

4.3 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INTERVIEW FINDINGS

As described in **Chapter 2.0** of this report, the Project Team conducted interviews with executive-level staff within the FDOT in order to identify key benefits issues impacting recruitment and retention within the Department.

The following is a summary of interview responses regarding the Department's benefits.

- *The benefits package is an attraction; plus job stability.*
- *Benefits used to be a more distinguishing characteristic of state employment, but not anymore. It's more comparable with the private sector, but Florida has not provided pay raises, so [employees] lose on both counts.*
- *Insurance and pension make up for the lack of salary sometimes, but young people generally don't care about that.*
- *The benefits package will appeal to older employees (50+ years), but not 30ish types.*
- *If you mess with the retirement system and go to a defined contribution (verses defined benefit), you will lose more people who now regard it as an offset to the reduced salary.*
- *Benefits are good internally; pension and health insurance are trade-offs for lower salaries.*
- *The agency needs thinkers and leaders. Retirements will impact the ability to recruit and retain quality employees. Need to be thinking of creative ways to recruit new staff.*
- *Veterans make for a strong hiring pool because they already have pensions.*
- *Benefits were used to offset the lower salaries, but not anymore [...] there's a longer period for vesting.*
- *Retirement benefits are not that impressive. The Federal government's [retirement benefits] are better. It degrades the value of state employment somewhat compared to the Federal government.*
- *[The Department] can attract some employees to come back for work stability and benefits package.*

Overall, Department interviewees spoke positively about the benefits offered.