

Making a connection: Construction of Oslo Road interchange with I-95 ready to get underway

Nick Slater, Treasure Coast Newspapers, August 2023

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — The thermometer read 95 along the side of Interstate 95 Monday morning as VIPs gathered to mark the start of a long-awaited construction project: a new highway interchange at Oslo Road.

Some 50 public officials and residents braved the heat, underscoring the importance of the \$95.8 million project to the county. Construction is to begin Aug. 14 and is expected to be completed summer 2027.

Finally, after a 20-year wait

Steven Braun, Florida Department of Transportation's district secretary, speaks during a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new I-95 interchange at Oslo Road in the southwest portion of Indian River County, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023. Around 50 people gathered, including county officials and FDOT representatives, in anticipation for the construction to begin Aug. 14, 2023. Improvements include partial cloverleaf ramps and replacing the bridge that will connect Oslo Road and I-95.

Talks of a new interchange, connecting the southern portion of the county to the interstate, began about 20 years ago, and it took three applications to the Federal Highway Administration in order to finally receive approval, according to Brian Freeman, Metropolitan Planning Organization staff director.

Cost of the project is being shared by state and the federal government. No county money is involved.

Major components of the project are partial cloverleaf ramps connecting Oslo Road and I-95 and widening Oslo Road from a two-lane to a four-lane highway, east to SW 58th Avenue.

The Oslo Road Bridge over I-95 is seen Monday, Aug. 7, 2023, in Indian River County. Construction for the bridge replacement with a I-95 interchange at Oslo Road will begin Aug. 14, 2023.

Other pieces of the project include:

Lighting interchange ramps

Replacing the existing Oslo Road bridge over I-95

Installing traffic signals at Oslo Road and 66th Avenue

Lighting the intersections at 74th, 66th and 58th avenues

Realignment of 82nd Avenue

Eliminating the Oslo intersection at 86th Avenue

Constructing a new road, 13th Street SW, to connect 86th and 90th avenues

Extending the noise wall south along I-95

Replace sanitary, water and untreated-water mains

Creating bike lanes and sidewalks

Economic-development opportunities, evacuation routes

The Indian River County Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new I-95 interchange at Oslo Road in the southwest portion of Indian River County, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023. Around 50 people gathered, including county officials and FDOT representatives, in anticipation for the construction to begin, Aug. 14, 2023. Improvements include partial cloverleaf ramps and replacing the current bridge that will connect Oslo Road and I-95.

FDOT District Four Secretary Steven Braun emphasized the importance of the interchange for southern Indian River County, pointing to the new evacuation route and access to major roadways for emergency services.

"This makes sense," said Helene Caseltine, Indian River Chamber of Commerce economic-development director. "It will be so much easier for people living in the southern portion of the county to evacuate during a hurricane."