

I-595 expansion all wrong -- shouldn't median be used for rail transit?

> Posted by Michael Mayo at 9:27 AM

Everyone talks a good game about bringing more mass transit to South Florida, but when push comes to shove (and shovel comes to dirt) we end up being more slavishly devoted to gas-guzzling autos than ever.

The latest proof: The just-announced **\$1.2 billion revamp/expansion of Interstate 595**.

Before going any further, I want you to **click on this link showing the project** , and tell me what is wrong with this picture.

Is it me, or do we seem to have this thing completely screwed?

This project turns the precious median land into reversible express toll lanes, which is all well and good if you want to encourage more and more auto traffic.

Wouldn't that median space be a logical place to build an East-West rail line that could run from Weston/Sunrise to downtown Fort Lauderdale?

Instead, it's all about cars, cars, cars -- with the occasional express bus thrown in.

This seems so 20th century. Between I-595's old and new lanes, and State Road 84's lanes, there will be 15 lanes devoted to vehicular traffic on that precious stretch.

If we're serious about finally making a push to rail transit, this plan is all wrong.

Using the East-West corridor along I-595 is one of two big steps to making rail transit a viable alternative for South Floridians.

The other: Creating a passenger transit line along the eastern FEC/CSX tracks.

But with this vehicle-happy expansion project set to begin soon, it looks like we'll be stuck in our cars (and traffic) for a long time to come. Let's hope someone develops a decent electric car soon.

Your thoughts?

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March 6, 2009

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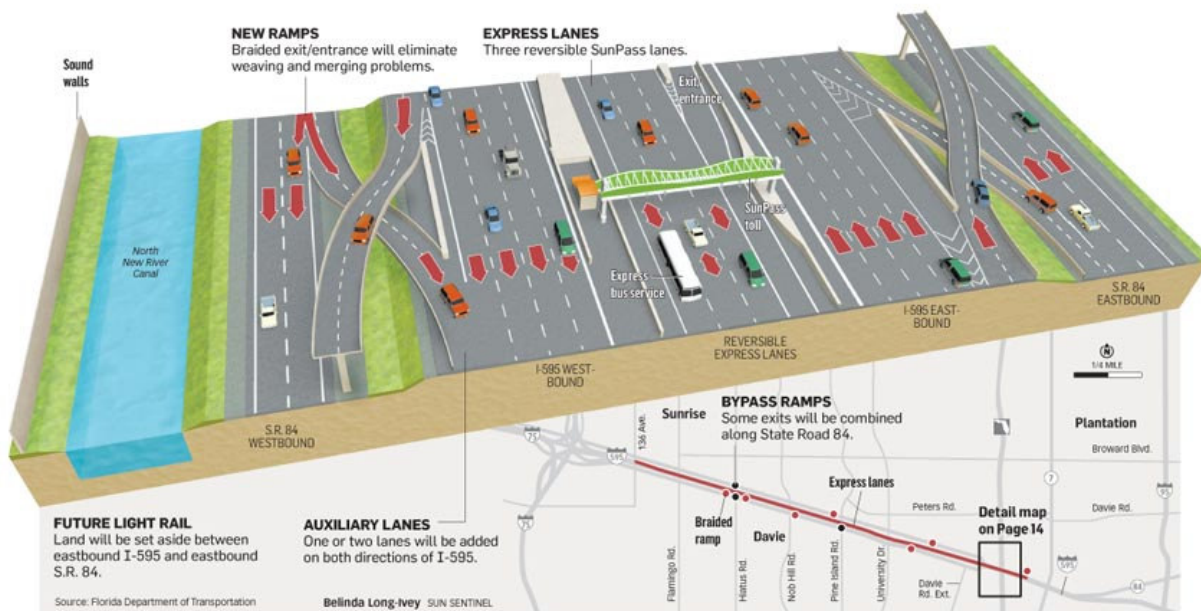
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