE RECREATION AREA	LEE
MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS STATE HISTORIC SITE	ALACHUA
MATLACHA PASS AQUATIC PRESERVE	LEE
MATLACHA PASS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	LEE
MYAKKA FLORIDA WILD AND SCENIC RIVER SEGMENT (5-14-86)	CHARLOTTE, MANATEE, SARASOTA
MYAKKA RIVER	CHARLOTTE, SARASOTA
MYAKKA RIVER STATE PARK	MANATEE, SARASOTA
O'LENO STATE PARK	ALACHUA, COLUMBIA
OCEAN POND	COLUMBIA
OKLAWAHA RIVER	MARION
OKLAWAHA RIVER AQUATIC PRESERVE	MARION
ORANGE LAKE	ALACHUA, MARION
OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK	SARASOTA
PASSAGE KEY	MANATEE
PAYNES PRAIRIE STATE PRESERVE	ALACHUA
PEACOCK SPRINGS STATE RECREATION AREA	SUWANNEE
PINE ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	LEE
PINE ISLAND SOUND AQUATIC PRESERVE	LEE
PINELLAS COUNTY AQUATIC PRESERVE	PASCO
PORT CHARLOTTE BEACH STATE RECREATION AREA	CHARLOTTE
RAINBOW RIVER	MARION
RAINBOW SPRINGS AQUATIC PRESERVE	MARION



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Name	County
RAINBOW SPRINGS STATE PARK	MARION
RIVER RISE STATE PRESERVE	ALACHUA, COLUMBIA
ROBINSON CREEK	COLUMBIA
ROOKERY BAY	COLLIER
ROOKERY BAY AQUATIC PRESERVE	COLLIER
ROSE SINK (ADDITION TO ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK)	COLUMBIA
SALT SPRINGS	MARION
SALT SPRINGS RUN	MARION
SAN FELASCO HAMMOCK STATE PRESERVE	ALACHUA
SANTA FE RIVER SYSTEM	ALACHUA, COLUMBIA, SUWANNEE
SARASOTA BAY ESTUARINE SYSTEM	MANATEE, SARASOTA
SAVE OUR EVERGLADES	COLLIER
SILVER RIVER	MARION
SILVER RIVER STATE PARK	MARION
SUWANNEE RIVER	COLUMBIA, HAMILTON, SUWANNEE
SUWANNEE RIVER STATE PARK	HAMILTON, SUWANNEE
TERRA CEIA AQUATIC PRESERVE	MANATEE
WEEKIWACHEE RIVERINE SYSTEM	HERNANDO
WETSTONE/BIRKOVITZ	PASCO
WIGGINS PASS ESTUARINE AREA AND THE COCOHATCHEE RIVER SYSTEM	COLLIER, LEE
WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER SYSTEM	HERNANDO, MARION, PASCO, SUMTER

Source: FDEP, 2011

State Parks, National Parks, and Managed Lands

State parks, national parks, and recreational/managed lands are also of particular concern to communities and conservation efforts within the I-75 corridor. Within the 15 counties of the I-75 corridor, three national parks and 48 state parks have been identified, as shown in **Figure 4.3.4** and detailed in **Table 4.3.2**. Additionally, more than 600 managed areas exist along the corridor and have a significant presence.

These areas have important conservation functions and supply nature-based recreational activities which bring a substantial amount of income to our state tourism markets. Furthermore, a number of the parks and managed lands contain protected historic and archaeological sites. The policy of FDOT is to avoid public parks, recreation areas, refuges, and historic sites.³ However, if any future project

³ FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 2: Analysis and Documentation, Chapter 13: Section 4(f) Evaluations



Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

in the I-75 corridor requires the use of lands in the previously mentioned protected areas, it must be determined that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land from the property. The action must include all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from the project.

Table 4.3.2 National and State Parks along I-75 Corridor

Park Name	County
ALAFIA RIVER STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
ANCLOTE KEY PRESERVE STATE PARK	PINELLAS, PASCO
BEKER - SOUTH FORK	MANATEE
BEKER - WINGATE CREEK	MANATEE
BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE	COLLIER
BIG SHOALS STATE PARK	HAMILTON, COLUMBIA
CAYO COSTA STATE PARK	LEE
CHARLOTTE HARBOR PRESERVE STATE PARK	LEE, CHARLOTTEE
COCKROACH BAY PRESERVE STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
COLLIER-SEMINOLE STATE PARK	COLLIER
DADE BATTLEFIELD HISTORIC STATE PARK	SUMTER
DELNOR-WIGGINS PASS STATE PARK	COLLIER
DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL	MANATEE
DEVIL'S MILLHOPPER GEOLOGICAL STATE PARK	ALACHUA
DON PEDRO ISLAND STATE PARK	CHARLOTTE
DUDLEY FARM HISTORIC STATE PARK	ALACHUA
EGMONT KEY	HILLSBOROUGH
ESTERO BAY PRESERVE STATE PARK	LEE
EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK	COLLIER
FAKAHATCHEE STRAND PRESERVE STATE PARK	COLLIER
GASPARILLA ISLAND STATE PARK	LEE
HILLSBOROUGH RIVER STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
HOLTON CREEK RIVERCAMP (MANAGED BY SUWANNEE RIVER STATE PARK)	SUWANNEE
ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK	COLUMBIA, SUWANNEE
JUDAH P. BENJAMIN CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL AT GAMBLE PLANTATION HISTORIC STATE PARK	MANATEE
KORESHAN STATE HISTORIC SITE	LEE
LAKE MANATEE STATE PARK	MANATEE
LITTLE MANATEE RIVER STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
LOVERS KEY STATE PARK	LEE



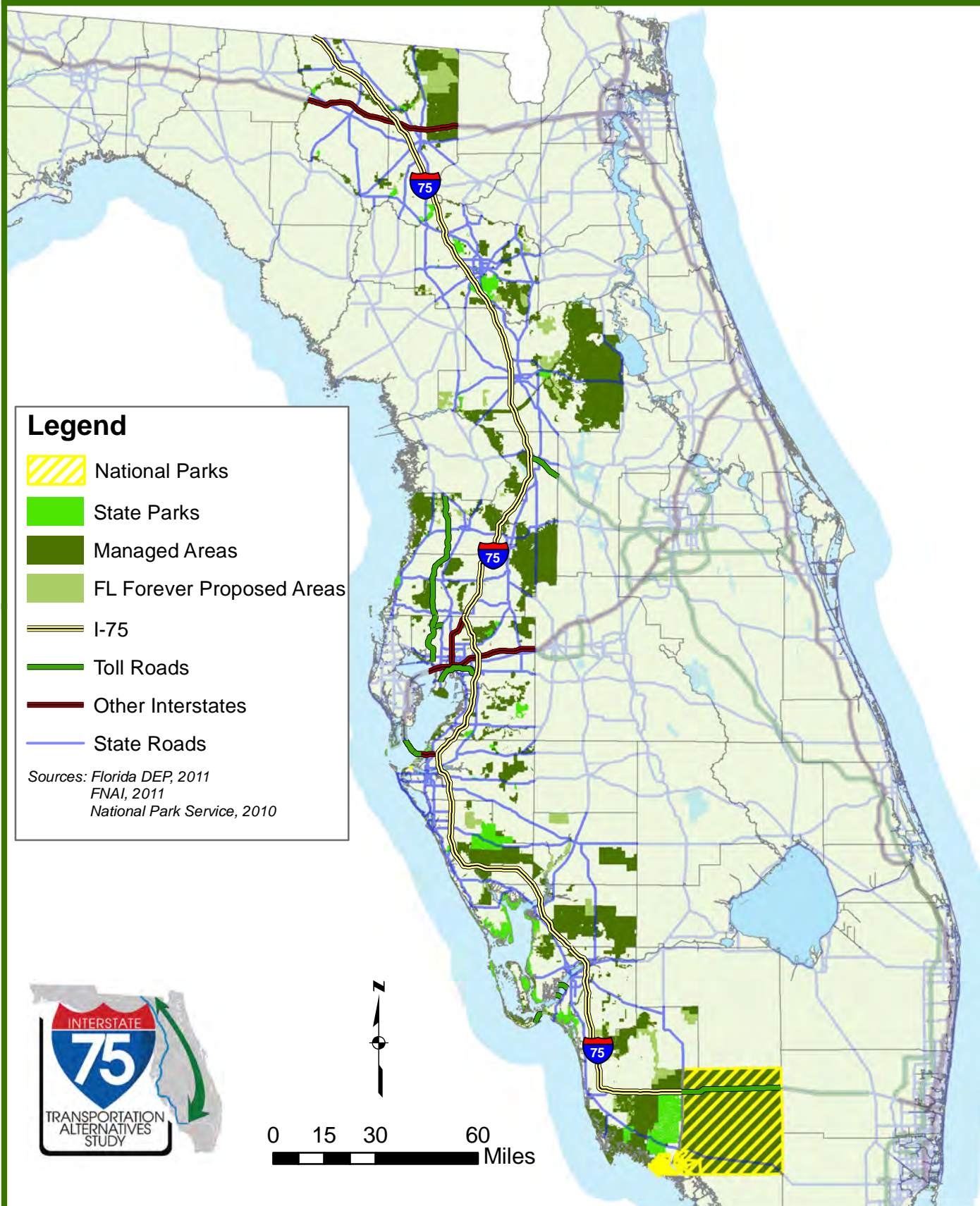
Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Park Name	County
MADIRA BICKEL MOUND STATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE	MANATEE
MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS HISTORIC STATE PARK	ALACHUA
MOUND KEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL STATE PARK	LEE
MYAKKA RIVER STATE PARK	MANATEE, SARASOTA
O'LENO STATE PARK	ALACHUA, COLUMBIA
OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK	SARASOTA
PAYNES PRAIRIE PRESERVE STATE PARK	ALACHUA
PEACOCK SLOUGH RIVERCAMP (MANAGED BY WES SKILES PEACOCK SPRINGS STAT*)	SUWANNEE
RAINBOW SPRINGS STATE PARK	MARION
RIVER RISE PRESERVE STATE PARK	ALACHUA, COLUMBIA
SAN FELASCO HAMMOCK PRESERVE STATE PARK	ALACHUA
SILVER RIVER STATE PARK	MARION
SKYWAY FISHING PIER STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH
STEPHEN FOSTER FOLK CULTURE CENTER STATE PARK	HAMILTON
STUMP PASS BEACH STATE PARK	CHARLOTTE
SUWANNEE RIVER STATE PARK	HAMILTON
TERRA CEIA PRESERVE STATE PARK	MANATEE
WEEKI WACHEE SPRINGS STATE PARK	HERNANDO
WERNER-BOYCE SALT SPRINGS STATE PARK	PASCO
WES SKILES PEACOCK SPRINGS STATE PARK	SUWANNEE
WOODS FERRY RIVERCAMP (MANAGED BY STEPHEN FOSTERFOLK CULTURAL CENTER	SUWANNEE
YBOR CITY MUSEUM STATE PARK	HILLSBOROUGH

