



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

From East of I-275 to West of N. 40th Street

Final Report

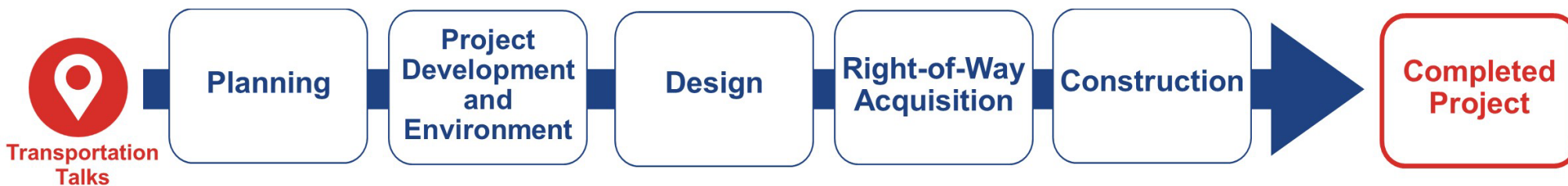
East Tampa Transportation Talks



Transportation Talks Program

The Florida Department of Transportation’s (FDOT) community outreach program, Transportation Talks, was used for this study to foster an open line of communication directly with the members of the community. The Transportation Talks program included several outreach opportunities, both in-person and virtually, to seek input from the citizens who live, work, and play along the selected corridors. In the first outreach meeting, on March 30, 2023, community members were actively engaged to provide input in an open house setting. The meeting focused on gathering their perspective of FDOT’s transportation infrastructure as part of the study’s preliminary planning stage. The second outreach event, on July 18, 2023, focused on addressing the feedback received during the previous

meeting. Proposed recommendations were presented and community members asked questions and provided additional feedback. The final meeting of the series, on December 5, 2023, reviewed the final concepts in order to aid FDOT in prioritizing and developing the next phase. In addition to hearing the community’s concerns, the Transportation Talks program presented an opportunity to inform citizens on FDOT processes. Additionally, it provided the venue and platform to discuss local concerns with the East Tampa community members such as funding alternatives, countermeasure selection, and answer other general inquiries on study information.



Project Development Process

Community Outreach

Much of the feedback provided by the meeting attendees included ideas to improve the overall aesthetics and concerns regarding the safety of the corridor. The comments from the public were varied and include bigger picture roadway concerns regarding turn lane requirements to specific personal safety issues related to narrow sidewalks. The feedback from the public was used to guide potential recommendations for the corridor.



Photograph of the meeting at Fair Oaks Community Center



Photograph of the meeting at Ragan Park

Each meeting had a virtual component with the opportunity for public comments. The following is a summary of the community touch points throughout the study:

Meeting #1

March 30, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Fair Oaks Community Center
5019 N. 34th St, Tampa FL, 33610

Meeting #2

July 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Ragan Park
1200 E. Lake Ave, Tampa FL, 33605

Meeting #3

December 5, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library
2607 E. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd., Tampa FL, 33610



Photograph of the meeting at C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library

Technical Analysis

Corridor Context

FDOT, District Seven, conducted a corridor study along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Boulevard (S.R. 574) from east of I-275 to west of N. 40th Street (U.S. 41) for a 2.4-mile stretch of roadway located in the City of Tampa. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. is a four-lane urban principal arterial for users accessing jobs, businesses, churches, and schools, as well as for commuting and freight delivery traveling along the corridor. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. was identified through conversations between FDOT District Seven and the local community where mobility, safety, and beautification were recognized as important elements to explore. This corridor study was undertaken to review alternatives for enhanced aesthetics and operational and safety improvements for both the short-term and long-term.

Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. passes through various land uses including mostly residential and commercial. The corridor has a context classification of Urban General (C4), with a posted speed limit between 35 MPH to 40 MPH and local access is prioritized (access classification 07). The corridor is served directly by Hillsborough Area Rapid Transit (HART) local route #32 and provides connections to Tampa International Airport, International Plaza, and Netpark Transfer Center.

