

What's That Cost? I-95 Sound Wall

Sound Wall Quiets Neighborhood; Costs Millions



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NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. -- The Florida Department of Transportation is building a sound wall in northern Palm Beach County to block the increasing noise from Interstate 95 as a portion of the highway is widened from six lanes to 10 lanes.

"It was very loud. You couldn't have your windows open and get fresh air without the traffic," said North Palm Beach Heights resident Kimberly Brown.

Brown lives fewer than 50 yards from the near complete sound wall.

The 22-foot wall stretches from the Donald Ross Road exit to the Indian Creek Golf Course, just south of the Indiantown Road exit.



This sound wall protects a northern Palm Beach County neighborhood from traffic on I-95. It costs more than \$5 million.

Since the wall was erected at the end of Brown's dead-end street, she says life has been more peaceful.

"Ever since they went up, it's great," said Brown.

According to the FDOT, whenever an interstate is expanded or a new major state road is built, a sound study must be completed to protect homes, schools, parks and churches.

The sound wall in northern Palm Beach County costs \$5.3 million. The project is federally funded by the Florida Highway Administration.

A second sound wall that stretches six-tenths of a mile between the PGA Boulevard exit and the Donald Ross Road exit is being built using \$1.82 million in federal funds. The wall consists of four smaller walls between Military Trail and Hood Road. These walls were completed in March 2009, and no more walls will be built on this project.

The FDOT said the sound walls will offer an economic boost to the community which they protect.

"(The wall) will actually increase the value to some of the homes and stabilize the community economically," said FDOT spokesperson Alicia De Fago.

Brown, a renter, is not concerned about the property values. She simply wants to open her windows and sleep comfortably -- no matter the cost.

"(It's) worth it for me," said Brown.