Source: FDEP, 2011

Figure 4.3.4

State Parks, National Parks, and Managed Areas along I-75 Corridor





Chapter 4 – Environmental Considerations

Mitigation Banks

Mitigation banks also serve an important conservation function and are established pursuant to Chapter 62-342, F.A.C. Mitigation banking is a practice in which an environmental enhancement and preservation project is conducted by a public agency or private entity to provide mitigation for unavoidable wetland impacts within a defined region. The mitigation bank is the site itself, and the currency sold by the banker to the impact permittee is a credit, which represents the wetland ecological value equivalent to the complete restoration of one acre. The number of potential credits permitted for the bank and the credit debits required for impact permits are determined by the permitting agencies. **Table 4.3.3** lists the six mitigation banks identified within the I-75 corridor.

Please note that mitigation banks are typically part of mitigation opportunities for FDOT projects. Since the I-75 Alternatives study is a very high-level conceptual study, the intent of this section is to note existence of the mitigation banks for mitigation opportunities that may be identified in the future for more detailed studies at the project level.

Table 4.3.3 Mitigation Banks along I-75 Corridor

Park Name	County
BORAN RANCH MITIGATION BANK	DESOTO
BRADEN RIVER MITIGATION BANK	MANATEE
CORKSCREW REGIONAL MITIGATION BANK	LEE
LITTLE PINE ISLAND	LEE
PANTHER ISLAND MITIGATION BANK	COLLIER
TAMPA BAY MITIGATION BANK	HILLSBOROUGH

Source: FDEP Mitigation Section, 2009

Next Steps

The review presented in this chapter should not be considered a complete analysis of the study area, but rather the initial step in identifying environmentally sensitive lands. More detailed, precise information, on-site environmental assessments, as well as identification of effects of any improvement to the surrounding environment, will be necessary if specific alternatives are identified for implementation subsequent to this study. If any projects advance, impacts to the environment will be assessed following FDOT processes and procedures and will be coordinated with appropriate resource and regulatory agencies.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

The I-75 Corridor serves as a key interstate facility for the movement of passengers and freight. The security of this vital route is of the utmost concern, as any disruption could impede the flow of travel and the flow of commerce. To prevent such disruption, whether natural or manmade, it is necessary to identify challenges and concerns for emergency response and security in the I-75 corridor. This section of the I-75 Needs Plan discusses existing plans for evacuation and emergency management and also presents the role of security and law enforcement in the project corridor.

5.1 Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program

Under Florida House Bill 7121, Disaster Preparedness Response and Recovery, the Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM) received funding to update all 11 regional evacuation studies for Florida's Regional Planning Councils (RPCs)¹, including the five RPCs along the I-75 Corridor which are illustrated in **Figure 5.1.1**. The Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program (SRESP) was created to identify and implement strategies for the facilitation of evacuations. The program allowed regions to coordinate resources and tie together all regional evacuation studies into one coordinated statewide plan.

As part of the study process for the SRESP, new coastal Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data was gathered and provided to update coastal surge/flood modeling tools including Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH).² The project also included demographic and land use analysis, hazards and behavioral analysis, shelter analysis, and an evaluation of the transportation networks in each region. The major components of the SRESP included the following:

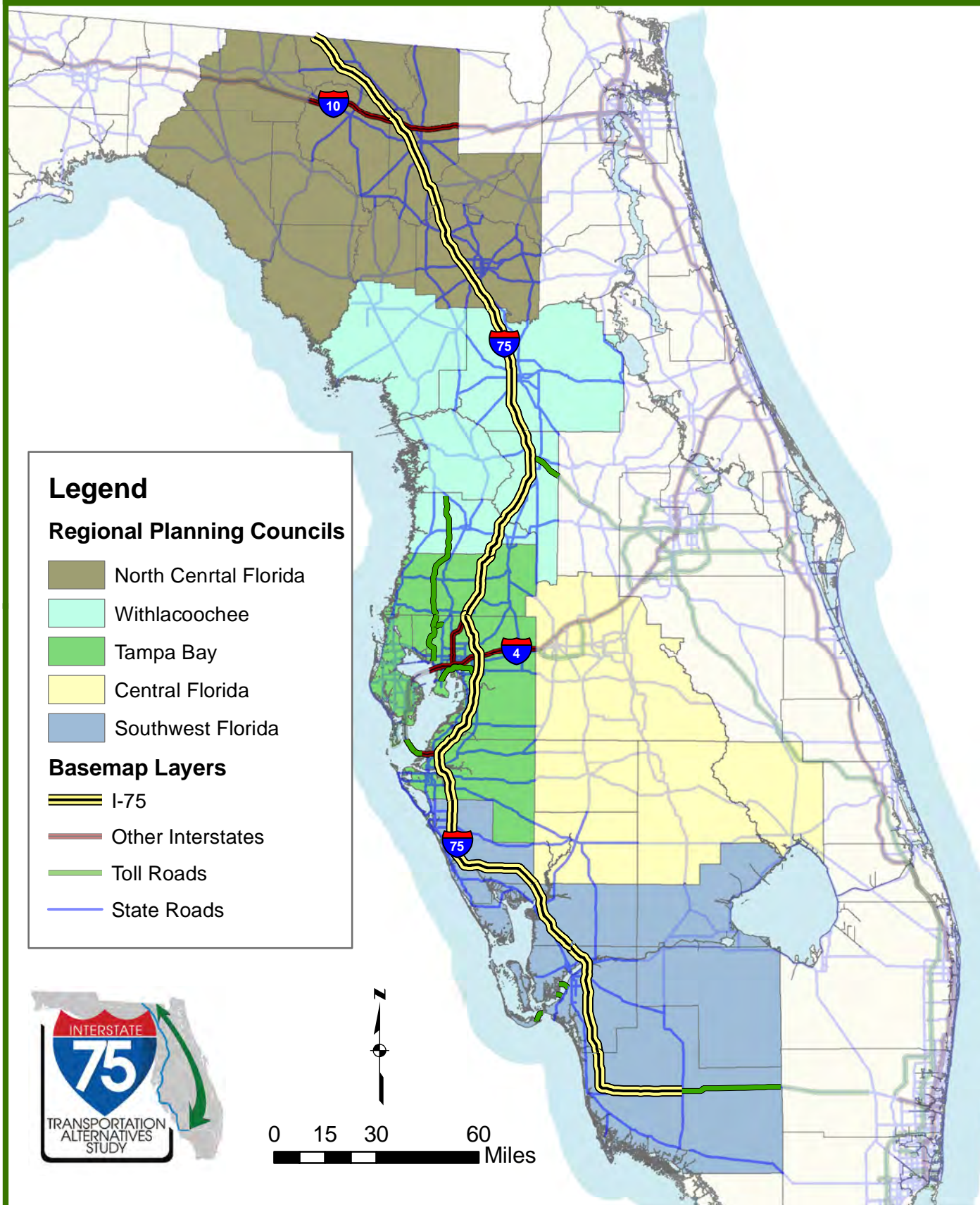
- **Demographic and Land Use Analysis** - The demographic and land use analysis described general population characteristics and implications for evacuation dynamics, as well as future land use analysis.

¹ Per Chapter 2006-71, Laws of Florida, HB 7121 provides legislative findings with respect to the need for improvements in the state's infrastructure in response to the hurricane seasons of 2004 and 2005; provides criteria for an appropriation to fund the construction or renovation of county emergency operations centers and designates alternate state emergency operations centers; provides criteria for an appropriation for retrofitting public hurricane evacuation shelters, etc.

² Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) is a remote sensing system used to collect topographic data. SLOSH (Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes) is a computerized model run by the National Hurricane Center (NHC) to estimate storm surge heights and winds resulting from historical, hypothetical, or predicted hurricanes.

