

Hercules Avenue North Road Closure at CSXT Railroad Fact Sheet

Why is this railroad crossing being replaced? The Hercules Avenue (CR 425) railroad reconstruction project is a part of a systematic maintenance and railway improvement program between Pinellas County and CSX Transportation Inc. (CSXT). Public railroad-highway grade crossings in the county are identified for replacement according to the age or condition of the crossing.

This high volume crossing was last reconstructed in 1998 using rubber crossing pads that typically have a lifespan of 10-12 years. The scope of work and improvements will include replacement of the rails and rail bed. The new railroad crossing will be constructed with reinforced concrete that has an extended lifespan compared to traditional grade crossing materials. Hercules Avenue roadway will also be reconstructed to improve safety.

When and where will the road be closed? The road closure is tentatively set to begin on late February or early March, 2017 and will last 3 to 4 weeks. The segment of Hercules Avenue N. to be closed will be approximately 200 feet either side of the railroad tracks between Drew Street and Sunset Point Road. This project requires significant coordination efforts between CSXT and their suppliers and contractors. Pinellas County Communications will keep all information current to the greatest extent possible, with regards to unanticipated delays. Please refer to the project website: www.pinellascounty.org/roadwork.htm for the most up to date information.

Why does it take three or more weeks? Pinellas County can begin reconstruction of the roadway only after CSXT performs their work. The CSXT construction will take between 10 to 14 days. The County's contractor will then reconstruct the entire roadway, including curbing, sidewalks, median, and drainage/utilities, in order to improve safety.

How can I get around the road closure? For through north/south traffic, it is suggested that motorists use either Belcher Road or Keene Road. Local traffic can use other local roads that may be familiar; however, all large trucks must use the designated detour route.

Local traffic, including vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists will be able to access businesses up to the railroad tracks from either direction but will not be able to cross the railroad tracks.

What is Pinellas County doing to keep traffic moving? Fourteen days prior to the road closure, variable message boards will be installed at the railroad crossing to alert motorists to the planned closure. This will give plenty of time for planning alternate routes. In addition, an extensive notification and coordination effort has been made with all Public Safety agencies to ensure EMS, Fire Departments and Law Enforcement services remain unaffected.

The entire process will be closely monitored by the County's Project Management Team and the Traffic Control Department to ensure that things are moving quickly and smoothly.