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MANATEE COUNTY, Fla.- Construction is underway to put a bridge over the Manatee River at Fort Hamer. Upper Manatee River Road and Fort Hamer Road will also get additional sidewalks and paved bike lanes, among other improvements according to Trudy Gerena--community outreach director for Manatee County, "there will be an additional right and left turn lane at each intersection. There also will be re-surfacing the existing pavement and will also make sure the road is twenty-four feet across."

Gerena also says nineteen piers will span the river, including two on the end called bents. Both are vertical structures that will help support the bridge deck.

"They are working on three of the piers right now. they're just on the edge of the river getting ready to go into the water probably within the next few weeks."

Robert Pacurew lives about a mile from where the bridge will start. He says the construction is not a hindrance at all and once the bridge is complete--it will only be beneficial to local residents.

"Reduces the amount of traffic on 301 and allows residents in this area to get to Route 64 more easily."

Construction is expected to be complete in early 2017.