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## State shortfall snags area road projects

By **BOB KOSLOW**

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DELAND -- Widening part of Interstate 4 in Volusia County and widening Palm Coast Parkway at Interstate 95 in Flagler County are two of several transportation projects facing delays due to the state's billion dollar shortfall.

"We have been facing deficits for a couple years with declining revenue and it's no different this year," said Noranne Downs, who heads the Central Florida region of the Florida Department of Transportation. "We are just not getting the revenue at the pumps to meet our needs."

The state is short \$1.4 billion dollars to pay for approved projects for the next five years, officials said at Monday's public hearing for the District 5 work program that covers state fiscal years 2008/09 through 2012/13. The district is short about \$486 million.

So projects have to be deferred within the five-year window and a few projects dropped from the program. There were also a few much-needed additions.

Major state proposals in Flagler County include:

- Deferring the engineering for the widening of Palm Coast Parkway at I-95 from this year to 2010, but added \$4.6 million for construction in 2013. A state grant with a county and Palm Coast match would complete the project.
- Eliminating the Palm Harbor Parkway extension scheduled for 2012.
- Deferring the Lehigh trailhead to Colbert Lane to 2012 and referred the Graham Swamp Trail to 2010.

"It's what I expected. Not much," said Faith Alkatib, Flagler County Engineer.

Major state proposals in Volusia County include:

- Adding \$9 million to the \$10 million for land purchases in 2008/09 for the widening of S.R. 415 from the Seminole County Line to Acorn Lake Road. Adding back the \$6 million construction money in 2013 it took this year to balance the work program for the \$160 million project.
- Adding money in 2008/09 for environmental studies of the East Central Florida Regional Rail Trail.
- Deferring land purchases for the widening of I-95 between I-4 and U.S. 92 from 2009 to 2011.
- Deferring the paving of Airport Road shoulders in Ormond Beach to 2009.
- Deferring the resurfacing of U.S. 92 from Kepler Road in DeLand east to Daytona Beach until 2011.
- Eliminating the widening of I-4 from S.R. 44 to I-95 beyond 2013.
- Eliminating traffic signal mast arms from S.R. 40 in Ormond Beach, S.R. 44 in New Smyrna Beach and U.S. 92 in Daytona Beach beyond 2013.
- Eliminating the Saxon Boulevard between Orange City and DeBary.

"The state has clearly shown it can not fund transportation adequately," said Volusia County Councilman Jack Hayman. "We can't build roads fast enough and don't have the money or the time to meet the growth of all the cars coming into the county each day. We need to change our philosophy and develop alternative decisions about how we fund transportation."

The District 5 tentative work plan will be reviewed by state agencies before it goes to the Legislature in the spring to approve and allocate the money.

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