

Orlando Sentinel, February 8, 2014

I-4 flyover in south Orange looks ready – but it isn't

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The \$20 million Fenton Street bridge over Interstate 4 in south Orange County seems ready to go, with the traffic lights up and the lanes striped.

But it may not open and link International Drive with Palm Parkway until the end of March because — appearances aside — Orange County's top road-building official says it is not ready for traffic.

"It looks done, but [more]

things need to be done," said Julie Naditz, Orange highway construction manager.

Included in the unfinished business: inspecting the stormwater piping around the overpass to ensure there are no leaks and installing cable on I-4 for the highway's traffic-information network.

Some motorists are getting frustrated.

"The money was spent to build Fenton Street. It's time to start using it," said John Andrews, a bus salesman who lives in the Dr. Phillips

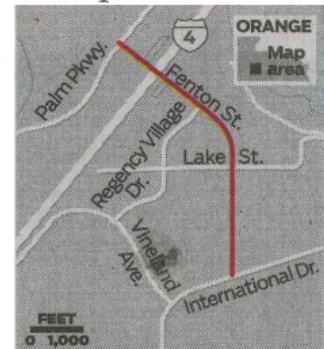
area and typically drives by the overpass a couple of times a week.

Andrews maintains the road has been ready for a while.

"Quite frankly," he said in an email to the Orlando Sentinel, "I have not seen any activity for months nor has there been any sign of construction equipment other than traffic cones at I-Drive and Palm Parkway."

Naditz said she understands the concerns but

Fenton Street overpass



SOURCE: Staff research

STAFF GRAPHIC

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ROAD

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points out the project is on schedule — and that calls for completion in late March. The work started in March 2012.

In addition to providing a shortcut to and from the south end of I-Drive, the flyover also opens up fallow land on both sides of I-4 to potential development. A group of five businesses, collectively known as Wildwood Area Improvement Company LLC, gave the county land and more than \$1 million for the bridge.

The cash went mostly for the installation of water

pipes and drainage necessary for construction, Naditz said. Members of the improvement company are Carter-Vineland Pointe, Floridays, Kingsland, Vitru and Blue Seas, according to the county.

Daryl Carter said his company and associates have been working to get the road completed for eight years. Carter owns nearly 200 acres on either side of the flyover and anticipates the new road will make it attractive for any number of possible uses, from resorts to apartments to offices to time shares.

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