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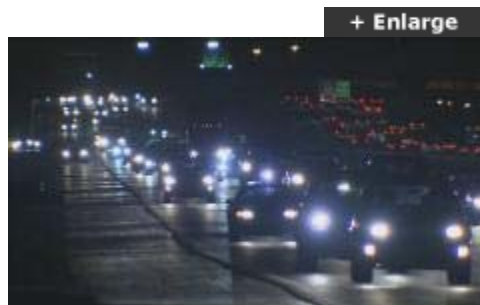
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I-595 Construction Project Set To Begin

\$1.2 Billion In Improvements Means Years Of Construction

POSTED: Friday, February 19, 2010

UPDATED: 11:43 pm EST February 19, 2010



FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. -- A major construction project to improve the traffic flow begins on Monday, Feb. 22. It's been 21 years since Interstate 595 opened and paved the way for the massive development of Western Broward County, but the highway is about to get a makeover.

The centerpiece of the four-year project is the "reversible express lanes" that will be built between the existing lanes of travel. The express lanes will carry traffic eastbound during the morning rush and westbound during the evening rush.

There will be a toll to use these lanes but with only so much room and money to work with, project managers say this will be like getting six travel lanes for the price of three.

"Of course we'll have lots of gates and signage to make sure that drivers don't go in the wrong direction", said Joseph Borello, the Department of Transportation project manager.

Two thirds of the cost of this \$1.2 billion dollar project will be spent to widen or replace the 66 bridges over the 10 mile stretch and improve the on and off ramps . Right now, the area where drivers have to merge on and off the highway in the same place is a real problem.

There will be no more jockeying for position in those spots. The new I-595 will have separate ramps so that traffic getting on the highway will go up and over cars getting off.

The project will also include an overhaul of the Turnpike interchange, noise barriers and a pedestrian greenway along the 84 canal.

Much of the work will be done at night, in fact the contractor isn't allowed to shut down primary travel lanes during the day.

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