



Florida Department of Transportation

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SECRETARY

June 1, 2023

Ms. Alissa S. Lotane, Director
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Department of State, R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Attn: Transportation Compliance Review Program

**RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey
SR 789 (John Ringling Causeway) Bridge
Sarasota County, Florida
Financial Management Numbers: 436680-1-22-01 & 436680-1-32-01**

Dear Ms. Lotane:

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey SR 789 (John Ringling Causeway) Bridge, Sarasota County, Florida*. This report presents the findings in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, proposed improvements to SR 789. The FDOT is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the potential reconstruction of the State Road (SR) 789 (John Ringling Causeway) bridges [Bridge Numbers 170022 and 170951]. The limits of the improvements are from Bird Key Drive to Sarasota Harbour West in Sarasota County, a distance of 0.741 miles. The purpose of the project is to address structural integrity and operational deficiencies of the SR 789 bridges. The ultimate goal of the project is to identify the optimal solution for a bridge structure in need of repair due to deteriorating conditions and to accommodate greater multimodal transportation access. This is a federally funded project.

The Preferred Alternative replaces the existing twin bridges with a single bridge and includes bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities that provide a connection between nearby neighborhoods and recreational facilities (Ringling Bridge Causeway Park, Bird Key Park and the Sarasota Yacht Club). A no-build (no-action) alternative is also considered as part of the PD&E evaluation. A rehabilitation alternative was also considered; however, due to extensive design and construction effort required to complete this alternative, and the bridges still requiring replacement after 30 years, this option was eliminated as a viable alternative. Based on feedback from a Public Workshop held in April 2022 and the ability to best address the purpose and need of the project, FDOT District One proposes replacing the existing two bridges with a single bridge. The preferred alternative single bridge typical section includes two 10.5-foot (ft) wide travel lanes, a dedicated 11-ft transit lane, 2.5-ft inside shoulder, 5.5-ft bike lane, and 14-ft shared use path in each direction. The total width of the bridge is 114-ft 3-inches (in).

The archaeological APE is defined as the footprint of construction within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The historical/architectural APE was set based on the single bridge replacement alternative. The maximum elevation for this proposed alternative is 27.55-ft, an increase of 11.82-ft compared to the existing bridges. As such, the historical/architectural APE is defined as a 1,000-ft viewshed from the center of the proposed bridge. Furthermore, because the road

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improvements along SR 789 (John Ringling Causeway) will not introduce new roadway features and will remain within the existing ROW, the APE to the east and west of the bridge replacement is defined as the footprint of construction within the existing ROW.

This CRAS was conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*. The investigations were carried out in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 8 (Archaeological and Historical Resources) of the FDOT's PD&E Manual, FDOT's Cultural Resources Manual, and the standards contained in the Florida Division of Historical Resources (FDHR) Cultural Resource Management Standards and Operations Manual (FDHR 2003). In addition, this survey meets the specifications set forth in Chapter 1A-46, Florida Administrative Code.

Archaeological background research, which included a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF), and the NRHP, indicated that no archaeological sites were recorded within the archaeological APE, but one site is recorded within one mile. Although the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) report (#14384) evaluated the project as having a moderate archaeological probability, due to the extensive development of SR 789 (John Ringling Causeway), including roadway construction, drainage structures, and buried utilities, the probability was downgraded to low archaeological potential for the discovery of prehistoric or historic archaeological sites. If sites were found, it was anticipated that they would be remnants of prehistoric shell middens or artifact scatters. As a result of field survey, no prehistoric or historic archaeological sites were identified within the APE. In addition, the FMSF, historic maps, aerials, and other documents do not record the location of shipwrecks or other historic maritime resources that would be of concern. Based on the historic coastline and known aboriginal settlement patterns in the area, there is no expectation of submerged aboriginal sites. These, along with the planned scope and impacts, it was determined that maritime archaeology did not appear necessary.

The historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of eight (8) historic resources (8SO06906, 8SO06907, 8SO12048, 8SO12111, 8SO12112, 8SO12125, 8SO14518, and 8SO14519) within the APE. This includes two (2) newly identified historic buildings (8SO14518, and 8SO14519) and six previously recorded historic resources (two bridges (8SO06906, 8SO06907) and four buildings 8SO12048, 8SO12111, 8SO12112, and 8SO12125). Of these, six (6) historic resources (8SO12048, 8SO12111, 8SO12112, 8SO12125, 8SO14518, and 8SO14519) were recorded/updated and evaluated within the APE. These include two Mid-Century Modern style buildings (8SO12048 and 8SO14518), one Ranch style building (8SO12111), one Frame Vernacular style building (8SO12112), and two Masonry Vernacular style building (8SO12125 and 8SO14519) built between circa (ca.) 1961 and ca. 1973. The two previously recorded bridges (8SO06906 and 8SO06907) were not updated because they were evaluated by the SHPO as ineligible for listing in the NRHP and no significant changes were observed during the field survey. Furthermore, the bridges are excluded from Section 106 consideration by the Program Comment for Common Post-1945 Concrete and Steel Bridges (Federal Register 2012:68793).

Based on the results of this study, it is the opinion of the District that the proposed undertaking will result in *no historic properties affected*.

I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

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The CRAS Technical Memorandum is provided for your review and comment. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (863) 519-2495 or email at Jonathon.Bennett@dot.state.fl.us




Jonathon Bennett
Environmental Project Manager
Florida Department of Transportation, District One

Enclosures: One original copy of the CRAS Report (April 2023), six (6) FMSF forms, One Completed Survey Log

CC: Jim Englert, P.E. Hardesty & Hanover
Gordon Mullen, RK&K
Maranda Kles, PhD, RPA (ACI)

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) finds the attached Cultural Resources Assessment Survey Report complete and sufficient and concurs/ does not concur with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/FDHR Project File Number 202303445. Or, the SHPO finds the attached document contains insufficient information.

SHPO Comments:



Alissa S. Lotane, Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources

6-21-2023
Date

