

Scenic Watch



Photo: Bob Self, Florida Times Union

Scenic Jacksonville and community win the battle!

"State pledges to work on plan to landscape areas cleared for I-295 widening"

"A state Department of Transportation administrator pledged Wednesday to work with Jacksonville beautification organizations and Mandarin residents to develop a landscaping plan for the Interstate 295 widening that cleared out acres of trees.

The transportation department didn't commit any specific amount of spending for landscaping that stretch of highway.

For the entire state, the department spends puts aside 1.5 percent of its construction spending to do landscaping. Some individual projects get more, some get less.

The I-295 construction is an \$89 million project, so 1.5 percent of that would be about \$1.3 million.

City Councilman Matt Schellenberg, who represents Mandarin, said he is confident the I-295 project will get landscaping in an amount above the state average. He said the state clear-cut a 'huge canopy of trees' alongside the highway and the department should restore the community as much as possible.

February
2015



Fun Festivals and Events

Central and West

Feb 26 - March 8
Florida Strawberry Festival, Plant City
Through March 6
Real Music Concert Series, Tampa Bay
March 1
Chocolate Festival, Melbourne
March 3
Moonlight Carillon Concert at Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Wales
March 5
Climb to the Moon, Ponce Inlet
March 6-15
Bike Week, Daytona Beach
March 6
Jazz Friday at Foosner Museum of Art, Melbourne

'What happened has happened, and we have to move forward,' Schellenberg said.

He said he was pleased with the discussion with Jim Knight, urban planning and modal administrator for the Northeast Florida district of FDOT...

The discussion in a City Hall conference room covered topics such how to landscape a drainage pond that will be built off Scott Mill Road, the location of sound walls that will be built along the widened highway, and planting trees that will grow tall enough so residents cannot see the highway's lights and signs from their yards.

Several people said the state should rule out planting palm trees and instead go with trees found in Northeast Florida woods.

Schellenberg and the department will schedule another meeting in a month.'

-- David Bauerlein, The Florida Times-Union

[Read entire article](#)

[Read detailed article by Bob Self. Florida Times-Union](#)

[Visit Scenic Jacksonville's website](#)



Photo: Nick Swyter, Miami Herald

"Elderly pedestrians especially at risk on South Florida roads"

"Imagine trying to cross U.S. 1 on foot. Or West Flagler Street as it widens. Or the business corridor along 27th Avenue. Or the funnel that is one-way Calle Ocho. Actually, imagine any intersection of any multi-lane road. Cars whizzing by at frightening speeds. Lights turning green too quickly. Drivers gunning their engine.

It's scarier still if you're elderly – if your pace is slow, your eyesight poor and your ability to react to the unexpected compromised. Yet, that's the scenario many of South Florida's seniors face when they're walking to a bus stop or the grocery store.

The tri-county area, from Miami to West Palm Beach, consistently ranks among the worst nationwide for pedestrians, and it can be especially tough for older walkers navigating a city that was built as a paean to the automobile. Dangerous by Design 2014, the latest report by activist groups the National Complete Streets Coalition and Smart Growth America, ranks South Florida as the nation's fourth most-dangerous metro area for pedestrians, with almost triple the average national rate for crashes involving people on foot.

Just last week 58-year-old Yvette Annette Wilson Hughes was hit while crossing Northwest 79th Street. Hughes, who was not walking in the crosswalk, had been trying to weave her way through cars before an eastbound SUV struck her. She went airborne and landed in the center lane, before being hit a second time by a Chevrolet Malibu, which dragged her about 5 to 10 feet. She is at Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital. Police are looking for the driver of a silver Hyundai SUV, who didn't stop...