The technical analysis included the following:

- Review of previous studies and other relevant data
- Stakeholder coordination with City of Tampa to gain insights from a local level
- Data collection about corridor characteristics
- Existing conditions analysis focused on understanding existing travel patterns and community characteristics
- Field review to observe existing facilities and user behaviors
- Crash analysis conducted for a five-year period between 2018 to 2022 to identify key hot spots and build the foundation for developing alternatives

Annual Average Daily Traffic along Study Corridor of Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard

Segment along Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard	AADT ⁽¹⁾
I-275 Ramp to Nebraska Avenue	27,500
Nebraska Avenue to 22 nd Street	19,600
22 nd Street to 40 th Street	21,500

(1) Source: 2022 Florida Traffic Online (FTO)

Concept Development

Based on the technical data, field review and input from the public, recommendations were developed along the corridor. These recommendations are for spots where typically there is heavy bicycle and pedestrian traffic with lack of crossings, speeding concerns, and operational concerns.

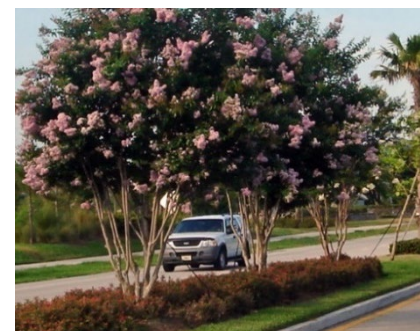


Left Turn Phasing: Add four section signal heads with backplates and Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA) to allow for eastbound and westbound left turn protected and permissive phasing at appropriate signalized intersections.

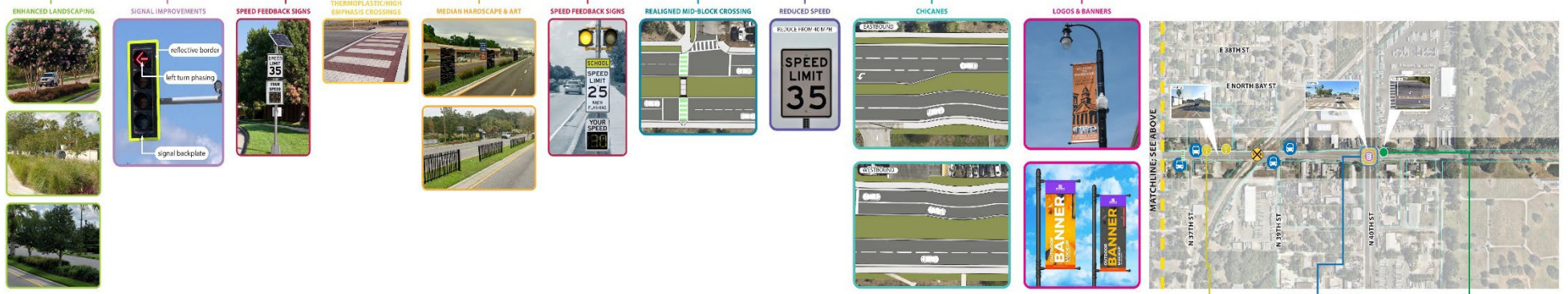
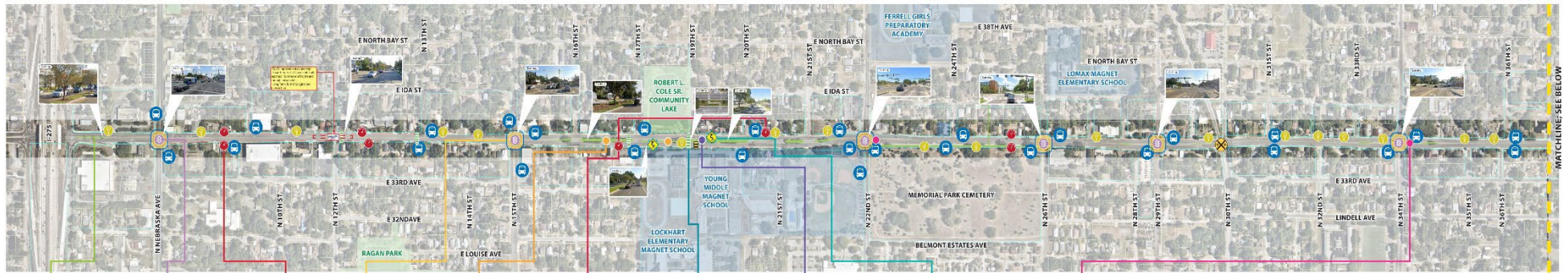
Speed Management: Add speed feedback signs along the corridor. Add school zone speed feedback signs in the school zone. In the school zone, consider lowering of posted speed limits and adding approaching chicanes.



