

Road Construction is Zooming Along In West Tampa

By: John McShaffrey, FDOT District 7, Public Information

Beginning in 1995, reconstruction of the interstate system in the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District Seven was launched in Hillsborough County with the first of the Interstate 4 (I-4) projects. For the most part, this involved rural to rural-urban sections of the corridor. Towards the end of the decade, urban reconstruction began taking place on the northern portion of Interstate 275 (I-275) in St. Petersburg. As we entered the new millennium, the interstate reconstruction effort made the full transition into the urban core in the City of Tampa with widening

of I-275 north of Busch Boulevard and major improvements to the I-4/I-275 junction.

While those projects have come and gone, major highway reconstruction in Tampa has continued with the first two of the "Links" projects involving the I-275 corridor. In August 2005, work began on the Tampa Airport Interchanges project to improve the State Road 60 (SR 60) corridor from I-275 to the Veterans Expressway, an area that serves over 160,000 vehicles per day in its busiest section between Tampa International Airport (TPA) and I-275. Two years later, reconstruction of the northbound I-275 corridor between Himes Avenue and Ashley Drive began. Both major projects are expected to be completed no later than spring 2010. Here is a closer look at each of these current projects:

Tampa Airport Interchanges

Drivers on the roadways south, east and west of TPA are beginning to see better traffic flow as the FDOT's contractor continues improvements to SR 60/Memorial Highway from I-275 to the Courtney Campbell Parkway interchange. The project also extends west one mile onto the Courtney Campbell Parkway (SR 60) and north to the Veterans Expressway. Formerly known as Links Stage 1, this project is now more appropriately named Tampa Airport Interchanges.



Photos by: Florida Department of Transportation

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Awarded to contractor Flatiron - Tidewater Skanska, a Joint Venture, this \$214 million project began August 15, 2005. Included in this figure is incentive money designed to minimize traffic disruption during construction and encourage timely completion, possibly as early as fall 2009. Key improvements that will provide for a free-flowing limited access roadway system throughout this area include:

- The Spruce Street/SR 60 interchange will become a four-level interchange and the Courtney Campbell/SR 60/Memorial Highway interchange will become three-levels.
- The SR 60 traffic signals within the Courtney Campbell interchange and on the Parkway at the Hyatt entrance have been eliminated.
- A new two lane frontage road system for access to the Hyatt property has been constructed.

- Separation of traffic to various destinations such as SR 60, Veterans Expressway, and TPA to reduce lane changes is partially completed.
- New connections between various roadways give motorists additional options for accessing the Westshore Business District:
 - westbound SR 60/northbound Memorial Highway to eastbound Spruce Street;
 - eastbound SR 60/southbound Memorial Highway to Cypress Street;
 - west end of Cypress Street to eastbound Spruce Street; and
 - southbound George Bean Parkway (out of TPA) to the west end of Cypress Street.

The project is also expected to reduce some congestion on the ramps at SR 60/I-275 and improve access to TPA, the Westshore Business District, and the Veterans Expressway.

Upcoming TBAG Meetings

March 5, 2009

May 14, 2009

August 20, 2009

October 29, 2009

Making these improvements is a challenge while keeping current traffic flowing. In general during peak travel hours, the number of lanes will remain consistent with the number of lanes available before construction began. Lane closures occur between 8:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. Most detours will occur between midnight and 4 a.m.; however, there are a few cases where longer term detours are necessary, including some weekends.

Challenges also exist in designing and building the project in relation to the very busy, growing air traffic at TPA. Careful attention to flight paths, lighted work areas, ground-level access and more was planned into the design and will carry through to the conclusion of constructing the project. These coordinated efforts between FDOT, its consultants, and the Aviation Authority are necessary to avoid interruption to air traffic while still allowing the massive road project to be built.

Drivers using the corridor are well aware of the many dramatic changes that have occurred throughout the project area. Nowhere is this more evident than in the roads, bridges, and ramps to the immediate south of TPA. A number of significant improvements were opened to motorists leading up to the big football game in February 2009, making travel through this area better for the thousands of visitors and locals alike. Great cooperation between all parties, the use of incentives and disincentives, and good weather conditions will likely combine to result in the project finishing significantly ahead of schedule.