Figure 5.1.1

Study Area RPC Boundaries





Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

- **Regional Hazards Analysis** - The regional hazards analysis addressed not only hurricanes but also other significant hazards which have the potential to bring about major evacuations, such as wildfires. The hazards analysis included general information about each hazard, a history of activity in the region, and geo-spatial analysis of the potential effects of the hazard.
- **Vulnerability Analysis** - The vulnerability analysis provided an assessment of the human and social impacts of hazards and identified the population-at-risk and the vulnerability of critical facilities. The vulnerability analysis also illustrated the threats of multiple hazard impacts following a hurricane.
- **Behavioral Analysis** - The behavioral analysis included the development of necessary assumptions based on how people respond to the changing conditions leading up to and during an evacuation. The assumptions were founded on survey data and show the response of people with respect to five behaviors: how many people would evacuate; when they would leave; what type of refuge they would seek; where they would travel for refuge; and how many vehicles they would use.
- **Shelter Analysis** - The shelter analysis presented a picture of shelter preparedness. The analysis included an inventory of shelters, as well as the special demands on those shelters. The criteria for shelter selection and the selection process were also discussed.
- **Transportation Analysis** - The transportation analysis is part of the backbone of the SRESP. The transportation portion served to estimate evacuation clearance times for every county and region and ensured that all Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) and the members of their respective regions used the same consistent transportation methodology. The RPCs and local county emergency management staff also identified evacuation networks, which were used as input for the transportation analysis.

The transportation analysis portion of the SRESP included the creation and development of a travel demand modeling system to calculate estimated evacuation clearance times and permitted RPCs to evaluate multiple “what-if” scenarios of various storm conditions. The travel demand model structure used the Cube Voyager platform, consistent with FDOT and MPO travel demand models, and included behavioral data, demographic data, an evacuation network and evacuation zones. The outputs from the model included clearance times, the number of evacuees entering and leaving the county, and evacuation network traffic volumes. The results of this analysis were helpful in exposing where deficiencies exist in the evacuation network.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

The SRESP was completed in December of 2010. The work completed on the transportation analysis and evacuation networks provided important information in confirming the importance of I-75 as a north/south evacuation corridor. I-75 played a key role in the evacuation network for the five regional planning councils and all 15 counties in the study area, as illustrated in **Figure 5.1.2A and 5.1.2B**.

Presently, I-75 directly connects to nearly 70 other RPC designated facilities that are part of the SRESP evacuation network. This connectivity provides important linkages to alternate routes in the case that any section of I-75 or other roads becomes impassable or unsafe. The counties within the study area with the highest number of evacuation network connections to I-75 are Hillsborough, Lee, and Sarasota. This is especially significant given the larger populations in each county that must be moved quickly in the event of a hurricane or other disastrous event.

The comprehensive behavioral studies completed as part of the SRESP included interviews with more than 18,000 Floridians and provided important information regarding evacuation trip characteristics. For the purposes of this study, evacuation trip distribution data was averaged for all evacuation categories and storm types, to yield an overall average evacuation trip distribution from the four coastal RPC areas along the I-75 corridor, as illustrated in **Figure 5.1.3**. Less than 20 percent of the evacuation trips for each of the RPCs remain within the RPC boundaries. For the Southwest Florida and Tampa Bay RPC regions, a large percentage of evacuation trips evacuate to Central Florida. A large percentage of trips from all four I-75 regions evacuate out of state. Many of these trips could possibly use the I-75 corridor as their primary evacuation route, which emphasizes the importance of the I-75 corridor as a major evacuation facility.

The geography of the state itself creates issues for citizens during an evacuation, given the predominately northbound single direction evacuation from southwest Florida. In a worst case storm scenario (Category 4 or 5 storm), the current structure of I-75 is not sufficient to accommodate evacuation trips, especially since the interstate still serves as a key commuter route during hurricane events.

Figure 5.1.2A

Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program Designated Evacuation Network

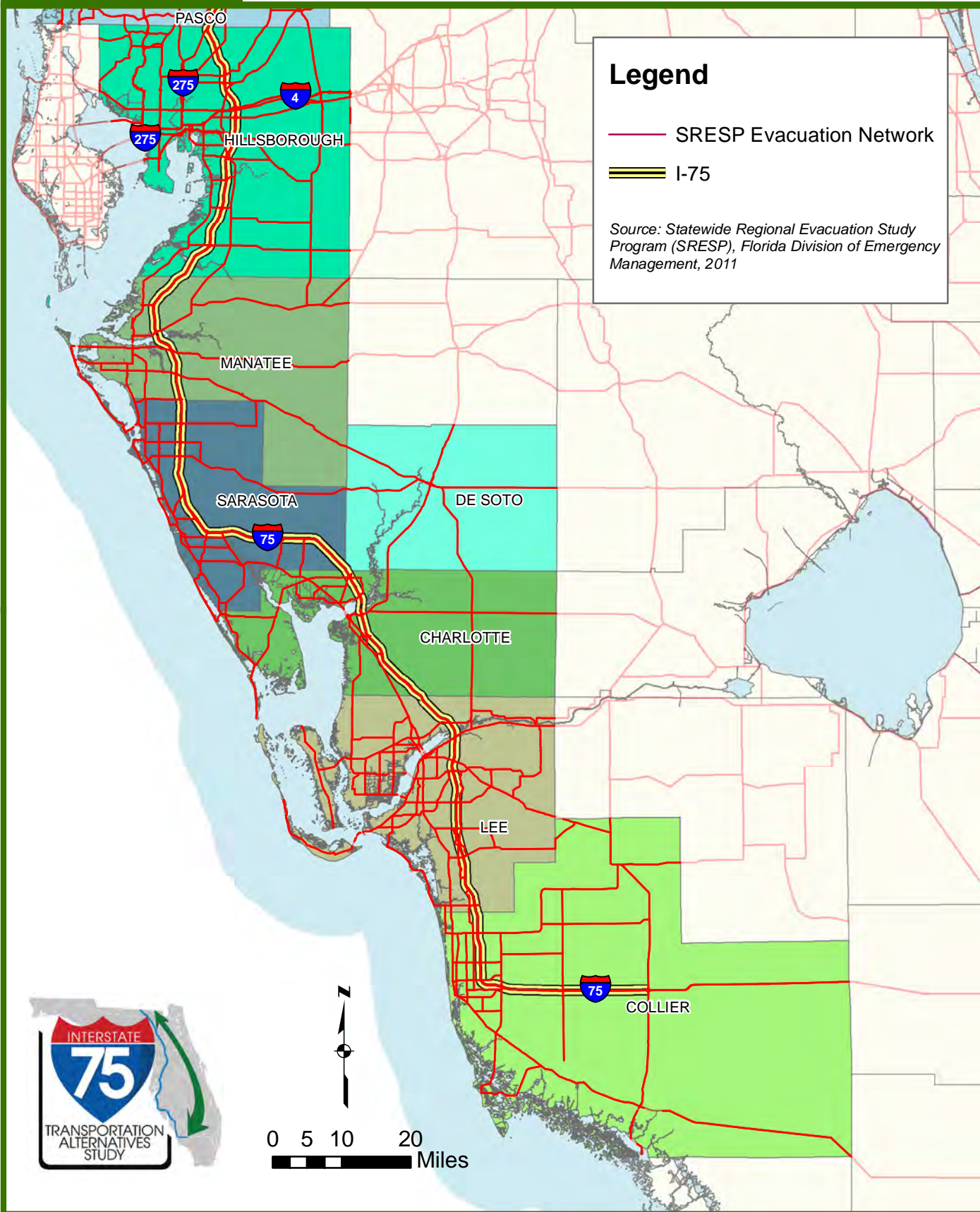
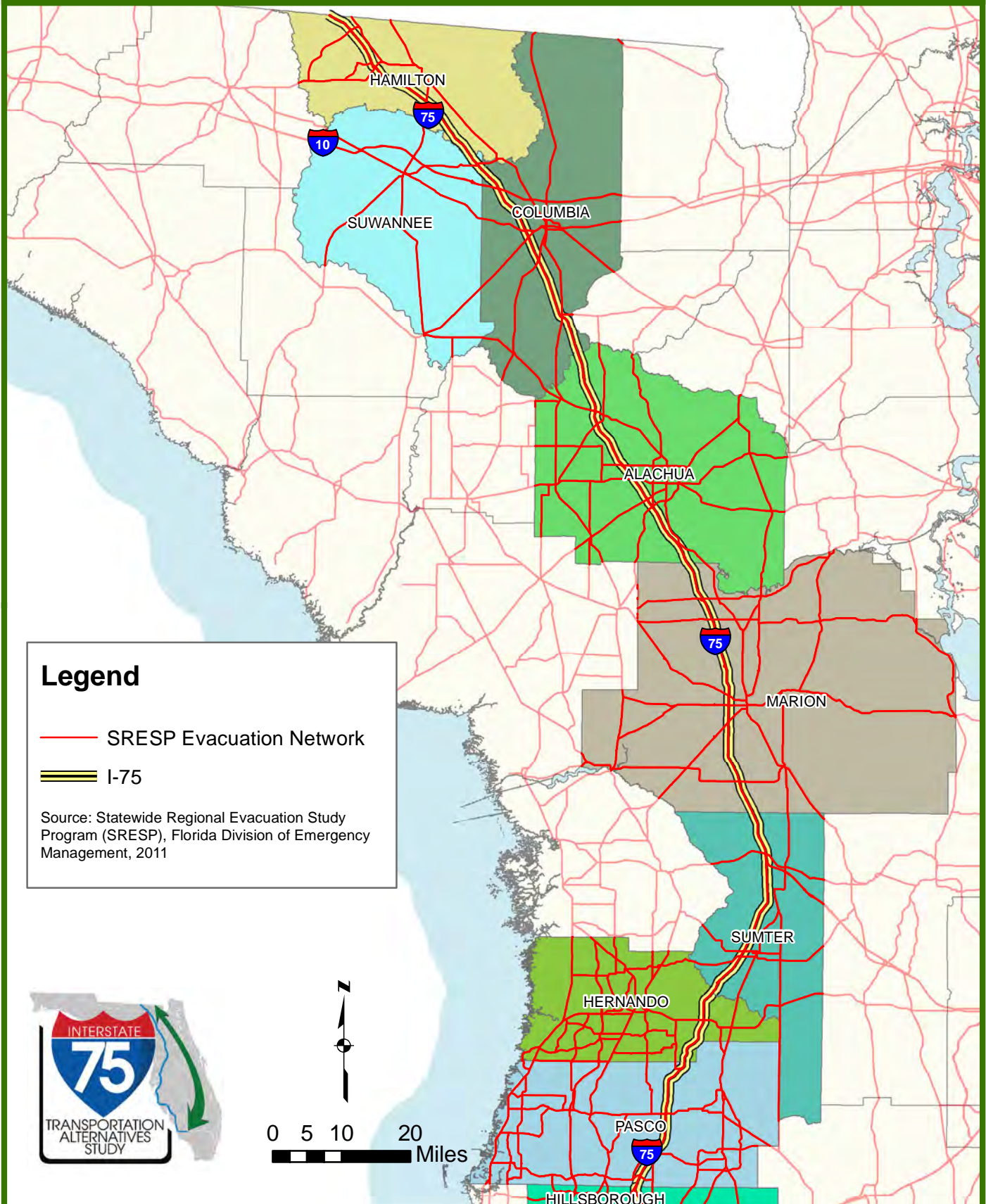


