

Posted: 4:18 p.m. Monday, March 4, 2013

## State unveils changes to come with I-4 widening



I-4 Toll roads

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ORLANDO, Fla. —

On Monday state officials made their pitch to the private companies bidding to make the 21-mile Interstate 4 widening from Longwood to Kirkman Road a reality.

Channel 9's Racquel Asa found out it includes a speed limit that would speed drivers along.

A video rendering released by the state Monday shows the new way drivers will enter and exit I-4 with the option of using express toll lanes to avoid traffic.

The optional toll lanes would cost drivers more than \$13 round trip from Longwood to

downtown during peak hours.

"What's your comment to people (for whom) \$13 is too much?" Asa asked Ananth Prasad, a representative with the Florida Department of Transportation.

"I would agree with you. But I don't think everybody is going to pay \$13 every day to commute that," said Prasad.

Similar express lanes along Interstate 95 in Miami Dade County show the average express lane user uses it twice a week.

There will also be 56 new bridges along I-4, including two in Maitland at Lake Destiny Road and Keller Drive.

Those bridges will eliminate the need for traffic lights at the on and offramps.

Exits that are now on the left side of the interstate will be moved to the right side.

The speed limit will also be more consistent at 60 mph between Seminole County and downtown. Currently it varies from 50-60 mph.

The big challenge will be convincing a private company to fund the remainder of the \$2 billion project. The state has already committed to half the cost.

"If we were to do this project on a regular pay-go mechanism we would be building it for the next 20-25 years," said Prasad.

The state plans to have a private investor selected before the end of the year and start construction soon after.