Pedestrian Crossings: Add midblock pedestrian crossings at 12th Street, 13th Street, 17th Street, and 37th Street.



Aesthetic Treatments: Identified opportunities in medians for aesthetic improvements as either landscape or hardscape medians in coordination with local agencies and City of Tampa. Add streetlighting & banners for East Tampa Community.



Legend

- Right-of-Way
- Parks
- Schools
- Railroad Crossings
- Bus Stops
- High Emphasis Crosswalks/Decorative Thermoplastic Crossings
- Existing Mid-Block Crossings
- Proposed Mid-Block Crossings
- Thru-Right Shared Lane
- Median Hardscape & Art
- Enhanced Landscaping
- Widened Sidewalk

Potential Treatments along Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd, from east of I-275 to west of 40th Street

Along westbound Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd. approaching Nebraska Avenue

Existing



Proposed

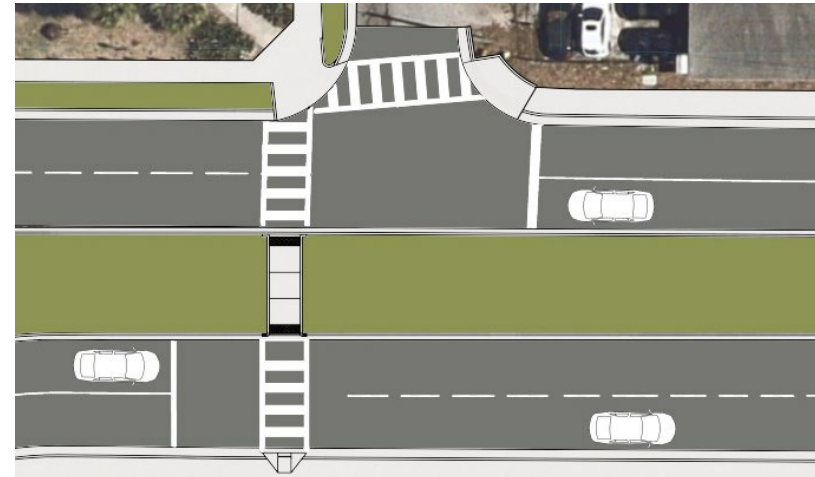


Midblock Crossing at 19th Street

Existing



Proposed



Before and after visualizations of the treatments shared at the community meeting on December 5, 2023 at the C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library