Figure 5.1.2B

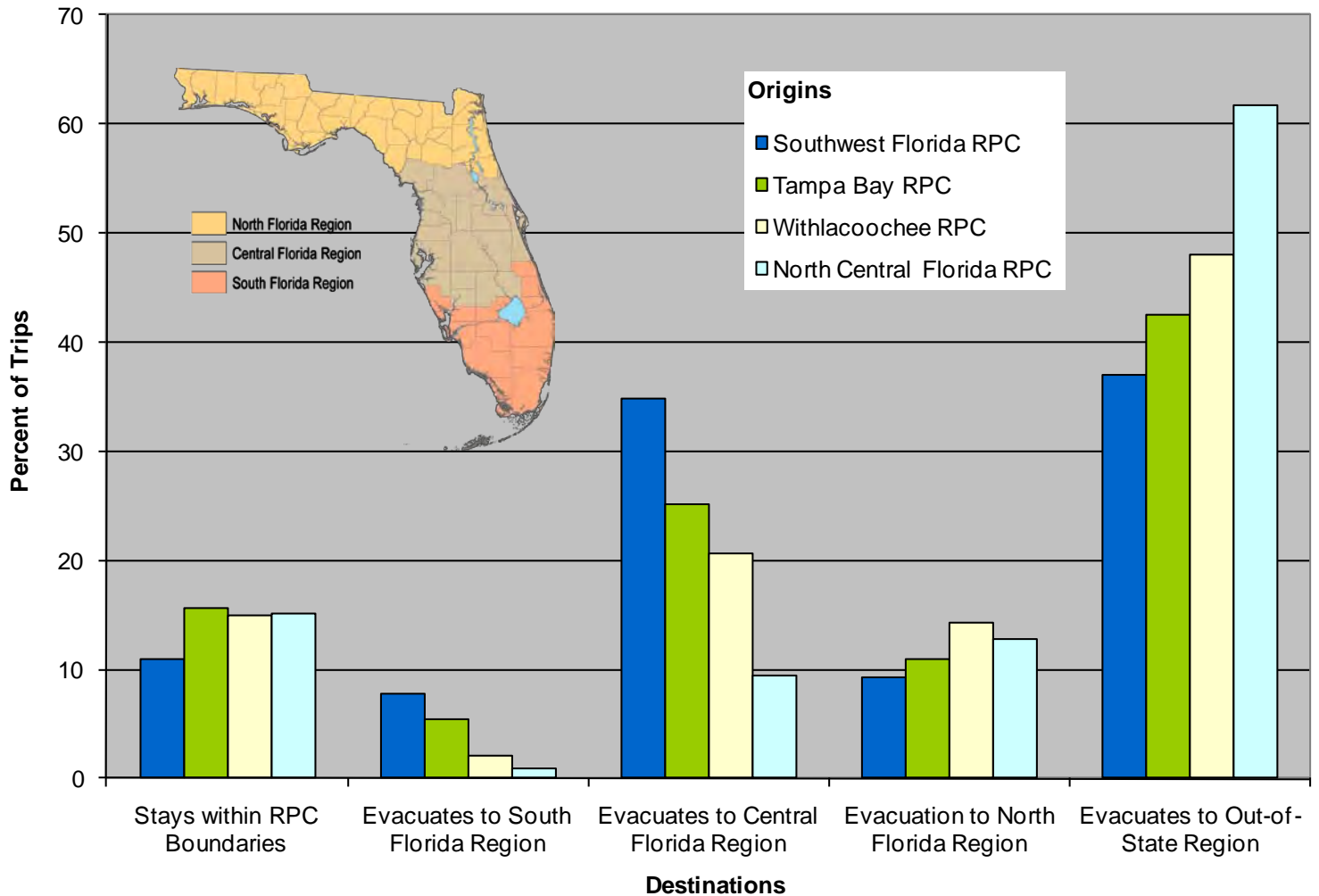
Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program Designated Evacuation Network





Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

Figure 5.1.3 Average Evacuation Trip Distributions for Regional RPC Evacuations along the I-75 Corridor



**Note: If the RPC is located within the region, trip distribution percentage only includes the counties outside the RPC boundaries. For the purposes of this study, evacuation trip distribution data was averaged for all evacuation categories and storm types, to yield an overall average evacuation trip distribution from the four coastal RPC areas along the I-75 corridor.*

Source: Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program, Florida Division of Emergency Management, 2010



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

5.2 County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans

Chapter 9G-6, Florida Administrative Code, requires each County to develop a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, while Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, (State Emergency Management Act) dictates that the Division of Emergency Management is responsible for the adoption of standards and requirements for county emergency management plans. The county plans must be consistent and coordinated with Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMP) of the 15 counties in the I-75 corridor, as well the rest of the counties in the State, are operations-oriented documents. The CEMPs establish the framework for an effective system to ensure that the counties and their municipalities will be adequately prepared to deal with the occurrence of emergencies and disasters.

The county plans outline the roles and responsibilities of local government, state and federal agencies and volunteer organizations. The CEMPs unite the efforts of these groups under the Emergency Support Function (ESF) format with a designated lead agency for a comprehensive approach to mitigation, planning, response and recovery from identified hazards.³ In Florida, there are 18 ESFs. A brief summary of each ESF is listed in **Table 5.2.1**. Each ESF has an important role in emergency operations and incident management, and the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) plays an intricate role in supporting all the ESFs along I-75.

These plans are structured to parallel state and federal activities set forth in the State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the Federal Response Plan, and describe how state, federal and other outside resources will be coordinated to supplement county resources and response.

³ The ESF concept was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the late 1980s to address the potential management concerns that would be necessary to coordinate a federal response to a catastrophic earthquake in California. FEMA subsequently implemented the ESF concept in the development of its Federal Response Plan. *Source:* <http://www.floridadisaster.org/bpr/emtools/esf.htm>



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

Table 5.2.1 Emergency Support Functions

ESF	Function Name	Description
1	Transportation	Provide or obtain transportation support.
2	Communications	Provide telecommunications, radio and satellite support.
3	Public Works	Provide in restoration of critical public services, roads, and utilities.
4	Firefighting	Support detection and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires.
5	Plans	Collect, analyze, and disseminate critical disaster information to SERT members.
6	Mass Care	Manage temporary sheltering, mass feeding, and distribution of essential supplies for victims.
7	Resource Management	Provide logistical and resource support to other organizations through purchasing, contacting, renting, and leasing supplies.
8	Health & Medical	Provide health, medical care, and social service needs.
9	Search & Rescue	Locate lost persons and victims trapped in collapsed structures and provide immediate medical care.
10	Environmental Protection	Respond to actual or potential hazardous materials discharges and other situations threatening the environment.
11	Food & Water	Secure bulk food, water and ice to mass care sites.
12	Energy	Support response and recovery from shortages and disruptions in supply and delivery of energy resources.
13	Military Support	Provide military resources to support logistical, medical, transportation, and security services.
14	External Affairs – Public Information	Disseminate disaster-related information the public.
15	Volunteers & Donations	Coordinate utilization and distribution of donated goods and services.
16	Law Enforcement & Security	Coordinate the mobilization of law enforcement and security resources.
17	Animal & Agricultural Issues	Provide rescue, protective car, feeding and identification of animals separated from their owners.
18	Business, Industry & Economic Stabilization	Provide support to business and industry in their response to a disaster.