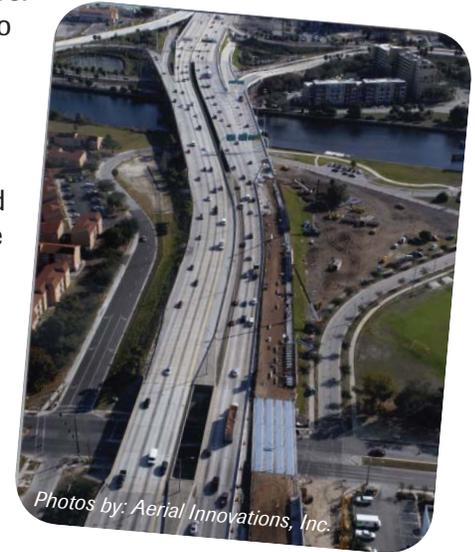
I-275 West Tampa Project

Another major project that is progressing well and also likely to finish early is the realignment and widening of northbound I-275 from Himes Avenue to Ashley Drive.

Built mainly to the south of the existing northbound lanes, this reconstructed portion of the corridor will feature four through-lanes, improved lighting and drainage, improved height

clearance where local roads pass under interstate bridges, and shoulder-mounted 8-foot noise walls next to densely developed residential areas. Drivers will also benefit from improved sightlines, paved shoulders, and an overall facility built to current standards.

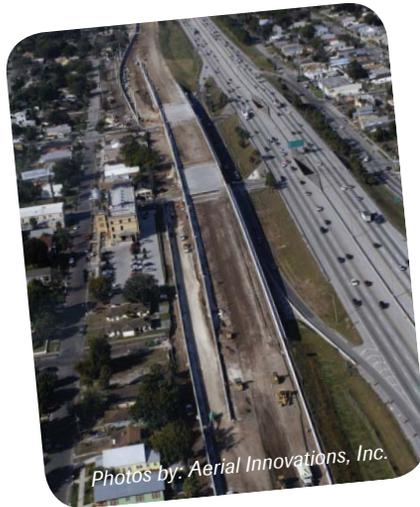
PCL Civil Constructors, Inc. is the contractor for this \$109 million project that also has incentive/disincentive provisions. Some incentives have already been met, including completing the widening of the Ashley Drive and Scott Street exit ramps. Motorists are already enjoying the wider ramps, as well as the new 4th mainline lane crossing the Hillsborough River.



Photos by: Aerial Innovations, Inc.

I-275-E from N. Blvd. to Ashley Dr. Off-Ramp.

Impact to mainline traffic has been much less than impacts from the Tampa Airport Interchanges project, mostly due to building adjacent to the existing corridor. Two main impacts to date have been the closure of the Himes Avenue entrance ramp to allow construction of the transition area from the existing alignment to the new alignment, and the closure of the auxiliary lane between the Howard Avenue entrance ramp and the Ashley/Scott exit.



Photos by: Aerial Innovations, Inc.

I-275-W Howard -
Armenia Interchange

Motorists will experience both progress and traffic impacts when traffic is switched to the new alignment within the next couple months. While vehicles will be on new pavement, only three lanes will open when traffic is first moved to the new roadway. Also, traffic will be shifted to the right with a small reduction in lane width, as well. This configuration will allow the remainder of the new alignment to be constructed in the North Boulevard area, where the new northbound lanes transition to the highway alignment crossing the river.



Photos by: Florida Department
of Transportation

Deco Work at Armenia
Interchange

Did You Hear the Scoop?

What will the Tampa Airport Interchanges Project do for me?

Part of a decade-long program to improve I-275 and SR 60

Separate roadways to various destinations (SR 60, Veterans Expressway, Airport)

Better access to Tampa International Airport and the Westshore Business District

Added capacity through additional lanes

Free-flow limited access highway through removal of traffic signals

Improved operations through redundant ramping

Readily adaptable to future improvements

When did the project start and when will it end?

