

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

The Applicant, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3, requests the FHWA approval of an Interchange Operational Analysis Report (IOAR) for the implementation of traffic signals at the State Road 79 (SR 79)/Interstate 10 (I-10) interchange in Holmes County. This IOAR has been developed in accordance with FDOT Policy No. 000-525-015: Approval of New or Modified Access to Limited Access Highways on the Strategic Highway System (SHS), FDOT Procedure No. 525-030-160: New or Modified Interchanges, Interchange Access Request User's Guide and the FDOT Project Traffic Forecasting Handbook (Procedure No. 525-030-120).

FDOT is conducting an IOAR to decide on the installation of a traffic signal at the stop-controlled ramp terminal intersections of the SR 79/I-10 interchange. A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study has been completed on SR 79 from I-10 to the Alabama State Line and a Design Traffic Technical Memorandum (DTTM) was completed to supplement the operational analysis of the PD&E study. As part of the SR 79 DTTM, it was determined that the unsignalized intersections of the SR 79 ramp terminals would operate below the adopted Level of Service (LOS) target C by the Design Year 2045. The SR 79 DTTM is provided in **Appendix A**. An Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process has been completed for the PD&E.

### **1.2 Purpose and Need**

I-10, an east/west facility, is an integral part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) providing for high-speed and high-volume traffic movements within the state of Florida. I-10 is a four lane facility within the area of influence. SR 79 serves as a north/south corridor connecting I-10 to Alabama and is an Emerging Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) corridor as well as a designated hurricane evacuation route. The purpose of this project is to investigate a signalization alternative for the SR 79/I-10 interchange that will improve safety and operations. The need for this study is based on the traffic analysis results from the DTTM, which reported operations below the level of service (LOS) target C. The I-10 EB off ramp reported LOS F during Design Year 2045 under unsignalized intersection control.

### **1.3 Project Location**

The proposed I-10 modifications are located in Holmes County, Florida at the SR 79/I-10 ramp terminal intersections; the location of the project is shown in **Figure 1-1**. The project limits extend from one mile east and west of the interchange on I-10 and a half mile north and south of the interchange on SR 79.