Sources: <http://www.floridadisaster.org/cemp.htm>; Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2010.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

General County CEMP Considerations

Although the particular role of I-75 in the CEMPs is limited, I-75 is still important since it facilitates movement. The interstate is part of the critical transportation infrastructure and serves as part of the evacuation network in each county of the study area. In every case, I-75 serves as a geographic reference; the issues and considerations identified for the I-75 corridor would generally apply to most other roadways in the state as well. From each of the county CEMPS, the following general considerations emerged and apply to all 15 counties in the study area⁴:

- I-75 is a major north/south transportation facility for the entire study area. This roadway could be expected to facilitate regional mass evacuations, and the nature of these evacuations will inevitably cause congestion along the interstate. Evacuees wishing to leave the region utilizing I-75 must leave well in advance of any evacuation order being issued since out of county evacuation may not be possible due to factors such as limited transportation capacity and dense population;
- Critical intersections of other evacuation roadways with I-75 need to be monitored during an evacuation event to ensure and expedite vehicle movement. The movement of vehicles will require extensive traffic control efforts;
- The entire I-75 study area is susceptible to hazardous materials incidents, whether by damage to fixed facilities or by accidents resulting from transportation of those materials by railway, through the air, by water or over major roadways such as I-75;
- The I-75 corridor experiences heavy use by passenger and commercial traffic. The interstate is undeniably vulnerable to transportation system accidents;
- Any incident that closes or significantly blocks I-75 will require notification of the respective county's emergency management division so that the agency may issue warning to other organizations and the public;

⁴ Sources: Columbia County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, April 2009; Alachua County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, December 2008; Marion County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, March 2005; Sumter County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (Draft), 2011; Hernando County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2007; Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, May 2006; Manatee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, August 2009; Charlotte County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2011-2015; Collier County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, June 2008.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

- Staging areas are, in many cases, located near or along I-75. These sites are readily accessible to rail, roadway, and air carriers for the assembly of personnel, supplies, and equipment prior to deployment to the affected area(s);
- If I-75 is damaged or impassable, alternate routes to I-75 should be available and clear. The disruption of the I-75 infrastructure would be a major hindrance to recovery operations, such as distribution of food, water and ice;
- Emergency Support Function (ESF) 3, Public Works, is an important factor in each county's CEMP. Public works is vital for clearing roadways and access to stricken areas. Public works is integral to the removal of debris from transportation routes. The assessment of damage and clearance of I-75 would greatly depend on this function. The Florida Department of Transportation is responsible for clearing debris from state and federal roads in major arterial systems;
- Hazards categories that could cause roadway blockage on I-75 are: hurricanes/tropical storms, tornados, severe thunderstorms, urban/wildfires, lightning, hazardous materials, water system failure, oil spills, sinkholes, civil disorder, and, terrorism; and,
- During evacuations changeable highway message signs may be used on the interstate. These signs communicate to the evacuating public as well as direct delivery vehicles for mutual aid resources that are designated for protective or recovery actions.⁵

5.3 Homeland Security and Emergency Response

On I-75, various law enforcement agencies monitor and control passenger and commercial traffic, investigate accidents, and provide general security enforcement. From day to day, these agencies help regulate the safety of the I-75 corridor;

⁵ Mutual aid resources are provided per mutual aid agreements. Per Section 252.40, *Mutual Aid Agreements*, Florida Statutes:

The governing body of each political subdivision of the state is authorized to develop and enter into mutual aid agreements within the state for reciprocal emergency aid and assistance in case of emergencies too extensive to be dealt with unassisted. Copies of such agreements shall be sent to the division. Such agreements shall be consistent with the state comprehensive emergency management plan and program, and in time of emergency it shall be the duty of each local emergency management agency to render assistance in accordance with the provisions of such mutual aid agreements to the fullest possible extent.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

however, these agencies have major responsibilities with regard to homeland security as well as emergency response and recovery actions during a disaster.

The roles and responsibilities of various law enforcement agencies along the I-75 corridor include the following:

Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Homeland Security – The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is a key player with regard to its commitment to domestic security in the Florida. FDLE is given its authority by Chapter 943, Florida Statutes, Department of Law Enforcement Act. Within this chapter, Section 943.03101, *Counter-terrorism Coordination*, places FDLE in control of the coordination of specialized efforts of emergency management that are unique to counter-terrorism activities. According to this Section:

These efforts intrinsically involve very close coordination of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies with the efforts of all others involved in emergency-response efforts. In order to best provide this specialized effort with respect to counter-terrorism efforts and responses, the Legislature has determined that such efforts should be coordinated by and through the Department of Law Enforcement, working closely with the Division of Emergency Management and others involved in preparation against acts of terrorism in or affecting this state.⁶

FDLE provides an important aspect to the information sharing and intelligence element of I-75 during a domestic security event. FDLE operates the Florida Fusion Center (FFC), which has a significant role in passing intelligence to state and local partners. The FFC, located in Tallahassee, serves as Florida's primary fusion center for the gathering, processing, analysis, and dissemination of criminal intelligence, terrorism, and homeland security information. If a suspicious activity or potential public safety threat along I-75 is reported to the local law enforcement agency, this information can then be communicated through regional fusion centers or directly to the FFC. FFC would complete analysis of this information and determine appropriate dissemination of this information or intelligence. This dissemination would include federal and state agencies as well as the regional fusion centers across Florida. The FFC has a working partnership with 18 state and federal agencies as well as professional associations (fire and law enforcement). FFC partners maintain the ability to utilize indices checks from their respective agency databases in order to provide collaborative analysis and additional information regarding the activities and incidents potentially affecting public health and safety.

In addition, the FFC participates in the National SAR Initiative (NSI), wherein if a suspicious incident takes place on I-75 and is reported by a local or state agency as a tip, field interview report or suspicious activity report (SAR), the FFC will review

⁶ Section 943.03101, *Florida Statutes, Counter-terrorism coordination*.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

the report for behaviors and indicators that may have a nexus to terrorism. If these indicators are present, the FFC will place the report into the national “shared space” in order to index the event and link other threat events/activities taking place both inside and outside Florida. This shared space environment is accessible by other fusion centers and federal entities, to include the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security. Further information on domestic security efforts in Florida may be found in the *Florida Domestic Security Plan, 2009-2011*.⁷

FDLE, Emergency Response and Mutual Aid - According to Florida’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), FDLE is also the primary state agency for Emergency Support Function 16, Law Enforcement and Security (ESF 16). FDLE coordinates the mobilization of law enforcement and security resources. Appendix XVI of the Plan states:

*When an emergency situation is anticipated or occurs, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement will dispatch sworn personnel from the nearest Florida Department of Law Enforcement office to the affected agency(ies) to establish state mutual aid liaisons and monitor the situation. These personnel will coordinate all requests for additional state law enforcement resources from within the affected region of the state and make regionally resources immediately available to the local law enforcement agency(s). The Special Agent in Charge, or a designee from the nearest Florida Department of Law Enforcement office, will accomplish coordination of the use of state resources for the local law enforcement executive(s). Should the situation escalate or require at the onset additional state law enforcement resources from outside the affected region, such resources will be dispatched in conjunction with other state law enforcement agency(s) listed in this appendix by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Director in Tallahassee.*⁸

An example of an emergency situation involving I-75 in which FDLE would be activated would be a hurricane evacuation. The movement of vehicles during an evacuation requires extensive traffic control efforts to make maximum use of roadway capacity and to expedite safe escape from hurricane hazards; this requires the coordinated efforts of municipal, county and state law enforcement agencies.⁹ FDLE would need to coordinate law enforcement resources to monitor critical

⁷ The Florida Domestic Security Plan is available on the internet in the following location: <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/0aead9bc-20f4-4c4e-86fd-6bd15df62b38/FloridaDomesticSecurityStrategicPlan2009-2011.aspx>

⁸ Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Appendix XVI: Emergency Support Function 16 – Law Enforcement and Security, 2010.

⁹ These actions fall under Section 252.40, *Mutual Aid Arrangements*, Chapter 252, Florida Statutes.



Chapter 5-Emergency & Security Response

intersections and expedite vehicular movements and confirm condition of evacuation routes with ESF 3 Public Works. Re-entry to evacuated areas would also need to be coordinated through ESF 16.

Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (HSMV), Enforcement and Emergency Response – The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is the parent agency for the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP). FHP promotes safety on I-75 and all Florida highways through enforcement as well as educational efforts. FHP publishes road closure information and also provides it to the Division of Emergency Management (DEM). One of the main goals of FHP is to attempt to reduce criminal activities occurring on Florida's highways through detection, prevention, and enforcement of criminal laws relating to highway violence, transportation of illegal drugs/contraband, auto theft, driver license fraud, and emissions fraud.

FHP is responsible for patrolling the entire length of I-75, and covers the territory with three troops. Troop F covers Collier County to Manatee County, Troop C covers Hillsborough County to Sumter County, and Troop B patrols Marion County to the Florida/Georgia state line in Hamilton County.

FHP also houses the Office of Motor Carrier Compliance (formerly an FDOT office). The OMCC provides commercial vehicle safety and weight enforcement functions. OMCC law enforcement officers are in force along the entire I-75 corridor and perform traffic enforcement with an emphasis on violations by commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) and passenger vehicles interacting with large trucks. The primary purpose of the weight enforcement program is to protect Florida's highway system and bridges from damage from overweight vehicles. Currently, there are three operational weigh stations along I-75 in Punta Gorda, Wildwood, and White Springs.

Local Law Enforcement Agencies - Sheriff's offices are the chief law enforcement entities in each county of the I-75 study area. Both the sheriff's offices and police departments in the corridor have the responsibility to take action in homeland security events within their communities and their jurisdictions. These agencies are the primary first responders when a disaster strikes. For example, local SWAT teams could be called in the case of a terrorist event on I-75. Local law enforcement agencies also have primary control over evacuation traffic control and reentry for their respective municipalities.



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

I-75 is a key contributor to economic development in the 15 county study area. Major businesses rely on I-75 for the movement of goods and people. The interstate also has the capability to funnel trips to developments and businesses along parallel and intersecting corridors. This chapter presents information regarding economic development potential along the I-75 corridor, along with a summary of tourism impacts.

