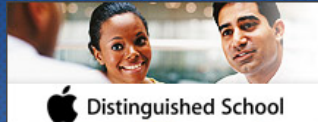




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## St. Johns Heritage Parkway opens in Palm Bay



Phase one of the St. Johns Heritage Parkway officially opened to drivers, Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2015. The second phase, including a new exit off Interstate 95, should be complete by 2017.

By Greg Pallone, Brevard County Reporter

Last Updated: Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 5:07 PM



**PALM BAY** -- Relief is coming for thousands of drivers as a southern [Brevard County](#) roadway project nears completion after two decades.

Officials expect thousands to use the St Johns Heritage Parkway daily, easing congestion on area roadways and the interstate. The road will eventually link Palm Bay, Central Florida's second largest city, with Melbourne, West Melbourne and State Road 192.

"We've pushed for this for a long time," said Palm Bay resident Doug Wigner.

Locals like Wigner are excited about the parkway. He's lived off Pace Drive for nearly 30 years.

During that time, he's championed for the beltway around I-95 to be built, sitting on the project's original citizen's advisory board and attending Palm Bay council meetings.

"There's a terrible intersection down here, Jupiter (Boulevard Northwest) and Malabar Road, people are sometimes backed up 30 (to) 45 minutes," Wigner said.

The parkway runs north and south in western Palm Bay.

This first \$12 million phase leads from Malabar Road near Heritage High School up to Emerson Drive, with Pace Drive intersecting with the parkway as well.

Nancy Flach is looking forward to saving 10 minutes of driving with her four kids to get to Palm Bay Regional Park.

"We will use this as our main road," Flach said.

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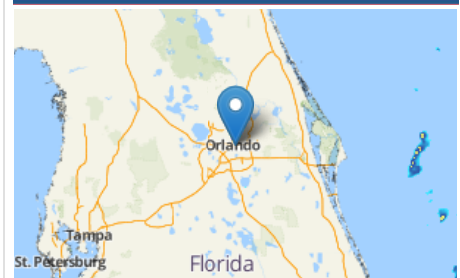


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"Beyond the congestion, there's a huge economic development impact to that, people trying to get to work and get their kids to daycare and school. Time is money," said Brevard District 4 Commissioner Andy Anderson, who has worked for years on the project.

Phase two of the parkway is now in the county's hands, running three miles north of Palm Bay to SR-192 and then another two miles to create a new I-95 interchange at Ellis Road.




Another interstate exit is also planned for south of Palm Bay.

The parkway is expected to bring more business development in the area and more jobs.

It will also be a key way for residents to evacuate during hurricanes.

If all goes as planned, the entire project should be complete by 2017.

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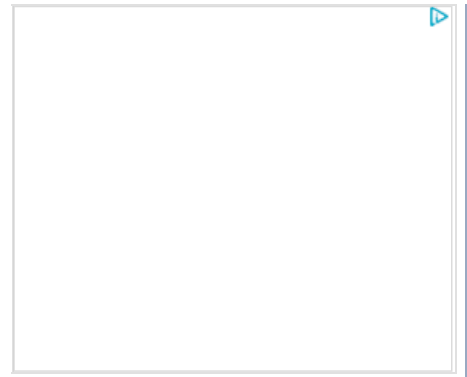





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