



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

801 N. Broadway Avenue
Bartow, Florida 33830

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Janella Newsome

B: (863) 519-2828 | C: (863) 209-5589

Janella.Newsome@dot.state.fl.us

PRESS RELEASE

Railroad Crossing Improvements to Close S.R. 60 in Polk County Starting July 27; Detours Advised

*Full two-week closure scheduled for essential CSX track reconstruction
between Bartow and Lake Wales*

BARTOW, Fla. — The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One announces an upcoming full closure of State Road 60 at the CSX railroad crossing, located west of Lake Wales and east of Bartow, **beginning on Monday, July 27, 2026. Specific time to be determined.** The closure is required to accommodate an extensive, full crossing reconstruction scheduled by CSX Transportation to enhance corridor safety and operational stability. **The project is anticipated to take two weeks, with a scheduled completion date by Monday, August 10, 2026, weather permitting.**

"Safety is our top priority at CSX, and we have worked closely with the Florida Department of Transportation to support this full crossing rebuild safely and efficiently," said Peggy Smith, CSX Regional Manager of Community Affairs and Safety. "This work is critical to maintaining a reliable crossing for both roadway users and rail operations, ensuring the freight the American public relies on moves safely and dependably."

To perform the work safely and efficiently, S.R. 60 will be fully closed to all through traffic at the tracks (GPS coordinates: 27°54'11.2"N 81°39'32.7"W) for approximately two weeks. During this window, CSX crews will remove the existing track structure across all four lanes of S.R. 60 and completely rebuild the foundation. Following track installation, new roadway asphalt will be placed immediately to guarantee a smooth, level ride for motorists.

FDOT recognizes that a full closure of this heavily traveled regional artery will cause temporary travel delays and disruptions. While this work represents a significant

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inconvenience to commuters and freight traffic alike, it is critically necessary to ensure the long-term safety of the traveling public and the integrity of the multimodal infrastructure.

"Public safety is the baseline of everything we do at FDOT, and addressing deteriorating railroad crossings is an absolute necessity to prevent hazards and maintain long-term corridor reliability," said John Kubler, FDOT District One Director of Transportation Operations. "We have collaborated extensively with CSX to ensure they have the absolute best logistical window to execute this comprehensive four-lane rebuild efficiently. By implementing a full, concentrated closure rather than prolonged partial lane shifts, we maximize crew safety and dramatically shorten the construction timeline, delivering the safest and most optimal outcome for both the railroad and the motoring public."

Motorists are strongly urged to plan ahead, allow significant extra travel time, and utilize regional navigation tools like **FL511.com**, mobile mapping apps, or GPS devices to monitor real-time traffic conditions. FDOT and Polk County have established two designated detour routes to safely redirect traffic during the closure.

MAP 1 – General Detour (Truck Traffic Route)

Due to weight and turning constraints, **all commercial trucks and heavy vehicles must utilize the 31-mile regional detour** via state roadways:

- **Westbound (From Lake Wales to Bartow):**
Head south on U.S. 27 to U.S. 98
Head west on U.S. 98 to U.S. 17
Head north on U.S. 17 to S.R. 60
- **Eastbound (From Bartow to Lake Wales):**
Head south on U.S. 17 to U.S. 98
Head east on U.S. 98 to U.S. 27
Head north on U.S. 27 to S.R. 60

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MAP 2 – LOCAL TRAFFIC and School Bus Detour (NO TRUCKS)

With the approval of Polk County, local passenger car traffic may utilize Old Bartow Lake Wales Road as a localized bypass. **Trucks are strictly prohibited from this local route:**

- **Westbound (From Lake Wales to Bartow):**
Head north on Old Bartow Road
At the roundabout, head west on Old Lake Wales Road
Head west on S.R. 60
- **Eastbound (From Bartow to Lake Wales):**
Head north on Old Lake Wales Road
At the roundabout, head south on Old Bartow Road
Head east on S.R. 60

Advanced warning signs, variable message boards, and detour trailblazers will be deployed across the corridor ahead of the July 27 start date to guide travelers. All work is subject to change based on weather or unexpected track conditions.

To sign up for email updates, please send an email to sr60closure@fdotdetours.com.

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