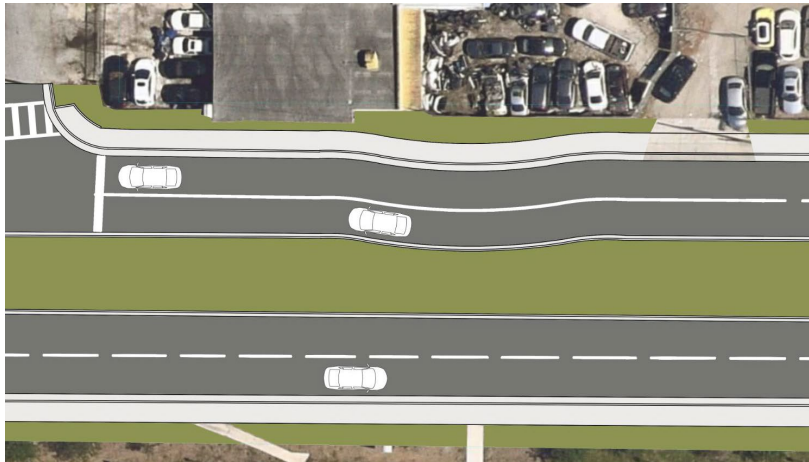
**East of 19th Street
Existing**



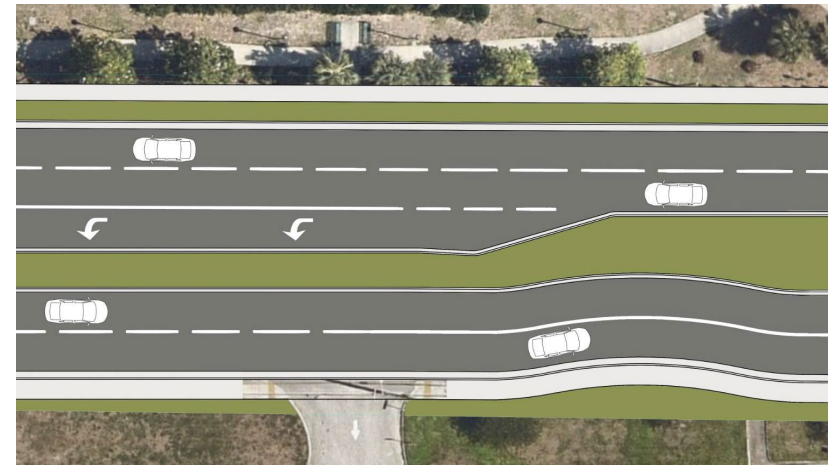
**West of 19th Street
Existing**



Proposed



Proposed



Before and after visualizations of the treatments shared at the community meeting on December 5, 2023 at the C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library

East of 17th Street

Existing

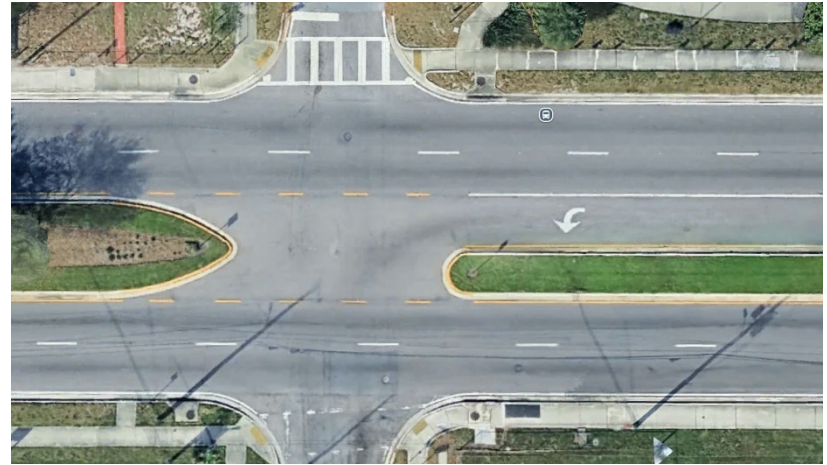


Proposed

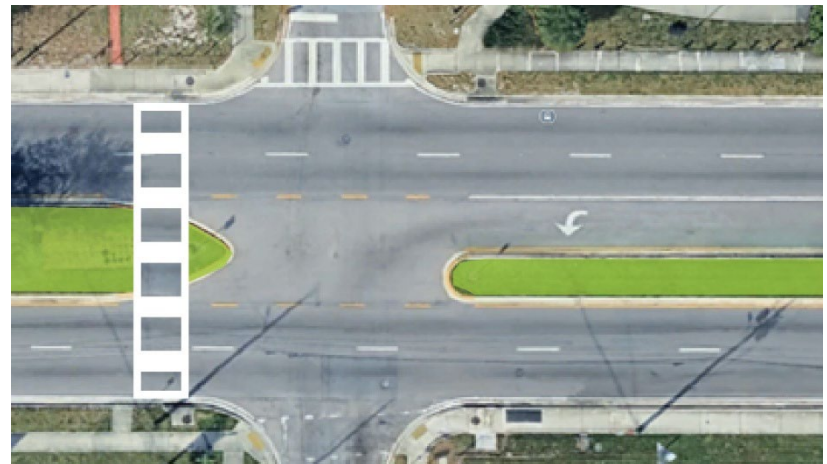


17th Street

Existing



Proposed



Before and after visualizations of the treatments shared at the community meeting on December 5, 2023 at the C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library

Westbound approach of 40th Street

Existing



Proposed



Before and after visualizations of the treatments shared at the community meeting on December 5, 2023 at the C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library