Older adults and other vulnerable groups, such as children and minorities, are disproportionately affected by pedestrian crashes. Though seniors 65 and over comprise 12.6 percent of the U.S. population, they account for almost 21 percent of pedestrian

March 6-8

Swamp Fest, Weeki Wachee

March 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, 28-29

Bands Brew and BBQ music festival, Orlando

March 7

First Saturday Jam, Barberville

March 7-8

Floral City Strawberry Festival, Floral City

March 13

Friday Family Fest, Melbourne

March 13-22

Sarasota County Fair, Sarasota

March 13-14

Central Florida Dragon Boat Festival, Tavares

March 13-15

Tico Warbird Airshow, Titusville

March 13-22

Firefighters' Indian River County Fair, Vero Beach

March 14

Taste of Oviedo, Oviedo

March 14-15

Manatee Festival of the Arts, Ruskin

March 14-15

Downtown Sarasota Craft Festival, Sarasota

March 20-22

55th Annual Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival, Winter Park

March 21

Cruisin' Downtown DeLand

Classic Car Show, DeLand

March 21-22

The Lakeland Craft Festival, Lakeland

March 21-22

Art and Craft Festival, Flagler Beach

March 21-22

The Sarasota Folk Festival, Osprey

March 22-23

26th Annual Spring Daytona

Turkey Run

March 23-28

Citrus County Fair, Inverness

March 27

Fourth Fridays Art Walk, Sanford

March 27-29

Grant BBQ Fest, Grant

March 28

4th Fridays DeLand Art Walk, DeLand

March 28

Art Walk on Flagler, New Smyrna Beach

March 28

Florida Wildflower & Garden Festival, DeLand

March 28

Kowtown Festival, Kissimmee

March 28-29

Annual Spring Fine Arts Festival, Englewood

March 28-29

Spring Antiques, Collectibles & Crafts Show, Mount Dora

March 28-29

fatalities nationwide. Stated another way: Nationally, the pedestrian fatality rate for older adults is 3.19 per 100,000 people compared with 1.75 for those under 65. For those 75 and older, the fatality rate jumps to 3.96 per 100,000.

Florida's older pedestrian fatality rate stands at 3.92 per 100,000, higher than the national average but, lower than some other states. Hawaii, for instance, has an astonishing 9.75 deaths per 100,000 people...

A March 2011 report prepared for Miami-Dade's public works department by the Lehman Center for Transportation Research at Florida International University cited high curbs, uneven pavements, narrow sidewalks, bad lighting and poorly labeled crosswalks at signalized intersections as impediments for elderly pedestrians. The "Traffic Safety Plan For Elderly Pedestrians" also identified the 10 most dangerous locations for older pedestrians in Miami-Dade, with a list of suggestions for improvement.

Some of these suggestions have already been implemented, said Antonio Cotarelo, deputy director of the county's public works department. On West Flagler Street and 97th Avenue, the No. 1 intersection on the 2011 list, a midblock crosswalk has been installed, street lighting and signage updated and the sidewalk improved, Cotarelo said.

The department is well aware of the problems, he added, "but we are doing this on a case by case basis...as money becomes available."

...Another program, the Safe Routes to Age in Place, a partnership between the Health Foundation of South Florida, the Alliance for Aging, ReServe Miami, Urban Health Partnerships and Miami-Dade County, is using a Pfizer Foundation grant to foster accessible and safe transportation options for older adults. The Alliance for Aging also launched a Safe Steps-Pasos Seguros campaign...

Ways to improve pedestrian safety

- Lowering speed limits in designated roads where there's a high volume of pedestrian traffic.
- Widening sidewalks and bike lanes
- Installing more frequent crosswalks and signals on long blocks.
- Narrowing traffic lanes.
- Building larger medians, or installing refuge islands, for pedestrians to land if the light changes before they get to the other end.
- Lengthening crosswalk time at designated intersections, from the typical 20 seconds to 30.
- Limiting right turns on red.
- Enhancing all-red light crosswalks in high-pedestrian traffic areas so walkers can cross in any direction when a light changes.
- Improving crosswalk markings, including adding lighted crosswalks.
- Improving lighting along streets and walkways.
- Enforcing speed limits and other traffic laws consistently.
- Eliminating clutter, such as signs, trees and other distractions, to increase visibility for both walkers and drivers.
- Installing overpasses and underpasses."

