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County Commission OKs Three Road Projects

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BARTOW | Polk County commissioners voted Wednesday to approve a \$13.9 million bid to widen Berkely Road from Old Dixie Highway to Pace Road.

Hubbard Construction of Winter Park was the low bidder.

Construction is scheduled to begin by mid-summer, said Wendy Kluge, director of transportation engineering. It's scheduled to be finished in 18 months.

The 4.4-mile project will be the latest improvement in this thoroughfare that serves the Auburndale area. Pace Road will serve as an access road to the planned University of South Florida Polytechnic campus.

The first phase of the project from U.S. 92 to Old Dixie Highway was completed in May 2005.

The next phase will run from Pace Road to County Road 559A and involves a new alignment of CR 559A from Berkeley Road to County Road 559 south of the Interstate 4 interchange.

Kluge said the improvements will eventually provide a better route for truck traffic and is expected to reduce truck traffic through downtown Auburndale in addition to improving traffic flow in that area of the county.

Commissioners also approved an \$11.1 million bid by Mid-State Paving of Auburndale to construct the next phase of Ernie Caldwell Boulevard and Pine Tree Trail, which would provide a new route between U.S. 27 and County Road 54 in the Four Corners area to relieve local traffic congestion on U.S. 27. It's expected to take 22 months to finish.

In addition, commissioners approved a \$2 million bid from Denson Construction of Lakeland to replace the Helena Road bridge near Winter Haven to improve safety and to better accommodate boat traffic in the Eloise-Winterset canal. It's expected to take five months to finish.

