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FDOT gets backing on \$2.1B I-4 project



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Gov. Rick Scott and the Florida Legislature on Feb. 1 gave the state Department of Transportation authority to move forward with the procurement process on the \$2.1 billion project to replace 21 miles of Interstate 4.

Remaking 21 miles of Interstate 4 through downtown Orlando got a step closer to reality Feb. 1 with Gov. [Rick Scott](#) and the Florida Legislature giving the [Florida Department of Transportation](#) authority to move forward with the procurement process on the \$2.1 billion project.

The state will host an I-4 Ultimate Project industry forum in Orlando March 4 to get feedback on [replacing 21 miles of the highway](#) from west of Kirkman Road to east of State Road 434.

“This strategic investment of more than \$2 billion will enhance safety and relieve congestion in one of the most heavily populated areas of the state,” Scott said in a prepared statement.

If the state relies on a traditional pay-as-you-go approach to build the project, it would take 26 years to complete the 21 miles of I-4 improvements. With a private-public partnership — called a P3 — the project would be completed in five to six years once construction starts.

Under Florida law, a contractor-financed P3 project requires both the governor’s approval and a 14-day legislative consultation and notification period.

“Our goal is to have financials close on the project by the summer of 2014 with construction beginning later that year/early 2015,” FDOT Secretary [Ananth Prasad](#) said in a prepared statement.

The project includes 56 new bridges, 68 bridges being replaced and 13 modifications to bridges. It also includes reconstruction of 15 major interchanges.

It would add four managed lanes, or tolled express lanes, to I-4. The project also includes six general purpose lanes and two auxiliary lanes.