



Florida Department of Transportation

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VIDEO AND PHOTO RELEASE

FDOT Celebrates Official Opening of Redesigned I-4 at C.R. 557 Interchange and Wildlife Crossing Project

Polk City, FL – Wednesday, June 5, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Interstate 4 (I-4) at County Road (C.R.) 557 interchange and a new wildlife crossing in the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area.

This project, which began in 2020, has been a major endeavor aimed at improving traffic flow, enhancing safety, and protecting wildlife along the I-4 corridor. The plan involved a comprehensive redesign of the existing partial cloverleaf interchange, replacing it with a modern diamond configuration, complete with new bridges and roundabouts.



“I’m thankful for the leadership of Governor DeSantis and support of the Florida Legislature who share FDOT’s vision to modernize Florida’s infrastructure to meet the unique characteristics and future needs of each community in Florida,” said **FDOT Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E.** “This new interchange and wildlife crossing will reduce congestion, enhance safety, and creates a new wildlife connection to allow Florida’s diverse wildlife a safer way to traverse the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area.”

“The successful completion of this project is a testament to our commitment to innovation and community well-being,” said **FDOT District One Secretary L.K. Nandam.** “By incorporating state-of-the-art design and environmental considerations, we are paving the way for a more connected future.”

The newly constructed interchange at Exit 48, C.R. 557, along the I-4 corridor is designed with various new safety features, greatly improves traffic circulation, and enhances access for emergency responders and truckers in Polk County. Additionally, the project includes wider shoulders on I-4 off-ramps to C.R. 557 and new L.E.D lighting along I-4 and C.R. 557, further improving safety and accessibility for all road users.

Additionally, as part of this project, C.R. 557 has been widened to four travel lanes within the project limits, offering better connectivity and seamless travel to and from the interstate.

Click on the [link](#) or the image for the video of the ribbon cutting celebration.



Another crucial component of this project is the new wildlife crossing under I-4, just east of the newly improved interchange. A variety of animals can be found traversing this area, including Florida Panthers, black bears, alligators, coyotes, and deer. With this newly built connection, wildlife-vehicle collisions can be significantly reduced, and wildlife can access

protected lands on both sides of the interstate, offering a great way to harmonize the environment and transportation.

The construction of this \$72.5 million project marks a new era for Polk County and the state of Florida, highlighting FDOT's dedication to offering a robust transportation network for Floridians.

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The Florida Department of Transportation's mission is to provide a safe transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances economic prosperity, and preserves the quality of the state's environment and communities. The department is committed to building a transportation system that not only fits the current needs of Florida's residents and visitors, but also enhances mobility throughout the state to accommodate its consistent and rapid growth. The unique nature of the Sunshine State provides numerous opportunities to achieve the department's mission through multiple transportation modes including highways/streets, air, rail, sea, spaceports, transit, and the ever-expanding deployment of bicycle & pedestrian facilities.