-- Ana Veciana-Suarez, Miami Herald

[Read many more details in article here](#)

Battle at Narcoossee Mill, St Cloud
March 28-29
50th Annual DeLand Outdoor Art Festival, DeLand

South West

March 3-28
Sanibel Music Festival, Sanibel Island
Through March 8
Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair, North Fort Myers
March 5-7
Sanibel Shell Fair and Show, Sanibel Island
March 13-15
64th Annual Art Under Oaks, Vero Beach
March 13-15
All-Florida Championship Rodeo, Arcadia
March 14-15
The Bonita Springs National Art Festival, Bonita Springs
March 14-15
Fort Myers Beach Shrimp Festival and Parade, Fort Myers Beach
March 17
Fishermen's Village Annual St Patrick's Day Celebration, Punta Gorda
March 19
Downtown Gallery Walk, Punta Gorda
March 21
Lee County Reading Festival, Fort Myers
March 21-22
Peace River National Arts Festival, Punta Gorda
March 21-22
Downtown Naples Festival of the Arts, Naples
March 28
Florida Wiener Dog Derby, North Fort Myers
March 28
Swamp Buggy Nights, Naples

South East and Keys

March 1
Suntrust Sunday Jazz Brunch, Fort Lauderdale
March 1
Marathon Miami, Miami Beach
March 6-15
Miami International Film Festival, Miami
March 7
Conch Shell Blowing Contest, Key West
March 7-8
27th Annual Art Fest by the Sea, Juno Beach
March 7-8
Conquistador Cup Regatta, Punta Gorda



Photo: Grant Jefferies, Bradenton Herald

Placemaking "Experts: Anna Maria Island needs paid parking, employee housing"

"Land-use experts recommended Friday that Anna Maria Island officials charge for parking on the island, provide employee housing and take ownership of their identity as an 'Old Florida' beach community..."

'We certainly got what we were looking for,' said Holmes Beach Mayor Bob Johnson, 'and that was an informed, objective analysis of our situation and the means to move forward.'

Bradenton Beach Mayor William Shearon said he feels encouraged...



Photo: Grant Jefferies, Bradenton Herald

The presentation, which marked the end of a week-long, \$130,000 study on the seven-mile barrier island, was filled with findings and suggestions that gave hope to officials and many residents struggling to cope with AMI's pressures. The issues afflicting the island include traffic congestion, parking woes and the proliferation of short-term vacation rentals being built in residential neighborhoods.

One by one, panelists from the Urban Land Institute, a nonprofit education-and-research organization focused on land use, stood behind a pulpit in CrossPointe Fellowship Church.

'Anna Maria Island has a finite amount of land and is essentially fully built out, thus the island's physical future can best be characterized as evolving, deliberate, strategic and controlled redevelopment,' said Alex Rose, ULI panel chairman and senior vice president of development for Continental Development Corp., an El Segundo, Calif.-based real estate development company.

Klaus Philipsen, president of Baltimore-based ArchPlan Inc., spoke about the island's position as an 'Old Florida' community and the idea of placemaking, which he described as preserving the good places and making good and memorable new places.

'You might think it would be actually better if fewer people would like Anna Maria

March 7-June 8
36th Annual Week of the Ocean Festival Sea-son, Fort Lauderdale
March 10-15
Okeechobee County Fair, Okeechobee
March 12-April 5
Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition, Miami
March 13-14
Delray Beach St Patrick's Day Festival, Delray Beach
March 13-15
Fairchild's 13th Annual International Orchid Festival, Coral Gables
March 14-15
Original Marathon Seafood Festival, Marathon
March 13-14
Historic House Tours, Key West
March 15
St Patrick's Day Parade & Irish Fun Celebration, Jensen Beach
March 19
Third Thursday Art Walk, Islamorada
March 28
TurtleFest, Juno Beach
March 28-29
ArtsFest, Stuart
March 28-29
24th Annual Florida Keys Island Fest, Islamorada

North

March 3-31
Garden Month 2015 at Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville
March 6
Moon Over the Mounds, Crystal River
March 6-8
Lions Seafood Festival, St Augustine
March 7-8
Azalea Festival, Palatka
March 7-8
The Gulf Coast Renaissance Faire, Pensacola
March 13-15
Nature Coast Civil War Reenactment, Crystal River
March 13-15
Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, Amelia Island
March 13-15
The St Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival, St Augustine
March 14
Gate River Run, Jacksonville
March 14-20
Paddle Florida, Lee
March 19-22

Island, but I want to submit that that's not a winning strategy,' Philipsen said.

