



Transportation Services

In fiscal year 2008 the Transportation Services Division completed five major road construction projects that added 55 lane miles to the county's roadway network along with sidewalks and bike lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists. The projects were Logan Boulevard Extension (a new two-lane alignment from Vanderbilt Beach Road to Immokalee Road), the widening of Rattlesnake Hammock Road from two lanes to six lanes from Polly Avenue to Collier Boulevard and three projects on Immokalee Road: the section from U.S. 41 to I-75 was widened from four lanes to six lanes; the section from I-75 to Collier Boulevard was widened from four lanes to six lanes and an eight-mile section from Collier Boulevard to Shady Hollow Boulevard was widened from two lanes to six lanes for 6.5 miles to Oil Well Road then from two lanes to four lanes from that point for an additional mile and-a-half to the end of the project. The cost of the five projects was approximately \$118 million. In addition, one new road widening improvement project began – the 6.5 mile six-laning of Collier Boulevard from U.S. 41 to Davis Boulevard will add an additional 13 lane miles to the county's road network when completed in fall 2009, at a cost of approximately \$25 million. Other projects that were nearing completion at the end of the year were Vanderbilt Beach Road that is being widened from two lanes to six lanes from Airport-Pulling Road to Collier Boulevard, and Collier Boulevard that is being widened from two lanes to six lanes from Golden Gate Boulevard to Immokalee Road. These two projects will add another 32 lane miles to the county's roadway network. Another major roadway project was awarded a contract to begin construction. The Santa Barbara Boulevard Extension which will be a six lane roadway from Davis Boulevard to Rattlesnake Hammock Road was awarded to Astaldi Construction for \$19 million and will add 12 lane miles when completed in the fall 2009. Astaldi is also the contractor for the current widening of Santa Barbara Boulevard from four lanes to six lanes from Davis Boulevard to Copper Leaf Lane, a \$62 million project that will add nearly 9 lane miles.

A major stormwater improvement project kicked off this year. Freedom Park, formerly known as the Gordon River Water Quality Park, began construction in January and completion is expected in 2009. It will be an approximately

50-acre natural water quality treatment facility, which will provide flooding relief and tertiary treatment of stormwater runoff from the Gordon River Extension Basin. The \$10 million project received \$6 million from Florida Communities Trust and \$1.2 million was granted by South Florida Water Management District. The remainder of the funding was allocated from ad valorem taxes. Also, several segments of the Lely Area Stormwater Improvement Project along with phases of the Gateway Triangle Project were completed, creating better stormwater flow at costs totaling approximately \$23 million. To help all the stormwater projects along, Resolution 2008-80 for the Stormwater Funding Policy was approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

Collier Area Transit (CAT) has also seen positive changes. Ridership grew on the seven-year-old transit system to over 1 million, six new bus shelters were constructed, and the CAT Operations Center opened at 8300 Radio Road in February. The facility houses 23 CAT trolley-wrapped buses, 20 paratransit vehicles, McDonald Transit staff (the county's contractor for the fixed route and paratransit services), along with two Fleet Maintenance workers that complete repairs on the vehicles, as well as Alternative Transportation Modes Department landscaping crews and equipment.

Maintaining existing roadways, bridges and roadside drainage swales is handled by the Road Maintenance Department. Crews resurfaced nearly 38 lane miles of roadways and converted 14 miles of limerock roads to asphalt.

In addition, the Transportation Planning Department continues to make strides with corridor management; a corridor study is in process to see if an alignment can be determined for extending Wilson Boulevard/Benfield Road east of Collier Boulevard and an Interchange Justification Report is progressing for the area off I-75 near Everglades Boulevard.

Finally, to continue to assist traffic flow, the Traffic Operations Department has new timings for 50 intersections and a state grant has been secured for retiming another 50 intersections in fiscal year 2008/09.

- Public involvement is a big part of the transportation planning process and many opportunities will be presented for citizens to get involved in the coming years. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the contract for the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Major Update in 2008. Numerous public information meetings will be held to gather public input over the next two years. The new LRTP is expected to be presented to the BCC by the end of 2010.

- The Traffic Management Center (TMC) now can view 47 intersections through arterial monitoring cameras (15 added this past year) and 62 percent of the signals can be controlled from the TMC, saving staff time and taxpayer dollars.

- Since its formation in 2000, the Transportation Services Division has added more than 230 lane miles to the county's roadway network.