Public Comments

Location Specific

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
Taliferro Avenue	Major danger zone with lack of visibility looking west when attempting to enter I-275 ramps	Modifications to this location will occur as part of project 443770-1 which is a capacity improvement project adding one lane in each direction of I-275 using the existing	To find out more information about the project and details of the upcoming modifications, please refer to FDOTampaBay.com (https://www.fdotampabay.com/project/706/431821-2-52-01-443770-1-52-01)
Nebraska Avenue	Too many curb cuts	It is recommended to conduct an access management study along the corridor which requires coordination with both the property owners and FDOT Access Management Department.	An access management study is a planning and engineering analysis used to evaluate and optimize the interactions between roads and adjacent land uses. The primary goal is to improve safety and efficiency by managing access points such as driveways, street connections, and entryways onto major roads. Access management can help reduce congestion, enhance safety, and support economic development by improving traffic flow and improving safety. The key component of access management is evaluating current access points including existing driveways, intersections, and other points where vehicles enter and exit a roadway.
	Nebraska Avenue needs more landscaping	Coordinate with City of Tampa to determine locations and maintenance agreement.	Adding more landscape requires approval from the City of Tampa for long term maintenance. This request will be provided to the City of Tampa.
	Left turn signal on street light at Nebraska Avenue and MLK Boulevard	Westbound dedicated left turn signal heads with protected phasing are recommended as a part of this study. Protected left turn phasing provides an exclusive phase when a driver can turn left onto Nebraska Avenue.	A new 4-section signal head would need to be installed to better manage left turns going westbound. This will help drivers know exactly when they can safely make a left turn. A plan to figure out the best timing for these lights to improve traffic flow and safety will need to be determined. Also, an estimate would need to be developed on how much the project will cost, including all necessary equipment and work needed.

Location Specific

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
12th Street	Add traffic signal to MLK Boulevard and 12th Street	FDOT is undertaking a project that involves installing 4-foot concrete traffic separators. In the long-term, a traffic signal analysis can be performed to determine if a new traffic signal is warranted.	Before installing new traffic lights at a particular location, several assessments and evaluations need to be conducted. Experts need to study how the intersection will operate after the 4-foot concrete traffic separators are installed and identify any issues that might need to be addressed by new signals. If the preliminary findings recommend investigating a new signal, FDOT would then need to collect data on traffic conditions to determine if the signal is justified.
15th Street	Left turn signal on street light at 15th Street and MLK Boulevard	This study recommends FDOT explore adding eastbound and westbound dedicated left turn phasing at the signalized intersection to provide an exclusive phase along with an option to turn when safe at 15th Street.	A new 4-section signal head would need to be installed to better manage left turns going eastbound and westbound. This will help drivers know exactly when they can safely make a left turn. A plan to figure out the best timing for these signals to improve traffic flow and safety will need to be determined. Also, an estimate would need to be developed on how much the project will cost, including all necessary equipment and work needed.
School Area (15th Street - 22nd Street), 16th Street	Art	Further coordination with the East Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is recommended to install artwork along the corridor.	Any art along the corridor would require approval from East Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).
School Area (15th Street - 22nd Street)	More visible and consistent reduce speed signs in school zones	Reducing the speed limit from 40 mph to 35 mph is recommended as part of this study. It is also recommended to move the speed limit sign closer to the school on eastbound MLK Boulevard.	In addition to posted speed reduction, other speed management geometric concepts are also being evaluated by FDOT like chicanes which involve adding curves or lane shifts in the road to naturally reduce speed. These would require detailed concept plans to estimate the costs involved. Speed management treatments aim to make roads safer by encouraging drivers to travel at appropriate speeds.
	Agreement that we need to change speed limit from 40 MPH to 35 MPH near Young Middle School	The reduction in speed limit from 40 MPH to 35 MPH near Young Middle School will require the drivers to slow down approaching the school zone, therefore, enhancing safety.	Speed limit will be lowered near Young Middle School. This will require the drivers to slow down approaching the school zone, therefore, enhancing safety. FDOT should complete a speed study by Young Middle School.