6.1 Economic Development Benefits and Opportunities

I-75 is a conduit between major economic centers in urban areas and designated enterprise zones in north, central, and southwest Florida. The I-75 corridor also connects to major roadway facilities that provide access to counties and communities designated as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern.

Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC)

Robust rural communities are essential to the overall success of the State's economy. While Florida's urban communities have grown rapidly over the past 50 years, its rural communities have not shared this growth and prosperity. Because most rural areas continue to experience severe and sustained economic distress, the State has designated 29 of its 32 rural counties and five communities as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC). Per Section 288.0656(2)(d), Florida Statutes, the definition of a RACEC is as follows:

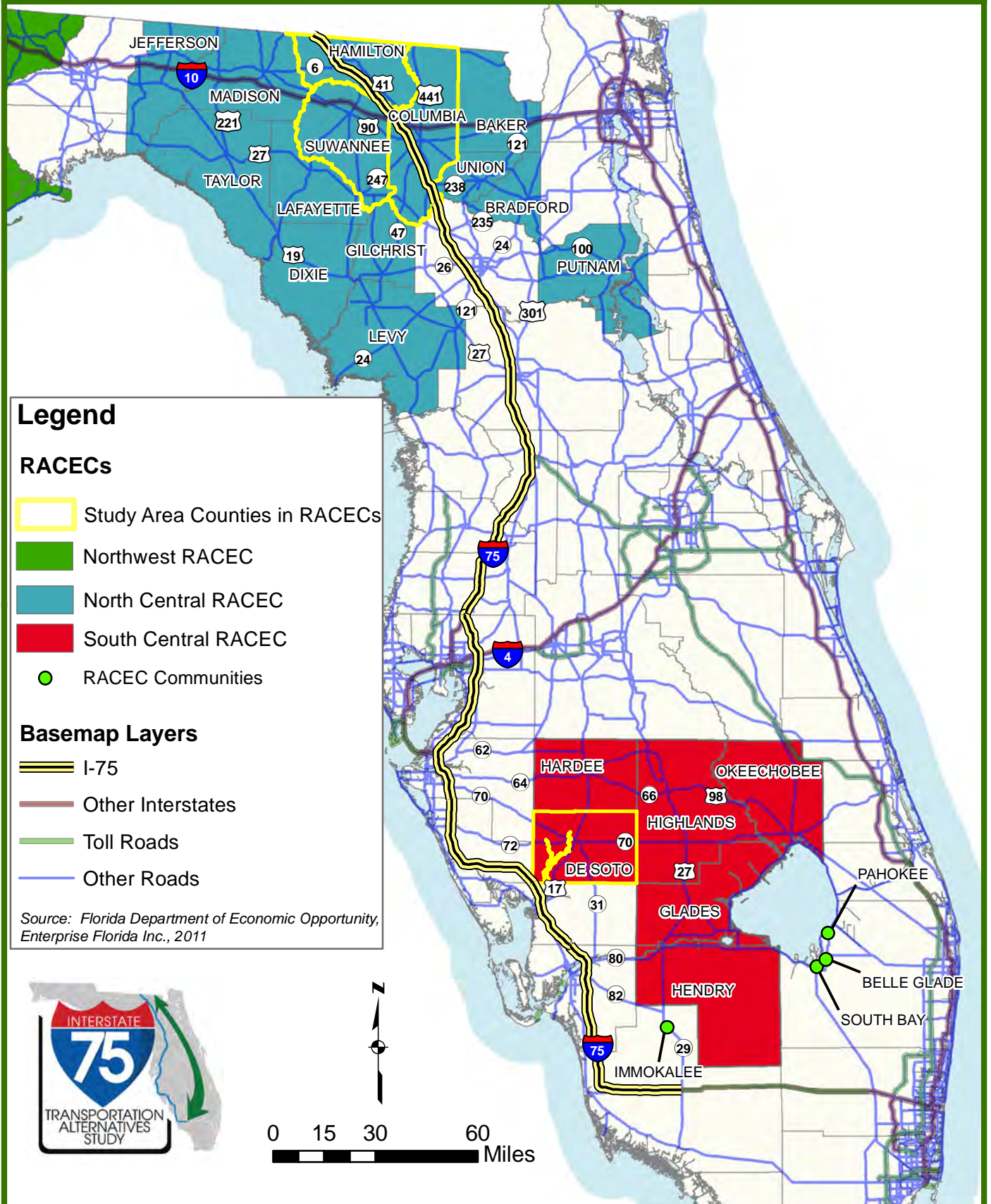
"Rural area of critical economic concern" means a rural community, or a region composed of rural communities, designated by the Governor, that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster or that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact."

The Governor may designate up to three RACECs. This designation establishes the regions as priority assignments for Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) agencies and allows the Governor waive criteria of any economic development incentive including transportation projects under Section 288.063, Florida Statutes.

Within the study area, Hamilton, Suwannee, Columbia, and DeSoto Counties are designated as RACEC counties. As shown in **Figure 6.1.1**, Hamilton, Suwannee, and Columbia Counties are part of the North Central RACEC, and DeSoto County is part of the South Central RACEC. The city of Immokalee, located in Collier County, is also designated as a RACEC community.

Figure 6.1.1

Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) Adjacent to or Within I-75 Corridor





Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

The proximity of I-75 to the Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) serves as an important component in providing much needed exposure to those areas. I-75 provides direct access to the RACEC counties within the corridor with the exception of DeSoto County; I-75 is connected to DeSoto County via US 17, SR 72, and SR 70. Immokalee is connected to the I-75 corridor via SR 29 and SR 82. RACEC counties that are immediately adjacent to the corridor are connected to I-75 via the following roadways:

- I-10 and US 90 connect I-75 to Baker and Madison Counties;
- US 27 connects I-75 to Levy County;
- SR 247 connects I-75 to Lafayette County;
- SR 121 connects I-75 to Union County;
- SR 26 connects I-75 to Gilchrist and Putnam Counties;
- SR 235 connects I-75 to Bradford County;
- SR 62 and SR 64 connect I-75 to Hardee County; and,
- SR 80 and SR 29 connect I-75 to Glades and Hendry Counties.

Enterprise Zones

Along the I-75 corridor, one of the key strategies supporting economic development is the use of Enterprise Zones. Florida's Enterprise Zone Program encourages economic growth and investment in distressed areas by offering tax advantages and incentives to businesses that are located in and/or invest in these areas. An Enterprise Zone is a specific geographic area targeted for economic revitalization. Potential benefits include sales tax refunds on building materials and equipment, sales tax exemptions on electricity, corporate tax credits, and any local incentives. Currently, the state has designated 59 enterprise zones in Florida, and the federal government has designated five. Included within that total are:

- 3 Federal Enterprise Communities;
- 2 Federal Empowerment Zones;
- 30 Rural Enterprise Zones; and,
- 29 Urban Enterprise Zones.

Within the 15 county I-75 study area, there are a total of 12 Enterprise Zones, as identified in **Table 6.1.1**. The Enterprise Zone program operates at both the state and federal levels, and almost every state has some form of an Enterprise Zone program. The federal government has designated a total of 172 Enterprise



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

Communities and Empowerment zones across the United States¹. These designations are based on criteria including population, poverty rates, and economic distress. Because of the diversity in the population and economy throughout the state of Florida, the Enterprise Zone program is designed to accommodate both rural and urban areas. Because rural areas do not attract and retain the same types of businesses that urban areas do, rural Enterprise Zones are given different tax credits through the various incentives.

**Table 6.1.1 Florida Enterprise Zones Located within
the I-75 Study Area and Local Accomplishments 10/1/2009-9/30/2010**

Enterprise Zone	Zone ID	Class	New Businesses	New Jobs
Immokalee/Collier County	EZ 1101	Rural	15	193
Fort Myers/Lee County	EZ 3601	Urban	48	309
Desoto County	EZ 1401	Rural	2	18
Sarasota County	EZ 5801	Urban	36	43
Palmetto/Manatee County	EZ 4102	Urban	13	49
Hillsborough County	EZ 2902	Urban	158	294
Brooksville/Hernando County	EZ 2701	Urban	28	95
City of Ocala	EZ 4201	Urban	10	394
Sumter County	EZ 6001	Rural	0	0
Columbia County	EZ 1202	Rural	0	0
Suwannee County	EZ 6101	Rural	0	0
Hamilton County	EZ 2401	Rural	0	0

Source: Enterprise Florida Inc.

Enterprise Zones all have the same basic goals of economic revitalization and community redevelopment; however these incentives are especially important in urban areas trying to change their development pattern. Many cities have had trouble with infill strategies due to the fact that redevelopment is often more expensive than new development. This program offers local governments more

¹ *Enterprise Florida Inc.*



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

control to direct development into areas that need it most. This could be a powerful tool for directing development to maximize the potential of the I-75 alternatives.

Major Businesses

As reflected in Fortune magazine, many major businesses chose to locate in the 15 county I-75 corridor study area. Fortune magazine has been a trusted source for business news and analyses for decades, including the distribution of major businesses in Florida. Among the well-known researched and ranked lists is the Fortune 500, an annual list compiled and published by Fortune magazine that ranks the top American public corporations as measured by their gross revenue. There are 16 Fortune 500 companies headquartered in Florida, and two of those companies are located along the I-75 Corridor². Proximity to I-75 is an important aspect in location choice, which is linked to the ability to move goods and people. **Table 6.1.2** identifies the Fortune 500 Companies headquartered along the I-75 Corridor.

