

## Economic Impact: Roads

Posted: February 25th, 2008 09:35 AM EDT

It takes impact fee money to build roads. So the list of projects for the upcoming year is short.



Those county coffers are drying up with the downturn in the housing market and the economy in general, leaving many planned road improvements on indefinite hold.

But from the larger gloom comes a ray of good news. The costs for road building projects are down significantly. The cheaper materials, combined with little competition for work crews, means existing projects are moving forward at lightning pace.

Look no further than the expansion of Barclay Avenue from Elgin Boulevard to Spring Hill Drive, which is nearing completion months ahead of time.

For 2008, the county Public Works Department is monitoring one large project and a few smaller ones. Here's what to expect on the roadways:

1 Barclay Avenue from Elgin Boulevard to Spring Hill Drive: Expansion is nearing completion months ahead of time.

2 County Line Road. The Florida Department of Transportation is widening County Line Road from the U.S. 19 intersection east to Cobblestone Road. This 2-mile stretch is going from two lanes to four lanes of travel with right-of-way space for two more lanes if needed in the future. The \$31.4-million project is slated for bidding in May with construction to start in early January 2009. It's not expected to be complete until 2010.

3 Sunshine Grove Road. A 2-mile stretch from State Road 50 to Ken Austin Parkway, which is the road to the campuses of the three county schools, will get a \$7.25-million makeover later this year.

4 Jasmine Drive. County officials are rerouting Jasmine, on the east side of Brooksville, to help improve traffic flow. Currently, the road connects State Road 50 and Mondon Hill Road. Once work is complete, it will meet Mondon Hill at the intersection with McIntyre Road. The former Jasmine Road will be blocked off with barriers for local traffic access from the north only.

5 Interstate 75. State transportation officials plan to add guardrails to a portion of the interstate from State Road 50 to the Hernando-Sumter county line. Construction starts in the summer and is expected to last a few months.

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