Start Date: August 15, 2005

Projected End Dates:

October 2009 - Based on achieving all bonus dates and early completion incentives.

May 2010 - End of authorized contract time.

Interesting Tid-bits

Earthwork -
Embankment (fill dirt) = 145,000 truck loads or enough to fill the St. Pete Times Forum 8 times

Pavement - 55 ½ lane miles or the equivalent to building a single lane from Clearwater to Lakeland

What interruptions to traffic will I experience?

- Lane Closures
- Rolling Roadblocks
 - Used to slow traffic with Police Officers
 - Restricted to night time hours (12:00 midnight to 4:00 AM)
- Detours
 - Night time
 - Multi-day
 - Phase duration

What are the construction challenges?

- Traffic
- Environmental
- Tampa International Airport
- Work Zone Access
- Other Development
- Neighborhoods
- Businesses



FDOT Web Site Can be Your Friend

By: John McShaffrey, FDOT District 7, Public Information

Let's face it – no one enjoys getting caught in a detour or lane closure. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) realized this many years ago and began including public information and community involvement initiatives as part of many construction projects. In 1995, FDOT District Seven created an Internet Web site for the massive I-4 reconstruction projects east of Tampa, making the site one of the first sites in the nation dedicated to specific transportation projects. As other major interstate projects (such as the Downtown Tampa Interchange and I-275 widening) neared construction, the site was redeveloped to include active, future, and completed interstate projects in the Tampa Bay area and was rebranded as myTBI.com. Though not an interstate project itself, when the District's State Road 60 (SR 60) corridor (Tampa Airport Interchanges Project) began construction in 2005, it was added to the site due to its tie-in to I-275 and regional commuting significance.

FDOT's Web site for interstate construction in the Tampa Bay area,

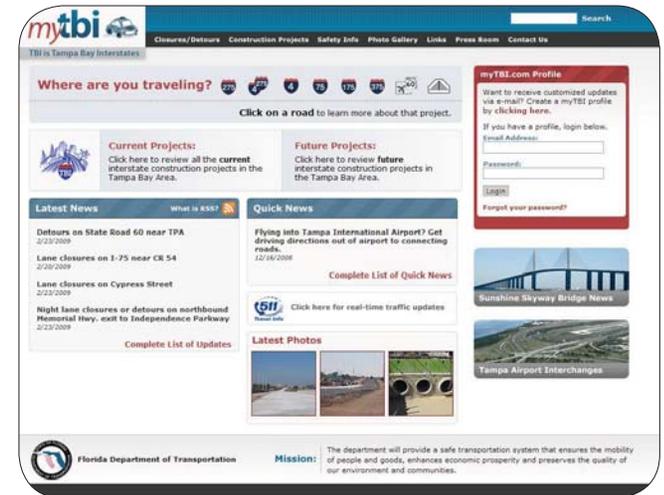


www.myTBI.com, has the usual items one might expect from a transportation Web site. General project information, photos, videos, safety tips, press releases and more are available there. In addition, the site offers you the opportunity to sign up for a free e-mail service to receive project updates, closure news, and other information to help you make informed decisions regarding your commute.

Getting caught in a detour or lane closure can be very frustrating when you have little time to spare. FDOT suggests the Web site and e-mail should become one of your best friends as major interstate construction continues in the area. Either by receiving the e-mail updates or logging in to view more specific project news and closures, the site features are designed to keep you updated so you're not caught off guard.

The site also offers closure information via Wireless Application Protocol, or WAP. This technology allows you to use your mobile phone or other wireless devices such as personal digital assistants to receive condensed information anywhere in your coverage area. Point your WAP browser to <http://mytbi.com/wap> and bookmark this location for news on the go (but not while you are driving).