These companies are not only high in earnings, but they also represent one of the industry clusters defined as strengths in Florida. WellCare Health Plans and Health Management Associates are linked to the Life Sciences cluster focusing on research centers, biotech, pharmaceutical and medical devices, and healthcare establishments. These I-75 Corridor companies play a key role in the state's continued economic success and competitiveness.

Table 6.1.2 I-75 Corridor Fortune 500 Companies Headquarters, 2011

National Rank	Company	City	Revenue (\$ millions)
420	WellCare Health Plans	Tampa	\$5,440
435	Health Management Assoc.	Naples	\$5,169

Source: Enterprise Florida

There are many other companies that have headquarters along the I-75 corridor that also have high earnings and provide above average wage jobs to Floridians. Companies like these far outnumber the larger Fortune 500 companies, and if taken as a whole, have substantial impacts on not only the local, but state economy as well. For example, TECO Energy in Tampa is on the Standard and Poor's list of companies headquartered in Florida for 2011. It is also on the InformationWeek 500 list of companies with Florida headquarters³.

² Enterprise Florida Inc.

³ Enterprise Florida Inc.



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

General Considerations for Economic Development

I-75 is a major selling point that can enhance Florida's economic competitiveness and diversification at local, regional and global levels. The I-75 corridor is home to multinational corporations and is part of a network that connects international markets to the United States and vice versa. I-75 offers unparalleled access to economic opportunities in the counties along the corridor where many corporate parks, light manufacturers, distribution centers, and research and development operations are either located or desire to locate.

Due to the convergence of multimodal hubs, the corridor plays an important role for distribution and freight, connecting seaports, airports and distribution centers. The I-75 corridor is part of a seamless system where efficiency is good for the bottom line. Locations along I-75 are ideal for the establishment of integrated logistics centers, which attract warehousing, forwarding, and logistics businesses, as well as restaurants, hotels.

With the anticipated recovery of the global economy, Florida stands to benefit from several external and internal freight related economic development opportunities, including the expansion of the Panama Canal. With these trade opportunities on the horizon for Florida and its seaports, comprehensive measures are proposed to enhance the state's competitive edge, better serve the state's population, and create jobs and revenues⁴. As cited in the seaports' White Paper entitled *2010 Economic Action Plan for Florida: A Blueprint to Leverage Florida's Strategic State-Seaport Partnership*⁵, if it is to attain and sustain global leadership, Florida must reject the status quo and develop a plan of action that positions the state to benefit from changing trade patterns, changing economic policies, and changing global markets. In partnership with FDOT, the Division of Strategic Business Development, and other bodies of the Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida's seaports have been working for two decades to expand seaport capacity and efficiency so that international trade can flourish throughout the state. Florida's interconnected multimodal transportation system -- seaports, airports, and rail -- is one of the state's most dynamic and proven catalysts for economic growth³.

The I-75 corridor is potential ground for new housing developments that spur commercial growth as the population grows. Because access to I-75 is a desirable feature of these residential developments, the integration of mixed uses, especially

⁴ A Five-year Plan to Achieve the Mission of Florida's Seaports, 2009/2010 – 2013/2014, Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council.

⁵ Florida Ports Council, February 2010.



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

in transit oriented and transit adjacent developments, would be a benefit to the economy. Proposed transit oriented developments could lead to reduction in VMT growth and a degree of system preservation, which translates to economic preservation.

6.2 Tourism

Tourism plays a fundamental role in Florida's economy, with the sun, sand, and a variety of other attractions bringing millions of visitors to Florida each year. Understanding visitor travel trends is an important part of using and predicting future travel demands, especially in a state with such a strong tourism industry. Visitor travel patterns are often different from resident or freight travel in both temporal and geographic distribution. For this reason visitor travel can also follow a different growth pattern. At one time Florida visitor travel grew faster than resident travel; now, visitor travel is growing at a slower rate than resident travel.

Understanding the significance of visitor travel is relevant to I-75 as it is a core part of the statewide transportation system, and Florida tourism is heavily dependent on a strong transportation system. Visitors to any new place want convenient, safe and efficient travel both into and out of their destination. Failure to meet the transportation needs of visitors could diminish Florida's attractiveness and jeopardize the economic momentum currently enjoyed. The state's tourism marketing agency, VISIT FLORIDA, measures the economic impact of tourists through recreational taxable sales, travel-related employment, car rental surcharges and tourist taxes.

According to the most recent annual tourism estimates, Florida attracted 82.3 million visitors in 2010. This represents a 1.8% increase over 2009⁶. The percentage of air travel is also rising, with an air/non-air split of 52.7%/47.3% in 2010 compared to the 51.3%/48.7% split in 2009. Due to the limited availability of other modes, this means the demand on highway facilities like the I-75 corridor were responsible for nearly half of all trips to Florida in 2010. **Table 6.2.1** illustrates the distribution of visitor origins to Florida by year.

The substantial historic economic impact of tourism on Florida can be shown in total spending, the amount of total sales tax revenues, and the number of persons directly employed by the tourism industry. In 2010, tourists spent over \$65 billion and the total sales tax revenues to the state were nearly \$4 billion⁷. **Table 6.2.2** shows the total tourism spending, total sales tax revenues, and number employed by tourism in Florida by year.

⁶ VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010

⁷ VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

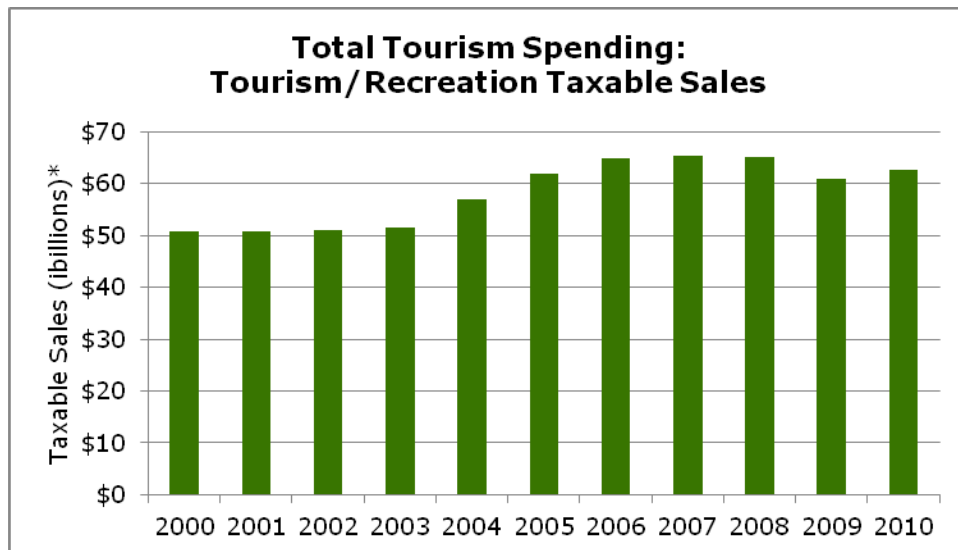
Table 6.2.1 Florida Historic Visitor Numbers (in millions)

Year	Domestic	Overseas	Canadian	Total
2000	64.7	6.0	2.0	72.8
2001	62.3	5.3	1.9	69.5
2002	67.9	4.4	1.6	73.9
2003	68.7	4.2	1.7	74.6
2004	73.4	4.4	1.9	79.7
2005	77.2	4.4	2.0	83.6
2006	77.6	4.1	2.1	83.9
2007	77.3	4.7	2.5	84.5
2008**	76.1	5.2	2.9	84.2
2009	71.3	7.0	2.6	80.9
2010	71.2	8.0	3.1	82.3

** In 2008, VISIT FLORIDA changed its visitor estimation method to increase accuracy, so estimates made prior to that year are not directly comparable to more recent yearly estimates.

Source: VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010

Table 6.2.2 Historic Economic Impact of Tourism on Florida 2000-2010



*Beginning in 2003, DOR revised this calculation to include 12 kind codes versus 14.

Source: VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

The top three states for total domestic visitors to Florida in 2010 were Georgia, New York, and Illinois⁸. The I-75 corridor is a likely choice for visitors from Georgia traveling by auto. With just under half of Florida's visitors arriving by non-air mode in 2010, it can be assumed that a large number of visitors utilized I-75 at some point in their travels. Europe and South America had over half of the share of overseas visitor volume, with the United Kingdom as the top origin country totaling 1.3 million visitors in 2010⁹.

With 28.9% of the total, Orange County remained the top destination among domestic visitors in 2010¹⁰. Other top ranked destination counties were Hillsborough, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Duval. The Orlando area with its theme parks and other attractions had many trips, but the Tampa area along I-75 was also quite popular with tourists. Other top destinations along the I-75 corridor include Pinellas, Lee, Collier, and Sarasota Counties.

Special tourism considerations for the I-75 corridor include Gasparilla and bowl games in Tampa, regular generators like the football games in Gainesville, nearby events like Lakeland's Fun n' Sun, and special events like the Republican National Convention 2012, also in Tampa. These events generate massive traffic issues due to participation of between 50,000 to 500,000 people. The I-75 corridor is a major facility responsible for moving all these people efficiently, and alternatives should be considered to help improve the mobility along the corridor.

⁸ VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010

⁹ VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010

¹⁰ VISIT FLORIDA Research Study 2010



Chapter 6 - Economic Development Benefits and Tourism Impacts

This page intentionally left blank.



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

7.1 Summary of Findings

The technical memorandum provides a baseline assessment of the travel demand of people and freight moving along the I-75 Corridor in the State of Florida against five measures: transportation, freight movements, emergency management, homeland security, and economic development. The following summarizes key findings from this review of existing conditions along the corridor and provides a preliminary framework for developing a range of corridor strategies to alleviate congestion, facilitate emergency and security response, and foster economic development in the State of Florida.

