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Florida Breaks Ground on I-595 Express Lanes

Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez joined Florida Gov. Charlie Crist and other state officials last Friday to break ground on the Interstate 595 Express Lanes project, an undertaking that will bring congestion relief to Broward County drivers through a public/private partnership.

The U.S. Department of Transportation provided a \$603 million Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan in March 2009 that will help cover the project's \$1.8 billion construction pricetag. The Florida Department of Transportation and its private partner will pay the remaining construction costs and will be responsible for repaying the federal loan. FDOT will collect tolls from motorists using the new express lanes to cover its payments.

Construction plans involve adding three reversible express lanes in the median along 10.5 miles of I-595, linking key interchanges with I-75, I-95, and the Florida Turnpike. In addition, three free lanes in each direction will be added to I-595. Construction is scheduled to be completed in 2014.

"Like many other projects in Florida and across the country, this not only brings jobs to the community, it also helps solve a local transportation issue," Mendez said.

Questions regarding this article may be directed to editor@ashtojournal.org.