Informing motorists where to obtain project information is a challenge as well, particularly with major corridor work. For neighborhood roads, it is much easier to identify the users. With a major state highway, it is very difficult to target users other than on the corridor itself. As part of the

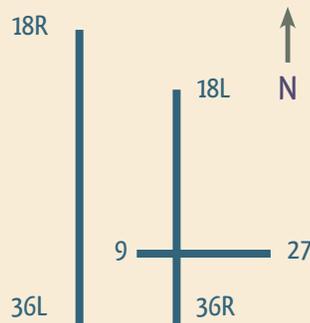


rebranding effort in 2002, informational road signs were developed to promote the Web address to motorists. These blue signs with white letters and an interstate logo simply state "INFO" and "myTBI.com" and are installed at key locations in or near active construction zones. They are believed to contribute greatly to leading users to myTBI.com, which has averaged over 4,700 user sessions and 45,000 page views per week since the fall of 2001. The numbers are even more impressive from the beginning of 2008 through mid-February 2009 at over 9,300 weekly user sessions and almost 81,000 pages viewed per week.

Tampa International Airport Trivia

Did you know airport runway names are traditionally based on compass directions and prevailing winds? TPA's runways are named as follows:

- 36 is equivalent to 360° due north - 36L (left) or 36R (right) side of the airfield
- 18 is equivalent to 180° due south - 18L (left) or 18R (right) side of the airfield
- 9 is equivalent to 90° due east
- 27 is equivalent to 270° due west



Noise Abatement: How the Aviation Authority Coordinates with the Community

By: Herman Lawrence, Noise Officer Aviation Authority

The Aviation Authority staff coordinates with the public on many levels. One area that the public does not consider unless they have a problem is the noise of jets flying over neighborhoods or business districts. This article highlights the program and measures implemented by the Aviation Authority to address noise impacts to the community.

Noise Compatibility Program

In an effort to be a good neighbor, the Aviation Authority created a noise office to implement a noise compatibility program. The program was approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in January 2001, as recommended in the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150 Noise Study. Computers housed at the noise office allow advanced flight tracking, noise monitoring, complaint management, and audio recordings of pilot/Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) conversations to be used for implementing noise compatibility and abatement measures.

Staff is always available to answer questions and address noise complaints through a variety of

contact methods such as calling the office at 813-870-7843 or visiting the Web site www.tampaairport.com/noise_abatement.

Informal Noise Program

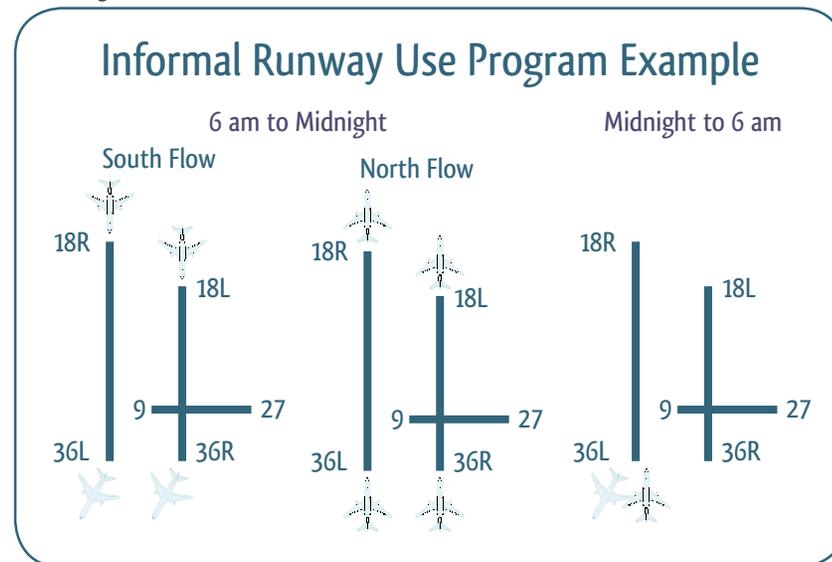
Guidelines for the noise office to follow have been developed through the Informal Runway Use Noise Program at Tampa International Airport (TPA). The Program has continually evolved since the late 1950's as a voluntary cooperative agreement between the Aviation Authority and the Tampa Federal Aviation Administration Air

Traffic Control Tower (FAA-ATCT) in an effort to reduce the impact of jet noise over residential communities surrounding the airport. This year marks the **50th Anniversary** of TPA's Informal Runway Use Program. A sample diagram of the voluntary Informal Runway Use Program is provided in Figure 1.

