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I-4 Ultimate Project Hosts First Ribbon-Cutting

New Grand National Drive Overpass Connects Oak Ridge Road to Major Boulevard

ORLANDO — The I-4 Ultimate project reached a major milestone on Wednesday, August 9, as the new Grand National Drive overpass was officially opened.

The overpass connects the Oak Ridge Road/International Drive area, east of Interstate 4 (I-4), to the Major Boulevard/Caravan Court area, west of I-4. The overpass was designed to accommodate more than 1,000 vehicles per hour to help ease congestion on the nearby Kirkman Road (State Road 435) interchange. The four-lane overpass was completed in two years and includes a host of traffic, pedestrian and aesthetic improvements to the area.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held to commemorate the occasion. Florida Department of Transportation District 5 Secretary Steve Martin was joined by Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs, project representatives and area stakeholders participated in the event. DOT 1, a restored 1929 AA Ford Truck was the first vehicle to cross the overpass while leading a procession over the interstate. The overpass was opened to traffic just before 1 p.m. today.

New roadway signs, LED lighting, dedicated turn lanes and traffic signals will assist motorists in navigating this bustling tourism corridor. New traffic signals are featured at the intersections of Oak Ridge Road and Grand National Drive and Grand National Drive and Major Boulevard. A third new traffic signal atop the overpass eventually will allow motorists to safely use the direct connect ramps to Express Lanes when they are put into service at the completion of the entire I-4 Ultimate project, scheduled for 2021.

Pedestrian improvements will provide easier access between attractions, retail and lodging located on both sides of I-4. New sidewalks and crosswalks were added to Grand National Drive, Caravan Court and Major Boulevard. As part of Florida Department of Transportation's Complete Streets initiative, bicycle lanes and sidewalks (that vary from eight to 12 feet wide) have been added to both sides of the overpass to encourage pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in this area. Aesthetic improvements to the area include enhanced drainage features and a lush landscaping featuring nearly 450 trees and more than 700 shrubs.

The I-4 Ultimate project is rebuilding 21 miles of Interstate 4 (I-4) from west of Kirkman Road in Orange County to east of State Road 434 in Seminole County, adding two new dynamic tolled Express Lanes in each direction, replacing more than 140 bridges, reconfiguring 15 major interchanges and reconstructing the entire roadway.