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I-595 reconstruction will be done faster with private financing, officials say

Michael Turnbell



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Schedule calls for completion in 2014, at least 11 years ahead traditional methods

Michael Turnbell
TRANSPORTATION COLUMNIST

5:11 p.m. EST, March 20, 2010

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Q: Where is the private financing coming from for the Interstate 595 reconstruction? I have a hard time believing that the project will be completed in less than one third the time simply because it's a private contractor. If it's ultimately tolls that will pay for it, then it's not really private financing is it? All highway jobs are done by private contractors hired by the state. Also, why isn't more than one contractor used? Who is the contractor?

Wade Smith, Fort Lauderdale

A: ACS Infrastructure Development is providing financing with a combination of money from a number of banks, a federal loan and its own equity.

The company won't get any money from the state until the project is finished in 2014, then will be repaid over 30 years.

By financing the project upfront, state officials say they are avoiding the delays had they relied on a traditional design first, then build method with multiple contracts that would have taken 15 to 20 years to finish.

The construction is being split into five segments, each which will have its own team of contractors and workers. So far there are more than 60 contractors involved, many of which are either based in Florida or have offices here.

Q: Old Boynton Road has been under construction between Boynton Beach Boulevard and Congress Avenue for more than a year. When will it be done?

Patricia Englert, Boynton Beach

A: It should reopen to traffic in the next few weeks, according to the latest weekly road construction report from the Palm Beach County

Engineer's Office.

Initially, officials anticipated the project would be delayed until the end of January after crews found muck under the roadbed at the approaches to the bridge over the E-4 Canal. The muck had to be removed and replaced with a new base material, otherwise dips and potholes would have formed on the new road surface.

Q: If I'm headed south on Interstate 95, can I use the new express lanes to reach the Port of Miami?

Richard Nunne, Delray Beach

A: Yes. But once you enter the southbound express lanes south of Miami Gardens Drive, you can't exit until State Road 112 (Airport Expressway). The express lanes end just south of S.R. 112.

Northwest Eighth Street — Exit 3B — is marked for the Port of Miami.

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