

International Drive Update - March 15, 2013

Description & Background:

Acquire right-of-way to accommodate the ultimate 4 lane, with median, facility and complete the first phase which includes paving a 5 ½ mile two lane section from intersection of International Drive and River Oaks Drive to S.C. Hwy. 90 to provide another access to and from Myrtle Beach.

Current Status:

Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2014 due to the requirement to complete projects in the Capital Sales Tax Program in priority order. Priority # 4 (Hwy 707 widening) and priority # 7 (Glenn's Bay Rd widening and interchange) are tentatively slated for letting (and bid opening) during the last half of this year (2013) pending receipt of their environmental permits. Once we have the bids (actual costs) for these two higher priority projects we can confirm that there are adequate monies available to complete the lower priority projects such as International Drive.

Potential Interim Use of International Drive as an Unpaved Road:

The public has requested Horry County to consider opening existing International Drive as an unpaved road until construction on the new paved roadway begins after the environmental permits are received. Since existing unpaved road surface of International Drive is not maintained by Horry County, it is currently in very poor condition and will require improvements such as adding stone base material to make the road passable for typical passenger cars or light-duty pickup trucks. Horry County has asked the SCDNR if they would allow us to make these improvements. They had advised us that they would support the County's request if the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) would also allow it. The SCDNR sent a letter to the ACOE asking them if any permitting would be required in order to approve the County's request and the county has not received a response at this time. If the ACOE will require a permit for these interim improvements, then we would likely not move forward with them because the permitting process in the best case takes about 6-9 months and we are hoping to have the permit for the paving of International Dr. at about this same time frame. Should the ACOE say we don't need a permit and the SCDNR approves the opening of the road to the public it will take us 2-4 weeks to make it passable to the public.