

Barriers planned to tame killer road

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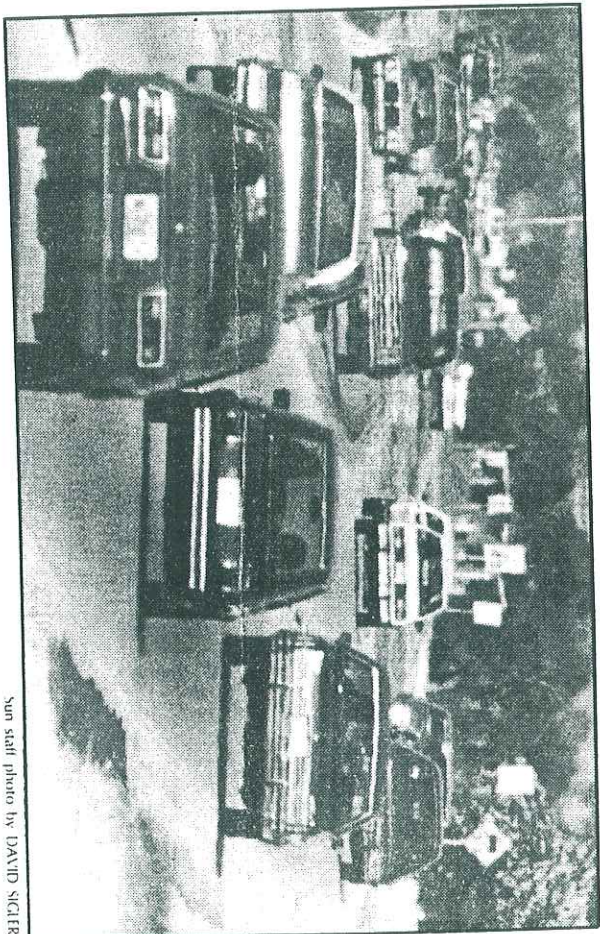
CLEARWATER—Ask any policeman on either side of the bay and you'll get the same answer: the Courtney Campbell Parkway is a killer.

The Florida Department of Transportation has announced the treacherous road crossing Tampa Bay will be tamed starting in July 1986 with the installation of a \$6.6-million barrier wall to separate east and west-bound traffic.

Jim Kennedy, deputy district engineer with the DOT, said Tuesday, "We know by putting up a barrier wall we'll do away with head-on collisions."

Between 1980 and 1984, 25 people have been killed on the causeway and 524 have been injured in 675 accidents. Statistics show that in a five-year period there have been three times as many accidents and twice as many deaths on the parkway as on the Howard Franklin and Gandy bridges combined.

(Please see * ROAD, next page)



Sun staff photo by DAVID SICLER

Traffic swarms on the Tampa side of the parkway Tuesday.

* Road

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Kennedy said the challenge of the parkway is "to maximize safety and at the same time maximize the access to the shoreline," which is a major recreational facility. "The two are in conflict," he said.

The DOT plans call for a 30-inch high barrier wall to be built down the center of the roadway from just east of the main bridge on the Pinellas side of the parkway to Eisenhower Boulevard in Tampa.

The barrier will be built so water can flow under it in the event of flooding.

Several openings with left turn lanes will be built along the barrier, from the bridge east to the municipal beach in Tampa, Kennedy said. The openings will provide access to service roads on both sides of the causeway, but no U-turns will be permitted, he said.

"And I'm talking about service roads," Kennedy said. "They'll be little old service roads to let people get off the main road to the shoreline, and we'll separate the two with a fence."

Kennedy said from Rocky Point Road on the Tampa side, to Eisenhower Boulevard, the road will be six-laned with a painted median installed. A barrier will be installed along parts of this road section, he said.

Plans also call for a "median upgrade" from the main bridge west to Baysshore Drive in Clearwater. But, "Our thinking is not yet complete on the Pinellas side," Kennedy said. "We know about what we'd like to do, but you don't want to eliminate one problem and create another. Since the Pinellas side has already been upgraded, it will probably be some sort of retrofitting design," on the existing 10-foot wide painted median, Kennedy said.

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