Through design and placemaking, Philipsen said island officials and residents can get visitors to care for and become vested in AMI..."

-- Amaris Castillo, Bradenton Herald

[Read entire article here](#)



Photo: Scenic America

Scenic America Rhode Island releases design guide for highway beautification practices

[Download a copy of the report here \(.pdf\)](#)

"...Governor Chafee's administration has made highway beautification a priority, installing new 'Discover Beautiful Rhode Island' welcome signs, a collection of murals on Interstates 95 and 195, and intensive new plantings north of the 'S Curves' on I-95 in Pawtucket. These projects have been recognized by Scenic America as leading the way in highway beautification. The Pawtucket River Bridge and the Route 24 Sakonnet River Bridge in Tiverton and Portsmouth have won major awards for architectural significance and aesthetic beauty.

'Rhode Island is a beautiful State, and our major roadway corridors should be as well,' Governor Chafee said. 'It is my hope that the guide will be valuable in the development of future projects and management practices that enhance the aesthetic appeal of our roadways in a manner worthy of our beautiful state'..."

-- Scenic America

[Visit Scenic America website](#)



Suwannee Spring Fest, Live Oak
March 21
Wild Azalea Festival, White
Springs
March 28
Annual Springtime Tallahassee,
Tallahassee
March 28-29
Cedar Key's 51st Annual Fine
Arts Festival, Cedar Key
March 28-29
Old Town Art & Craft Show, St
Augustine

[For many more events and
details please visit the Orlando
Times Travel Calendar here](#)



Scenic Nevada "City says no to Summit; Community makes A difference

"In an amazing victory for scenic and neighborhood preservation, the Reno City Council voted unanimously Wednesday to deny Summit Sierra's request for a big, bright digital sign at the mall that would have flashed changing advertising messages, 24/7.

The vote was greeted by a round of applause from the standing room only crowd at city hall who came downtown and stayed late to tell the city council that the proposed sign didn't fit with the scenic mountain views, natural open spaces, dark skies and nearby scenic byway along Mt. Rose Highway, considered a gateway to the Sierras and Lake Tahoe...

Three-Hour Public Hearing

...About 25 residents representing a cross section of business, political and social interests came to comment against the sign from lawyers, engineers, astronomers, an accountant and a construction worker to the Sierra Club, dark sky enthusiasts and the South WashoeDEMS. One South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley County Advisory Board member spoke in favor and another one against. Only a handful of others favored the sign, including a speaker for the Reno/Sparks Chamber of Commerce, two mall merchants and two sign industry representatives.

If approved, the digital sign would have flashed rotating advertising specials for various tenants in the mall towards drivers traveling in either direction on Interstate 580. The ads would have flipped every 10 seconds until 11 p.m. and every 30 minutes from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

...Scenic Nevada was given 15 minutes to present its appeal and convinced the council that the digital sign was not appropriate at the mall as Summit contended and digital billboards are prohibited in the future, contradicting city staff's assertion that they were allowed "by right."

Summit officials had said up to four or five digital billboards could be erected on the 56-acre site, but they would agree to prohibit them, if Reno were to grant a permit for one digital sign at the back of the mall facing the freeway. City staff initially had rejected the digital sign then reversed itself to okay the deal and recommended the planning commission and city council approve the Summit sign.

Scenic Nevada told the city council Wednesday night that the deal between Summit and city staff was meaningless because billboards are prohibited on the Summit site under the city's billboard laws.

When questioned by Councilwoman Jenny Brekhus, planning staff admitted that Scenic Nevada was right and agreed that Summit could not erect any digital billboards after all.

Scenic Nevada told the council that the Summit site was annexed from Washoe County's jurisdiction by the city in 2004. Reno's billboard code says that the city must follow the county's policies on billboards in place when annexation took place. At that time no billboards were allowed in the area.

Apparently, city staff did not check the city's billboard code before it reversed its recommendation to allow the sign in exchange for Summit's agreement to prohibit billboards there. Without the threat of new billboards on the site, the staff's 'primary' reason to approve an incompatible sign evaporated..."

[Visit Scenic Nevada website here](#)