

Major traffic work to continue in 2008

With dozens of projects in the offing, city also keeps east-west and north-south connectors in the mix

Major infrastructure work – some storm-related and some involving projects that have been talked about for years – will begin taking shape in 2008 and will continue for the next several years, Mayor A.J. Holloway announced in his State of the City address in February.

Holloway said motorists will see a complete repaving of Irish Hill Drive and the Biloxi portion of Pass Road, two major east-west corridors, in 2008, and the city hopes to begin construction on widening the last phase of Popp's Ferry Road, from Cedar Lake Road to Lamey Road, where property acquisition is in the works.

Additionally, Howard Avenue will be rebuilt from MLK Boulevard to Myrtle Street, design work will wrap up on improvements on Brodie and Brashier roads, and boulevards are planned at Veterans Avenue in west Biloxi and Pine Street in east Biloxi. The new Pine Street thoroughfare, in fact, will connect to Back Bay Boulevard, creating a new access route from Point Cadet to Back Bay and I-110.

"In 2008," Holloway said, "Biloxi residents will see a continuation of major thoroughfare improvements that move traffic and move the economy."

The mayor also announced that initial work is underway to outline a federally funded initiative towards making Popp's Ferry a bonafide north-south corridor to connect U.S. 90 and I-10.

The mayor has asked Gov. Haley Barbour to help secure funding for an environmental assessment for another much-discussed project, the construction of a new east-west corridor to span the Gulf Coast.

"These east-west and north-south corridors are not going to be easy," Holloway declared. "They are going to take years of planning and millions of dollars, but I think we need to continue to do the ground work

because they are very important to our future."

Major infrastructure improvements – whether in streets and drainage, new roads or new schools, help move traffic and the economy, Holloway said, pointing to the tremendous growth on Cedar Lake Road.

"You're seeing this huge amount of private investment out on Cedar-Popp's because they don't have the issues like flood insurance and elevations that are slowing the recovery in other areas of our city," Holloway said.

"You're also seeing this area blossom because of the tremendous amount of improvements we made in streets, drainage, infrastructure, the sports complex and let's not forget the new high school and elementary school.

"Our role in city government is to provide all of the essentials to give you an outstanding quality of life. Our role is to set the table for economic development. And you're going to continue to see more of that."



The city of Biloxi is planning hundreds of dollars in infrastructure work, primarily in storm-surge areas of the peninsula and the Eagle Point area. Here, Public Works crews install a new water line on Kensington Drive on Back Bay.

City seeks hundreds of millions for surge areas

The City of Biloxi is applying to federal and state authorities for at least \$355 million in funds to replace infrastructure in areas inundated by the Katrina storm surge.

"This would allow us to replace and repair streets, drainage, water and sewer, and other infrastructure in all areas inundated by the storm surge," Mayor A.J. Holloway said, noting that the work would envelop the Biloxi peninsula and include a significant portion of Eagle Point.

"This would be a multi-year undertaking that would see tremendous work – and inconvenience throughout our city."

The city plans to divvy up the surge areas into grids to help facilitate the massive amount of work.

Said Holloway: "The initial figure is \$355 million, but what we've found is that once projects are put out to bid, the numbers could double. In fact, once all is said and done, we fully expect to see more than a billion dollars in improvements in our city."

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