The word "voluntary" is used to allow the ATCT more discretion to use the airfield under specific conditions (wind, weather, safety, operational necessity, emergencies, closed runway, etc.).

Herman Lawrence, Noise Officer, checks each deviation from the voluntary program to confirm it was necessary based on the

Figure 1.



circumstances. TPA has established a priority runway use assignment for turbojet aircraft operations (landings and takeoffs) based on the informal runway use program in the form of a 'Letter to Airmen,' dated January 15, 2008. The assignment is always dependent on the direction of the prevailing wind, weather, and operational constraints.

Using the guidelines of the Informal Runway Use Program, the noise office implements procedural measures to manage noise issues on a regular basis and particularly during a large construction project such as the **Tampa Airport Interchanges Project (TAIP)**. Examples of procedural abatement measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

Procedural Measures

- Maximizing daytime south flow,
- Adopting preferential order of runway use using air traffic control tower's (ATCT) Letter to Airmen (e.g., arriving turbojets landing to the north expect Runway 36L),
- Extending nighttime preference for Runway 36L arrivals and Runway 18R departures to all aircraft,
- Recommending turbojets use noise abatement departure procedures
- Recommending turbojets use Air Transport Association noise abatement arrival procedures, and;
- Using the shared run-up enclosure (opened October 2003) for turbojet maintenance run-ups above idle power.

These procedural measures are coordinated daily. The Aviation Authority also works with the community to provide long-term implementation measures such as building within compatible zoning, conducting public information programs, purchasing aviation easements (based on 5-year noise exposure map), and soundproofing residences (based on 5-year noise exposure map) when necessary.

Community Noise Consortium

In an effort to reach out to the community through education and personal contact, the Aviation Authority has established the **Community Noise Consortium (CNC)**. Residential membership is generally from established neighborhood or homeowner associations (Dana Shores, Carrollwood, Beach Park, Culbreath Isles, Town n' Country, etc.) The Aviation Authority also has airline and corporate pilots and the ATCT staff as members on the CNC.

The CNC is open to the public and the meetings are held quarterly. Staff presents statistical reviews of noise abatement efforts at these meetings and addresses concerns about noise complaints and other issues.

Fourth Quarter (2008) Summary of TAIP Runway Closures Presented to CNC

FDOT TAIP Crane Operations Update

As of January 1, 2009, the remaining schedule for the closure of Runway 36L-18R is as follows:

- From 10:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m. - 21 days (11 days remaining)
- From 11:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m. - 60 days (1 days remaining)
- From 12 midnight - 5:00 a.m. - 119 days (77 days remaining)

Fourth Quarter (2008) Summary of Noise Complaints Presented to CNC

- Total of 233 noise complaints from 13 complainants:
 - 50 fewer complaints than Q3 '08 and
 - 271 fewer complaints than CY Q4 '07
- Six (6) repeat callers accounted for 97% or 226 of the total complaints:
 - One household logged 71% (161) of the total repeat calls
- Frequent types of noise complaints:
 - 35% were Turbojet Arrivals on Runway 36R - 18L
 - 59% were turns north of MacDill Air Force Base
- Geographical location of majority of noise complaints:
 - 69% from households south of Gandy Blvd.
 - 27% from households south of Kennedy Blvd. and north of Gandy Blvd.

At a recent January 22, 2009 CNC meeting, flight patterns for the informal runway use program were presented, as well as an update on the TAIP through Year 2010. Information presented at the CNC included the number of closure days for each time period for the TAIP.

To get on the mailing list to be notified of when to expect turbojet aircraft over-flights over the South Tampa area, please send an email to HLawrence@TampaAirport.com and/or visit the Community Noise Impact Notifications web page on our web site, www.TampaAirport.com.

The next CNC meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 16, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. Meeting dates and times may change, so check the Web site frequently.

To get further information on noise abatement or attend one of the upcoming CNC meetings, please contact Herman Lawrence at 813-870-7843.

