Infrastructure Asset Management in Hillsborough County, Florida

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ABSTRACT

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 2009 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure offers an assessment of the state of our nation’s infrastructure, with grades based on the most up-to-date information available. ASCE estimates the nation still stands at a D average. With each passing day, the inability of the country’s aging infrastructure to meet the needs of our growing population further threatens our economy and environmental quality of life. Establishing a comprehensive, long-term infrastructure development and maintenance plan must become a priority for our policy leaders.

Public commitment is critical to any infrastructure improvement plan. Federal funding alone won’t fix the nation’s crumbling infrastructure. The public needs to understand that when they vote down a half-cent tax increase that would be set aside for transportation improvements, they are effectively sentencing themselves to car repair bills caused by potholes and more time stuck in rush hour traffic. State and local governments must also be part of the solutions.

Florida’s already overburdened public services will be further threatened without proper investment in the additional capacity needed to support our increasing population. In addition to capacity planning, modernization of aging systems in Florida is fundamental to providing a safe and operational infrastructure while improving the quality of life for the state’s residents. Furthermore, planning and allocating funds for the continued forecasted growth in the state is essential as existing facilities and services become obsolete, overburdened, or fall into disrepair. Fiscally responsible planning for sustainable and safe infrastructure 5, 10, 20, or 50 years from now must start today.

The desired outcome from the development and publication of this Infrastructure Report Card is for the state legislature and U.S. Congress to allocate funding for state infrastructure at levels that meet the need identified by this Report Card, to support infrastructure funding that promotes economic growth and a high quality of life in local governments throughout the state, and to obtain Florida voter support for infrastructure funding initiatives and fees. In Hillsborough County, Florida, the Public Works Department has performed analyses and developed recommendations to “Raise the Grade” in each applicable infrastructure category. As such, we have developed and initiated an Asset Management Program in accordance with GASB 34. This initiative encompasses the areas of operations and maintenance (O&M) and overall asset management planning and will be measured to improve the “whole life” cycle of assets.

Key words: America’s infrastructure—ASCE Report Card—asset management