Location Specific

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
22nd Street	Turn signal at 22nd Street and MLK Boulevard for both lefts and rights	This study recommends FDOT explore adding eastbound and westbound dedicated left turn phasing at the signalized intersection to provide an exclusive phase along with an option to turn when safe at 22nd Street. No modifications are recommended for the existing shared right turn movements.	Since the right turns share a lane with through vehicles, an additional signal head for only right turns cannot be added without another lane. A new 4-section signal head would need to be installed to better manage left turns going eastbound and westbound. This will help drivers know exactly when they can safely make a left turn. A plan to figure out the best timing for these signals to improve traffic flow and safety will need to be determined. Also, an estimate would need to be developed on how much the project will cost, including all necessary equipment and work needed.
26th Street	A right turn at 26th Street on to MLK Boulevard is needed	Further analysis and coordination with the City of Tampa is needed to investigate the feasibility of adding a northbound right-turn along 26th Street.	This will need collaboration with the City of Tampa to determine if a new right turn lane should be added. To do this, traffic counts will be needed to see how many vehicles make right turns over at least for a four-hour period. This data will help analyze how the intersection functions now and how it might improve with a new northbound right turn lane. Once the traffic counts are collected, an analysis will be done to compare the intersection's performance with and without the proposed lane. Afterward, a detailed plan and cost estimates will be prepared to move forward with any changes. The goal is to ensure that road updates are practical and beneficial for traffic flow and safety.
	Want paver crossing at 26th Street	Adding paver crossings at this intersection is recommended as part of this study. The City would need to approve maintenance agreement for pavers.	Restriping for maintenance of already existing painted crossings can be performed. Cost estimates will need to be prepared.

Location Specific

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
26th Street	Much needed left turn indications from northbound 26th Street to MLK Boulevard	Adding a dedicated left turn signal from Northbound 26th Street to Westbound MLK Boulevard has been recommended as a part of this study. However, this would require adding a left turn lane for this movement as well. The feasibility of this has not been evaluated.	Signal phasing plans will need to be developed to evaluate the northbound left turn at 26th Street. To install a protected left turn phase, modifications to the existing signal may be needed. Cost estimate can be developed for new signal head, if needed. This would require adding a left turn lane for this movement as well. The feasibility of this has not been evaluated and will need to be determined before proceeding with the signal updates.
	Need better lane marking and striping near 26th Street	Enhanced crossings are recommended at this intersection; Maintenance of lane markings and pavement stripings may be addressed as part of ongoing road maintenance efforts.	To ensure clarity for drivers, these pavement marking upgrades will be taken care of at a later time as part of ongoing road maintenance efforts.
29th Street	Stop sign at 39th Street and N Bay - Trucks block view	This is outside of the study area. There are stop signs along North Bay Street.	There are stop signs on North Bay Street. FDOT will provide this comment to the City of Tampa to determine if adjustments are needed to enhance the sight distance.
	Left turn signal on street light located at 29th Street and MLK Boulevard	This study recommends FDOT explore adding eastbound and westbound dedicated left turn phasing at the signalized intersection to provide an exclusive phase along with an option to turn when safe at 29th Street.	A new 4-section signal head would need to be installed to better manage left turns going eastbound and westbound. This will help drivers know exactly when they can safely make a left turn. A plan to figure out the best timing for these signals to improve traffic flow and safety will need to be determined. Also, an estimate would need to be developed on how much the project will cost, including all necessary equipment and work needed.
	Banners needed on 29th Street around business area	This study recommends installing gateway banners for the East Tampa Business Area at 29th Street and 30th Street adjacent to local businesses.	FDOT will provide this comment to the City of Tampa. Installing banners for the East Tampa Business Area at 29th Street and 30th Street requires approval from the City of Tampa.

