

# Busch Boulevard Work May Start In Fall

**TAMPA** — Busch Boulevard, one of the city's ugliest roads, is scheduled to get a major facelift this year.

"It's all green lights," project manager John Novak said. "We'll be completing the design plans by spring and ready to put it out to bid by the summer. We should start construction in the fall."

The Florida Department of Transportation, Tampa and Hillsborough County have budgeted \$18 million, the bulk of which will go to repave the six-lane boulevard. A significant portion will go for safety improvements and beautification along the 4-mile stretch from Florida Avenue to 56th Street.

The FDOT plans to add streetlights between Nebraska Avenue and 15th Street. Sidewalks will be added near the Interstate 275 interchange, and some medians will be closed, Novak said. Decorative, textured crosswalks and new pedestrian crossing signals will be added at most major intersections.

The final plan will draw from a master plan developed during a series of public meetings in 2004. It calls for tropical plants and palms in the medians, but one of the more unique elements — animal-shaped topiaries — may not make the cut.

"We'll have to wait and see," Novak said. "With the FDOT funding this project, I don't think you'll see too many frills."

*Laura Kinsler*