



Florida Department of Transportation

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**ANANTH PRASAD, P.E.
SECRETARY**

May 11, 2012

Ms. Lauren P. Milligan
Florida State Clearinghouse
Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Mail Station 47
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

**Subject: US Department of Transportation (DOT) TIGER Discretionary Grant
Application Florida International University (FIU) Transit Oriented Development
FIU UniversityCity Project**

Dear Ms Milligan:

As requested, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) reviewed the US DOT TIGER Discretionary Grant Application for the FIU Project in the City of Sweetwater, Florida. FIU is seeking Federal funding for the implementation of an Advanced Transit Oriented Development (ATOD) project, and an Informed Traveler Program and Applications (ITPA) project, together known as the FIU UniversityCity Prosperity project.

Following are FDOT comments on the major elements of the proposed UniversityCity project:

- Pedestrian Bridge at SW 8th Street (US 41) and SW 109th Avenue

The proposed project includes a pedestrian bridge at SW 8th Street (US 41) and SW 109th Avenue. The bridge will have a direct impact on the operations of this intersection by reducing left turn storage capacity to accommodate a bridge column. The proposed bridge column is proposed to be placed in the median of SW 8th Street, which impacts the eastbound left-turn lane. This impact can be mitigated by implementing dual eastbound turns onto SW 109th Avenue. The existing striped area can be removed to add appropriate markings. No other improvements may be required; however, a traffic study will be required to ensure that expected vehicular traffic is provided with adequate storage.

- Bus Lane for Advanced Transit Multimodal Station (ATMS)

The ATMS will include a raised platform and a special access drive for buses, providing direct entry and exit from and back onto SW 8th Street (US 41). The current FIU entrance at SW 112th Avenue includes an exclusive westbound lane exiting the FIU Stadium area. The proposed exclusive bus lane entrance will be in conflict with this lane. An operational analysis must be conducted to determine the required geometry to ensure proper operations and safety of the special access drive. Also, the addition of a new roadway connection will require compliance with FDOT Rule 14-96 and 14-97, Access Management Rule.

- SW 109th Avenue and (US 41) SW 8th Street

At-grade pedestrian and street improvements are proposed along SW 109th Avenue and SW 8th Street (US 41), which include narrow lanes for both facilities to enhance pedestrian movements. SW 8th Street (US 41) is a main road with high traffic volumes. A reduction in the width of the travel lanes may create a safety concern for this type of facility. The proposed narrow lanes along SW 109th Avenue may not have a significant adverse impact for traffic and motorist safety along that corridor.

- SW 107th Avenue Complete Street Improvements

The application does not offer any descriptions about the type of improvements to be considered under this title. At a minimum the widening of SW 107th Avenue within the project limits should consider adding bike lanes, sidewalks, bus bays and adequate signing to access and identify activity centers for motorists and pedestrians. An increased level of street illumination or pedestrian lighting may be required to provide nighttime visibility and enhance pedestrian safety. The planning and implementation of the Complete Street Improvements concept must be coordinated with the currently programmed projects along SW 107th Avenue, projects 412479-2 and 412479-3.

In general, the proposed project appears to be consistent with FDOT transportation and transit plans, and is expected to improve the use of transit with the addition of the transit oriented development and related improvements. As noted in the application package, the FDOT work program currently includes two nearby projects along SW 107th Avenue in Miami-Dade County that could be impacted by the proposed UniversityCity project. The two FDOT projects are as follows:

- Project 412479-2, which includes roadway widening along SR 985/SW 107th Avenue from SW 5th Street to North of West Flagler Street, and
- Project 412479-3, which includes roadway widening along SR 985/SW 107th Avenue from SW 12th Street to SW 4th Street.

The UniversityCity project does not directly impact either FDOT project; however, FIU should continue to coordinate with FDOT as the project moves forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If there are any questions, please contact Phil Steinmiller, District Planning Manager at (305) 470-5386.

Sincerely,



Gus Pego, P.E.
District Secretary

cc: Harold Desdunes, P.E., District Director of Transportation Development
Aileen Boucle, AICP, District Intermodal Systems Planning Administrator
Martin Markovich, FDOT Office of Policy Planning