Location Specific

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
30th Street	Banner light poles	Banners for East Tampa Business Area to be added at 30th Street.	Banners for the East Tampa Business Area can be installed at 30th Street if approved by the City of Tampa.
	Particularly dangerous bicycle-pedestrian areas at 30th Street and 20th Street	Midblock crossings are recommended near 20th Street at 17th Street, 19th Street and 37th Street; Additionally, lighting enhancement is also recommended between 20th Street and 30th Street.	Midblock crossing studies need to be conducted to assess the need for crosswalks at these locations. This will involve collecting data. Additionally, to improve the lighting, there needs to be a Lighting Justification Report created followed by design plans and cost estimates.
Railroad	There is substantial speeding by the railroad crossing; Request for speed control (policing, speed bumps, etc.); Belief that speed feedback signs may not work so well; No speed enforcement in area	Raised pavement approaching the rail tracks from both directions and raised intersection at 30th Street is recommended as a part of this study.	For speed management, other options like raised intersections and raised pavement will be considered. If needed, speed reduction markings along the lanes could be considered. Installing these speed management treatments will require developing concept plans and cost estimates.
40th Street	There is traffic backup at 40th Street	A westbound lane for both through and right-turning traffic is recommended to be added as a part of this study to help with the backup.	A feasibility study will need to be performed to add a right turn lane. This requires a detailed evaluation of traffic and the space available for construction. Traffic data must first be collected to determine if the right turn lane is justified. The next step would be the development of concept plans and an estimate of the costs involved.

Corridorwide

Aesthetics Comments			
Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
MLK Boulevard	Landscaping between 26th Street and 28th Street	Enhanced landscaping on the median is shown as a recommendation west of 28th Street.	Landscaping options need to be approved by the City of Tampa as the maintaining agency.
	Corridorwide lighting; Need lighting at 30th Street, 21st Street, and 20th Street	Lighting improvements are recommended along the study corridor and specifically at the requested locations.	In order to improve lighting at the listed locations, there needs to be a Lighting Justification Report (LJR) created, design lighting plans, and cost estimates prepared.
	Want gateway features at 22nd Street and 34th Street	It is recommended to coordinate with the City of Tampa to install banners for the East Tampa Community & Culture & History around 22nd Street and 34th Street.	Banners can be installed if approved by the City of Tampa. However, it is not possible to create a gateway feature in this urban corridor because there is limited space and limited right-of-way.
	Responsive lighting needed from 29th Street to 34th Street for enhanced safety	Lighting improvements are recommended to be studied between 29th Street and 34th Street as a part of this study.	In order to enhance lighting at the listed locations, a Lighting Justification Report (LJR) and lighting plans and cost estimates will need to be prepared.
	Corridor banners and street crossing beacons at key areas (library, schools, parks) are a must	Banners and crossings with beacons serving Young Magnet School, C Blythe Andrews Library, and Robert L Cole Sr Community Lake Park are recommended as a part of this study.	Banners can be installed at these locations if approved by the City of Tampa.
	Re-do road with road lines	Maintenance of lane markings and pavement stripings may be addressed at a later time.	FDOT will consider restriping of roadway lanes under maintenance. Cost estimate will need to be prepared.
	Less hardscape - bulb outs and median landscaping	Median landscaping is recommended throughout the study corridor.	Landscaping needs to be approved by the City as they are the maintaining agency.
	Trim all crosswalks and streets from bushes and trees	Trimming the trees and bushes will be handled by the City of Tampa.	Trimming the trees and bushes will be handled by the City of Tampa.
	MLK Boulevard, 15th Street	Bury utility lines	Noted. No modification recommended at this time.

Corridorwide

Traffic Comments			
Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
MLK Boulevard	Roadway speeding near Nebraska Avenue, 12th Street, and 26th Street	Consideration will be given to speed management geometric concepts like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs), chicanes. Also, use of speed reduction marking along the lanes.	FDOT will study other speed management geometric concepts like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs), chicanes. The use of geometric design changes can help manage vehicle speeds. Also, the use of speed reduction marking along the lanes can be considered along the corridor. Installing these treatments would require design plans and cost estimates prior to moving into implementation.
	Speed bumps needed between 34th Street and 29th Street (on E. Lake) due to racing and presence of major childcare facilities	Speed bumps are not feasible along this state road based on speed limit and context classification. Consideration will be given to other speed management geometric concepts like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs) and use of speed reduction marking along the lanes.	Speed bumps are not feasible along MLK Boulevard based on speed limit and context classification. FDOT will look into other speed management geometric concepts like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs), chicanes. Also, use of speed reduction marking along the lanes can be considered along the corridor. These would require design plans and cost estimates prior to moving into implementation.
General	Speed feedback signs on MLK Boulevard	Speed feedback signs are not very effective in reducing speeding. Other speed management measures like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs), chicanes are recommended as a part of this study. Also, use of speed reduction marking along the lanes will be considered.	FDOT will look into other speed management geometric concepts like raised intersections, curb extensions (bulb outs), chicanes and also, use of speed reduction marking along the lanes. These would require concept plan and cost estimates development first prior to moving into implementation.
	Ellicott Street and 26th Street need all-way stop	This is outside of the study area, but this will be coordinated with the City.	This will require coordination with the City of Tampa. If the City agrees, a Multiway Stop Sign Warrant Study will need to be conducted prior to implementation.
	Roundabouts are not desired	No roundabouts have been recommended as a part of this study along MLK Boulevard.	Roundabouts have not been considered because of their impact, limited right-of-way and associated costs.

