



**For Immediate Release**

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## **U.S. Transportation Under Secretary Peter Rogoff and Senator Bill Nelson Announce Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority's \$17 million Federal Contract for a Connected Vehicle Pilot Program**

**September 14, 2015**

**Tampa, FL** – Today, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) awarded a \$17 million contract to the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority (THEA). This award will be used, in a THEA partnership with other local agencies and private sector stakeholders, to conduct an innovative "Connected Vehicle (CV) pilot program" designed to make transportation safer, smarter and greener. The THEA CV pilot program would outfit cars, buses and roadside equipment with technology so that they can communicate with each other about various traffic conditions. The proposal's main goals would be improved safety for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists; improved traffic flow and transit trip times; and reduction of Tampa Bay's carbon footprint.

"We're bringing transportation into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and Florida is going to be at the center of it all," said U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson. "Tampa will be among the first cities in the nation to use the latest technology to make it safer and easier to drive."

"This was a national award. I believe THEA excelled because of our collaborative efforts with both the public and private sector. And also because the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway and Meridian Avenue offer an ideal setting for a CV pilot program," said THEA Executive Director Joe Waggoner. "The CV technology we are piloting can make Tampa a national leader in transportation innovation safety and efficiency. We are excited for THEA and for Tampa Bay."

"Tampa's emergence as an incubator for innovation and pursuit of innovative transportation solutions continues to be recognized," said Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn. "As Mayor of Tampa, I couldn't be prouder of our city, and more thankful to Secretary Foxx and the Department of Transportation. As a THEA board member, I appreciate the agency's willingness to look to new partners and new options for the region's transportation issues."

"This award is a game-changer," said Florida Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Jeff Brandes. "Connected and Automated Vehicle technologies are the cutting-edge future of transportation. This CV pilot program will help ensure Florida remains a recognized leader in transportation solutions, technologies, and public policies. This pilot program will positively impact the people of Tampa by ensuring that new technologies preserve pedestrian safety, while improving traffic flow and reducing congestion."

In addition to improved traffic and pedestrian safety applications, the pilot program will also seek to demonstrate and measure the impact of CV technology's ability to **make transportation smarter** by combining CV technology with cell phone and "smart car" apps; **greener** by tracking emission reductions achieved through improved travel patterns; and **adaptable** by integrating CV technologies with existing transportation systems and infrastructure.

Joining THEA today for the USDOT CV Award announcement were representatives of partnering agencies from the City of Tampa, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART), University of South Florida's Center for Urban Transportation Research (USF/CUTR), and private sector stakeholders, including Siemens and HNTB.

"THEA and its partners have assembled a dynamic team," said U.S. Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy Peter Rogoff in announcing the federal contract awarded to THEA. "The United States Department of Transportation is proud to select THEA and their partners to enable the testing and advancing of innovative Connective Vehicle transportation technologies. This pilot program will positively impact the people of Tampa by ensuring that new technologies preserve pedestrian safety, while improving traffic flow and reducing congestion."

#### **ABOUT THEA:**

As the owner and operator of the Selmon Expressway, the Tampa Hillsborough County Expressway Authority's (THEA) mission is to provide safe, reliable, and financially-sustainable transportation services to the Tampa Bay region while reinvesting customer-based revenues back into the community.

Our vision is to lead, partner, and implement safe, economically sound, and innovative multi-modal transportation solutions for our Tampa Bay Community.

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