



## Florida Department of Transportation

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### **U.S. DOT PICKS 95 EXPRESS**

*- Florida's citizens, visitors and businesses will save time on congested highways -*

**Miami, FL---** Beleaguered motorists and bus riders stuck in traffic on I-95 in Miami-Dade and Broward counties will soon be able to choose relief on 95 Express, a bold new program to ease gridlock on one of Florida's busiest roadways.

"One of my top transportation priorities is to relieve the traffic congestion so many Floridians face each day," said Governor Charlie Crist.

"South Florida has the sixth worst traffic congestion in the nation.

That's unacceptable. The 95 Express project will bring relief to Florida's families by saving them time on crowded highways."

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) today presented a \$62.9 million grant to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to help move the project forward. The federal Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA) payment will be used in South Florida to manage congestion on the critical I-95 corridor from I-395 in Miami to I-595 in Fort Lauderdale.

"The 95 Express project will help boost the economy and improve the quality of life of all South Floridians by managing congestion," said FDOT Secretary Stephanie C. Kopelousos. "Thanks to our great partnerships - federal, state and local - we're moving this project into the fast lane."

To keep traffic moving at approximately 50 miles per hour during rush hour, tolls will fluctuate according to the time of the day and number of vehicles in the lanes. Buses, vanpools, motorcycles and registered carpools will use the 95 Express managed lanes at no charge.

The federal agreement required applicants to showcase their proposals by using the Four Ts: Tolling, Transit, Technology and Telecommuting. South Florida's application met all four of those requirements. For its transit component, 95 Express will offer Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service, a very important improvement for riders who travel between Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Now that 21-mile trip can be seamless, without the need for a transfer at the Golden Glades Park-n-Ride facility.

“One of my priorities is to offer transportation congestion relief to the citizens of Miami-Dade County and our visitors. There are few opportunities in congested urban areas like Miami-Dade County to offer traffic relief in a timely manner without the cost and disruption of major infrastructure enhancements,” said Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez.

“I believe the managed express lanes strategy is an effective and efficient way to offer increased roadway capacity with almost immediate results.”

95 Express will not require major construction and there is no need to widen the highway. Instead, the lanes will be restriped and their width will be slightly narrowed, creating an additional lane in each direction.

The new lane plus the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane will be converted to the managed lanes of 95 Express.

"It's important that we try new and innovative ways to relieve traffic congestion in South Florida," said Broward County Mayor Josephus Eggelton, Jr. "Adding express lanes on I-95 is one option that should be explored. Those who wish to pay for the express toll lanes will experience less traffic. It gives people a choice."

Operation of northbound 95 Express lanes between State Road (SR) 112/I-195 and the Golden Glades interchange is planned to begin in late February 2008. North and southbound lanes between SR 836/I-395 and the Golden Glades interchange should be operational by December 2008. Those lanes between the Golden Glades interchange and I-595/Broward Boulevard should be open by June 2009.

The project is estimated to cost \$248 million. In addition to the federal award of \$62.9 million, the Florida Legislature allocated \$35 million for the project during the 2007 legislative session, and this will be matched with toll revenues generated from 95 Express once operational.

South Florida was one of nine metropolitan areas short listed by U.S. DOT in June from among the 27 originally competing for the \$1 billion in federal dollars awarded through the Urban Partnership Agreement. That program is part of the national Congestion Initiative aimed at reducing traffic tie-ups in major urban centers.

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