Existing Corridor Conditions

- The number of through lanes along I-75 ranges from 4 to 8 lanes depending upon the location. In southwest Florida, from Collier County to Sarasota County, I-75 fluctuates between 4 and 6 lanes. As I-75 extends north through Manatee and Hillsborough Counties, the lane configuration ranges from 6 to 8 lanes with a short 4-lane segment north of US 301. North of the apex of I-75 and I-275 in Pasco County, I-75 has four lanes through Pasco County and all of Hernando County. At the Hernando/Sumter County line, the interstate increases to 6 lanes and carries this configuration to the end of the study limits at the Florida/Georgia border.
- ITS coverage varies throughout the corridor. Charlotte and Hillsborough Counties have invested more heavily in ITS infrastructure, while Manatee, Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter Counties have minimal ITS infrastructure.

Demographic Elements

- The 15 counties along the study corridor are home to over 4.5 million residents, which constitute approximately 24% of Florida's total population. The I-75 corridor runs through two of the top ten most populated counties in Florida (Hillsborough and Lee Counties), making the efficient movement of people and goods a priority for these areas. Hillsborough County's population was fourth highest in the state, at over 1.2 million, and Lee County came in eighth at just under 650,000.
- Together, the fifteen I-75 Corridor counties could add over two million new residents within the span of a generation, growing at a rate of 46%. The state of Florida is expected to grow at a rate of 33%, or over 6 million by 2035. Over a third of that growth is projected to be along the I-75 corridor. Depending on the travel choices made, any new population may add significantly to the congestion already being experienced in Florida.



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

- In addition to the large tourist population present year-round in Florida, the number of students, disabled persons, and others with specific mobility needs will continue to grow¹. For example, the 65+ age group has unique mobility needs and is projected to grow very quickly. Approximately 26% of Floridians are projected to be over the age of 65 by 2030, compared with about 20% nationally². Along the I-75 corridor, over 40% of the population will be over the age of 65 in Charlotte, Sarasota, and Sumter counties by 2030.

Environmental Considerations

- When considering new transportation alternatives, the following environmental issues are important: conservation lands, surface waters, wetlands, coastal and marine environments, threatened and endangered species and their habitats, cultural and historic resources, air quality and energy consumption.
- Wetlands are found along much of the I-75 study area. Those wetlands in the northern part of the corridor, and in much of Collier County, are forested/shrub. There are smaller scattered freshwater emergent wetlands inland and estuarine wetlands along the coast. Many of the wetland areas near I-75 are also protected public lands.
- Alternatives should consider potential impacts to wildlife along the corridor. Endangered and threatened species with consultation areas in the study area include the crocodile, the Florida panther, and five bird species.
- State parks, national parks, and recreational/managed lands are also of particular concern to communities and conservation efforts within the I-75 corridor. Within the 15 counties of the I-75 corridor, 48 state parks, three national parks, and more than 600 managed areas have been identified. Improvements to this area of the corridor will need to determine any potential impacts to parks and managed areas.

Mobility and Traffic Elements

- Existing AADT along the I-75 corridor ranges from a high of 134,500 vehicles per day (vpd) north of SR 574 in Hillsborough County to a low of less than 20,000 vpd in Collier County along Alligator Alley. Truck AADT ranges from a high of more than 14,400 trucks per day (tpd) in Marion County to a low of less than 2,000 tpd in Collier County.

¹ 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, 2010

² 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, 2010



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

- Future year 2035 traffic volumes along I-75 are forecasted to increase significantly throughout the corridor, with the largest increase in Pasco County north of CR 41 where AADT is projected to increase by nearly 120 percent from 34,500 vehicles per day (vpd) in 2011 to 75,700 vpd in 2035. Two other locations, including one site in Hillsborough County and one in Hernando County, increased by 100 percent or more.
- The transportation analysis reflects a need for improvements and illustrates that alternative transportation options must be available by the 2035 planning horizon to capture growing demand. I-75, even at build-out, will not be operating at sufficient levels, and model results imply that parallel facilities may be facing a similar growth problem. Alternative transportation routes and modal choices must become readily available to ensure safe and efficient movement of passenger and freight travel.
- Regional trip patterns vary greatly along the I-75 corridor, depending upon the selected location. For example, In Collier, Lee, and Hillsborough Counties, a large percentage of trips along I-75 are considered local trips, starting and ending within each respective county. In Charlotte, Sarasota, Pasco, Columbia, Suwannee, and Hamilton Counties, the large majority of trips are inter-regional in nature. This emphasizes the difference in trip characteristics in different areas of the state where I-75 is used more for long distance trips in some areas and used more for local trips in other areas. Trip characteristics of the corridor have large impact on the types of alternatives that should be considered for improving mobility along the I-75 corridor.
- Significant increased freight tonnage on I-75 is expected by 2035. The commodity flow analysis revealed that Georgia is projected to be the state's top national trading partner by 2035, with total trading tonnage forecasted to increase by approximately 175 percent. Truck volumes are also projected to increase significantly by 2035.
- The I-75 corridor is served by major airports, intermodal freight-rail terminals, passenger terminals, and seaports. These intermodal facilities are part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and include four SIS airports, two SIS seaports, one SIS intermodal freight-rail terminals, and four SIS passenger terminals. I-75 serves and connects key SIS hubs that are on or adjacent to the corridor. Any improvements to I-75 should consider potential impacts to these facilities.

Emergency and Security Response

- I-75 is part of the critical transportation infrastructure and serves as part of the evacuation network in each county of the study area. I-75 directly connects to



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

more than 70 other RPC designated facilities that are part of the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program (SRESP) evacuation network. This connectivity provides important linkages to alternate routes in the case that any section of I-75 or other roads becomes impassable or unsafe.

- A number of emergency management considerations apply to the I-75 corridor. Specific considerations include the susceptibility to hazardous materials incidents and vulnerability to transportation system accidents. Alternative routes must be available and clear as the disruption of the I-75 infrastructure would be a major hindrance to evacuation or recovery operations.

Economic Development and Tourism Impacts

- The proximity of I-75 to the Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) serves as an important component in providing much needed exposure to those areas. I-75 provides direct access to the RACEC counties of Hamilton, Suwannee, and Columbia and connects to DeSoto County via US 17, SR 72, and SR 70. The RACEC community of Immokalee is connected to the I-75 corridor via SR 29 and SR 82.
- Along the I-75 corridor, one of the key strategies supporting economic development is the use of Enterprise Zones. Within the 15 county I-75 study area, there are a total of 12 Enterprise Zones. These include Enterprise Zones in the Collier, Lee, DeSoto, Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough, Hernando, Sumter, Columbia, Suwannee, and Hamilton Counties, as well as the City of Ocala. Providing sufficient access for these business areas will be key to providing efficient transportation improvements in these areas of the corridor.
- Special tourism considerations for the I-75 corridor include Gasparilla and bowl games in Tampa, regular generators like the football games in Gainesville, nearby events like Lakeland's Fun n' Sun, and special events like the Republican National Convention 2012, also in Tampa. These events generate massive traffic issues due to participation of between 50,000 to 500,000 people. The I-75 corridor is a major facility responsible for moving all these people efficiently, and alternatives should be considered to help improve the mobility along the corridor.

7.2 Identified Needs

The identified needs for the I-75 corridor are:

- Additional capacity to I-75 and/or parallel facilities to reduce congestion along the corridor. Increasing capacity would potentially alleviate bottlenecks as well as provide better accessibility for emergency management purposes.



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

- Improvement in coordination between planning and operations for statewide and local levels. Improved coordination will assist with overall system management of the corridor.
- Creation of different travel options for travelers within the I-75 footprint. Incorporation of different travel options allows for improved accessibility by other modes.
- Improve the freight network in the I-75 corridor and parallel corridors. Improving the freight network will create better accessibility and connectivity between freight operations along the I-75 corridor.
- Utilization of non-highway modes for freight movement.
- Utilize accessibility to seaports along the corridor for short-sea shipping opportunities.
- Shift freight movement along I-75 to parallel rail networks to reduce congestion and minimize maintenance costs along the corridor.
- Identify greener transportation options for all modes.
- Identify local transit options which may reduce the amount of localized trips from I-75.
- Improve coordination efforts with local business community on developing incentives for employees to use alternative forms of transportation for daily commute.

The identified needs presented in this section should not be considered a complete description of the needs of the study area, but rather the initial step in identifying general issues. This study is the first step in the corridor study process, and analysis in future studies will provide more detailed, precise information.

7.3 The Corridor Moving Forward

The I-75 Alternatives Study consists of three main documents. This Identification of Corridor Needs Technical Memorandum is the first in a series of documents describing the development of the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study. This document has identified existing conditions along the I-75 Corridor from different perspectives, including transportation, demographic, emergency management, homeland security, and economic development. The summary provided in this



Chapter 7 – Corridor Summary

section will provide the preliminary framework for developing potential alternative options along the corridor.

The Alternative Options and Policy Implications Technical Memorandum will be the next document in the series and will include a discussion of transportation alternatives or different approaches to solving the identified needs and improving existing conditions, along with the policy implications of implementing those alternatives. The second document will not discuss specific projects or recommend solutions, but will present a comprehensive list of alternative approaches to improving mobility, emergency response, and economic development within the 15 county study area. A final report document, titled the I-75 Transportation Alternatives Study, will summarize the full study and conclude this study.

This page intentionally left blank.