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Noise Glossary and Acronyms

dB - The decibel (dB) is the unit used to measure the magnitude or intensity of sound. It uses a mathematical scale to cover the large range of sound pressures that can be heard by the human ear. A 10-dB increase will be perceived by most people to be a doubling of loudness. For example, 80 dB typically seems twice as loud as 70 dB.

dBA - The A-weighted Decibel (dBA) is the most common unit used for measuring environmental sound levels. It adjusts, or weights, the frequency components of sound to conform with the normal response of the human ear at conversational levels. dBA is an international metric that is used for assessing environmental noise exposure of all noise sources.

DNL - In simple terms, Ldn or Day Night Average Sound Level (DNL) is the average noise level over a 24-hour period except that noise occurring at night (between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) are artificially increased by 10 dB. This weighting reflects the added intrusiveness of night noise events attributable to the fact that community background noise typically decreases by 10 dB at night. Under Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150, the FAA has established Ldn/DNL as the cumulative noise exposure metric for use in airport noise analyses.

Noise Event - A Noise Event is the measured sound produced by a single source of noise over a particular period of time. An aircraft noise event begins when the sound level of an over-flight exceeds a noise threshold and ends when the level drops down below that threshold.

Ground Run-up Enclosure (GRE) - A GRE is a three-sided steel structure lined with acoustical absorbent panels to deflect and muffle engine noise, and is provided by the Aviation Authority to be used for engine test and maintenance.

Stage 2 and Stage 3 Aircraft - Commercial jet engines currently meet either Stage 2 or Stage 3 noise standards. Stage 2 engines are older and noisier than Stage 3 engines. Stage 3 aircraft incorporate the latest technology for suppressing jet-engine noise and, in general, are 10 dB quieter than Stage 2 aircraft. This represents a halving of perceived noise; however, actual noise reduction varies by aircraft. All aircraft greater than 75,000 lbs had to meet Stage 3 noise standards as of January 1, 2000.

Tampa Bay Applications Group Brown Bag Meeting

March 5, 2009

FDOT District Seven Office from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Auditorium Opens at 11:30 a.m.)



What's on the Horizon for Transportation in Florida? Interstate Improvements - FDOT District 7 Impacts to Florida from the Federal Economic Stimulus Package

What are You Doing to My Roads? And When are You Going to be Done?

John McShaffrey, FDOT District 7 Public Information Officer for Interstate Construction

Motorists who drive past the Tampa International Airport or drive on Interstate 275 (I-275) approaching downtown Tampa have experienced road construction for the past few years. The construction seems never ending and motorists in the Tampa Bay area are asking, "When will the construction be finished and how will we benefit from these new road configurations?" This presentation will offer a bird's eye view of the dramatic changes taking place along the I-275 corridor, while explaining the challenges of maintaining traffic flow – both on the ground and in the air (flight traffic). Two major projects will be discussed – the Tampa Airport Interchanges project and the I-275 West Tampa project. This presentation will also address public communication methods for providing interstate project information, and advanced traffic control information such as lane closures and major traffic flow changes.

Tampa Interstates – Where the Future Will Take Us?

Adam Perez, District 7 FDOT Interstate Program Manager

This presentation will highlight the current plans and the ultimate build-out for Interstate 275, the downtown interchange (Interstates 275 and 4), and Interstate 4 improvements as developed by FDOT District 7.

The presentation will also address how the construction around Tampa International Airport and the proposed Crosstown Connector tie into the long range plans for the interstate corridor. Project implementation and staging will be discussed, as well as coordination within the District to bring all of the significant pieces of the interstate improvements together.

Transportation in 2009 ... A Time of Opportunity!

Doug Callaway, President, Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT)

The Chinese symbol for the word "crisis" is made up of two characters representing "danger" and "opportunity." So literally a time of crisis – like the economic recession we are in now – is both dangerous and, a chance for major opportunity.

Three important events are unfolding for 2009; the recently-enacted Federal Economic Stimulus package containing new transportation funding; the sixty-day Florida Legislative Session starting on March 3rd; and the Federal transportation law known as SAFETEA-LU is set to expire on September 30th. This year truly holds both opportunity and danger for Florida's transportation network. The presentation will address the "opportunities" that need to be explored for the State.