



Florida Department of Transportation

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

MIKE DEW
SECRETARY

June 29, 2018

Mayor Guinn
110 S.E. Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

Dear Mayor Guinn:

I wanted to take this opportunity to give you an update on the recent discussions regarding the Coastal Connector planning study and the impact to Marion County. This study was designed to produce ideas and discuss potential solutions for long term infrastructure improvements to ensure Florida continues to have a world class transportation system.

The Department has heard from many of the constituents in Marion County and the surrounding area about the concerns the planning study has created in your community. We have met with many local representatives and look forward to continuing the dialogue with these interest groups. The Department appreciates the rich history of the Marion County equine industry and the important economic engine it provides to the region. Their concerns will continue to be paramount in our long-term planning. **At this time, the Department will postpone the recommendations from the Coastal Connector planning study and increase our resolve to implement the I-75 task force recommendations aimed to provide relief to existing traffic on I-75 and to enhance the interregional connectivity between West Central and Northeast Florida.**

Interstate 75 is a critical freight and evacuation corridor that serves our residents, visitors, and businesses daily. As recommended in the report, the Department is researching and programming options that address the capacity needs of I-75. Currently, the Department is programming Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) studies which will incorporate additional capacity on two segments of I-75 from the Turnpike to County Road 234 in Micanopy. The first PD&E study will begin in Fiscal Year 2019/2020 and is estimated to cost \$6.3 million, while the subsequent segment is planned to begin in Fiscal Year 2020/2021 at an estimated cost \$6.6 million. Construction on these critical capacity projects is anticipated to begin 2025. The Department has also implemented additional traffic incident management tools, including the instillation of additional DMS signs and deployment of Road Ranger service patrols, to assist with traffic efficiency.

Mayor Guinn
Correspondence
June 29, 2018

We remain committed to continuing our conversations with the region's local governments and stakeholders to develop other corridor alternatives that help meet the future transportation needs while providing solutions that may be more acceptable to the members of the community.

I look forward to working with you and your constituents as we continue to provide for safe transportation improvements for the future generations of Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Dew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike Dew
Secretary

MD/bl