Corridorwide

Traffic Comments			
Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
MLK Boulevard	Corridor needs to be expanded from 2 lanes to 4 lanes from 40th Street to 50th Street	This is outside the study area and would require a detailed traffic evaluation in coordination with City of Tampa.	A detailed traffic evaluation (Project Traffic Analysis Report) to widen the corridor of MLK Boulevard between 40th Street and 50th Street would be needed. This would require the evaluation of all segments and intersections within the corridor and requires substantial traffic data collection. Corridor widening would require investigating the impact to adjacent buildings, determination of available right-of-way, and the creation of cost estimates.
Multimodal Comments			
General	Need better north-south connections and crossings including green boxes and bicycle facilities	New mid-block crossings are recommended near 12th Street, 13th Street, 17th Street and 37th Street; Improved mid-block crossing at 19th Street.	Mid-block crossing studies will need to be conducted at these locations. This would be followed by design plans and development of cost estimates. The proposed mid-block crossings would provide north-south connections and crossings for bicycles.
	Sidewalks are uneven and not wide enough – concerns on ADA requirements. Sidewalks are infrequent and disconnected; There needs to be better coordination between City, County and State so that all roads and sidewalks receive similar standards and upkeep. Sidewalks need to be repaired/ replaced	Widening the sidewalks along MLK Boulevard, on one or both sides, by utilizing the utility strips between Nebraska Avenue and 15th Street is recommended in this study.	To widen the sidewalks along MLK Boulevard within the study limits, the next step is to prepare concept plans and cost estimates.
	Streets need striping updated	Maintenance of lane markings and pavement striping may be addressed at a later time.	Refreshing existing crosswalks and lane markings for maintenance will be considered. Cost estimates will need to be prepared prior to implementation.
	Agreement to the white high emphasis striping	Adding high emphasis striping was recommended along the corridor.	High emphasis crosswalks increases visibility for people crossing the street. As new projects are programmed, high emphasis crosswalks will be installed.

Corridorwide

Location	Comment	Recommendations	Explanations
General Comments			
General	Need better notification and communications between City, County, and State	Noted.	FDOT will continue to collaborate and work with local agency partners.
	It is confusing the issues to have all 4 of FDOT East Tampa corridors in one meeting, people need to come to focus on one issue at a time	Noted. The final meeting was conducted for only an individual corridor, MLK Boulevard and the public meeting was on Dec 5, 2023	This comment was taken into account and the final public meeting was conducted for individual corridor of MLK Blvd on Dec 5, 2023
	There needs to be better communication to the residents about what is happening in all roadway corridors, more advance notice of meetings, easier to navigate websites and more non-tech notifications such as hand-outs and spreading the word by canvassing (allowing community partners enough time to take the message out to people face-to-face)	Noted.	Community engagement is very important to FDOT. FDOT uses a variety of different resources to notify and engage the public. Public notifications range from flyers, newspaper ads, post cards and letters to website announcements, social media and online advertisements. FDOT remains diligent and focused on its commitment to innovation and improving future processes and resources.
	There needs to be better record keeping and historical documentation available for the design and construction so pipes are not hit during construction	Noted.	This feedback is noted and will be shared with relevant stakeholders.
	Coordination between Authorities having Jurisdiction also needs to include sharing of feedback that is heard at one Jurisdiction's meeting that pertain to other Jurisdiction's roadways; residents feel like they repeat the same thing over and over at meetings but when meetings are only focused on one particular segment or one particular Jurisdiction the input never makes it to the Jurisdictions that need to hear it	Noted.	This comment has been noted.

Final Report

