

# St. Johns Heritage Parkway section may open this spring

**Rick Neale**, FLORIDA TODAY

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(Photo: RICK NEALE/FLORIDA TODAY)

The flat ribbon of new blacktop slices southward from U.S. 192 through silent cattle pastures, stretching to the horizon just west of the roadside landmark cowboy boot at Byrd's Western Store.

Crews are wrapping up the second segment of the long-anticipated St. Johns Heritage Parkway, which will soon provide a new north-south alternative to congested Minton Road for motorists in Palm Bay, West Melbourne, Melbourne and unincorporated Brevard County.

Back in January 2015, Palm Bay leaders conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating completion of the first segment of the western roadway: a 2.5-mile portion linking Malabar Road with Emerson Boulevard. City officials managed that \$13.4 million project.

Parkway segment opens in Palm Bay, more coming

(<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/local/2015/01/13/parkway-segment-opens-palm-bay-coming/21718571/>)

The new segment extends 3.1 miles — the length of a 5K race — from Emerson Boulevard to U.S. 192 in West Melbourne. Construction on this section should wrap up this spring, said Don Walker, Brevard County governmental spokesman.

Work began in February 2015. The construction contract calls for substantial completion by April 14 and final completion by June 13. Officials added one day to the contract schedule because of Tropical Storm Erika, Walker said.

Orange barrels and "Road Closed" sawhorses line rural U.S. 192 at the St. Johns Heritage Parkway intersection, where workers have installed stoplights, street lights and crosswalk signals.

The \$12.7 million project was funded via gas tax revenues, state and federal grants, and impact fees. Workers cleared and grubbed land, built a bridge, and installed concrete sidewalks and a stormwater system.

The portion of Minton Road between Emerson Boulevard and Palm Bay Road ranks as one of Brevard's busiest streets. On average, 45,150 vehicles traverse this section per day, Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization records show.

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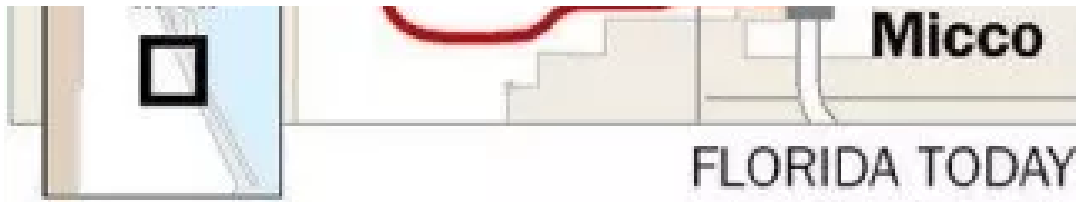
The St. Johns Heritage Parkway will eventually link with I-95 via future interchanges on Ellis Road in Melbourne and John's Grant-Valkaria. Transportation officials say the Ellis Road interchange will improve vehicular access to Orlando Melbourne International Airport.

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## — Proposed St. Johns Heritage Parkway

■ Proposed I-95 interchanges







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