

Attacking gridlock

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While we're on the subject of looming tax cuts, County Commissioners were smart Thursday not to allow the threat to stop them from approving badly needed road projects.

In a 4-1 vote, they OK'd borrowing nearly \$50 million for 30 projects, a small part of the \$470 million in unmet road needs the county faces.

The work includes:

--- Widening Barnes Boulevard in Rockledge.

--- Right of way acquisition and engineering work for the St. Johns Heritage Parkway, formerly called the Palm Bay Parkway.

--- Making interchange and sidewalk improvements on Micco Road.

--- Resurfacing and culvert replacement on a variety of roads.

The Space Coast's road network is an essential part of its infrastructure, and some of it has been pushed to the breaking point by the area's rapid growth in recent years.

That has meant more cars and trucks on the streets, and more traffic jams and gridlock during morning and evening commutes.

And the problem gets worse every year as still more development brings new residents.

Commissioners, and citizens, face tough budget choices ahead. But in examining the options, finding the money to continue road improvements should be a priority.

If it's not, the trouble will only escalate and cost taxpayers more to fix down the road.

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