

= Homestead Extension of Florida 's Turnpike =

The Homestead Extension of Florida 's Turnpike (HEFT) , designated as the Ronald Reagan Turnpike and originally known as the West Dade Expressway , is a north ? south free @-@ flow toll road southern extension of the similarly tolled Florida 's Turnpike . The 48 @-@ mile @-@ long (77 km) expressway runs around the west and north sides of the Greater Miami area , extending from U.S. Route 1 in Florida City (near Homestead) to the Turnpike mainline four miles north of the Golden Glades Interchange . The road carries the hidden designation of State Road 821 (SR 821) . It was opened in stages between 1973 and 1974 , after the main line of the Turnpike was completed , and is used by both commuters and travelers to the Florida Keys and Everglades National Park . Due to its path , it acts as a de facto outer beltway for Miami . Unlike other Florida 's Turnpike Enterprise highways , it is treated as if it were part of Florida 's Turnpike mainline by highway signs and exit numbers , despite its separate state road number .

= = Route description = =

The road begins at a partial interchange with US 1 in Florida City next to the Florida Keys Outlet Center , where the road heads northeast as a four lane expressway . Travelers to here from the northern parts of the Turnpike Extension can continue south along US 1 to the Florida Keys or the Everglades National Park (via SR 9336) . This point also marks the beginning of the HEFT 's hidden designation of State Road 821 .

Between Florida City and Cutler Bay , the HEFT acts as a bypass for the communities along US 1 . The first 16 miles of the tollway are located within mostly new residential developments that were constructed after Hurricane Andrew , which destroyed most of the area in 1992 . Some farms line the rest of this stretch . The first interchange northbound is Campbell Drive / Southwest 312th Street in Homestead , which allows travelers to access the Homestead Hospital and the Homestead @-@ Miami Speedway . The Turnpike then has an exit with Southwest 288th Street at mile 5 , providing a connection to the Homestead Air Reserve Base , before leaving Homestead and entering parts of unincorporated Miami @-@ Dade County . At mile 6 , the tollway has a southbound exit and northbound entry for Southwest 137th Avenue , with the HEFT heading east @-@ northeast until the exit with SR 989 (Allapattah Road / Southwest 112th Avenue) at mile 9 . The road then curves to a northerly direction towards the Homestead Toll Gantry , the first of four on the route , at mile 10 . It then enters Cutler Bay , where the highway is also known as the John F. Cosgrove Highway for the next five miles . The first exit in Cutler Bay is with Southwest 216th Street / Cutler Ridge Blvd at mile 11 , followed by another at Caribbean Blvd at mile 12 . Following exit 11 , the turnpike widens to six lanes . The tollway then crosses back over US 1 at the Southland Mall and leaves Cutler Bay . Continuing north , the HEFT serves SR 994 (Quail Roost Drive) at exit 13 and gains another lane in each direction . This is followed by SR 992 (Coral Reef Drive (Southwest 152nd Street)) at exit 16 , which marks the northern terminus of the John F. Cosgrove Highway .

The tollway passes through older , predominantly residential areas for the next ten miles . Between exits 16 and 17 , the Turnpike Extension swells to ten lanes ; this section of the tollway also has the highest traffic count at 172 @, @ 000 vehicles per day (as of 2014) . Past exit 17 , where SR 874 (Don Shula Expressway) leaves the HEFT to connect to SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) , the tollway drops back to six lanes and soon reaches an interchange with Southwest 120th Street at mile 19 . Just north of the Southwest 120th Street exit , still at mile 19 , lies the Snapper Creek Service plaza , which is located on the center median with access from both directions and is the only plaza on the extension ; unlike the more robust services along the mainline , it only offers a convenience store inside the gas station . The next exit is with SR 94 (Kendall Drive) , followed by the Bird Road Toll Gantry at mile 23 ; from here , the HEFT takes a beeline path north for the next ten miles . The next exit is with SR 976 (Southwest 40th Street) , after which the HEFT gains two extra lanes in preparation for the next two exits . After the tollway forms the western end of the Florida International University campus , it meets the Tamiami Trail (US 41) at exit 25 , and then SR 836 (Dolphin Expressway) at exit 26 in Fontainebleau , which provides access to Miami

International Airport eastbound .

North of this interchange , the Turnpike Extension enters a stretch where it forms the border between undeveloped Miami @-@ Dade County to the west and residential developments to the east for the rest of its journey in the county , its width varying between six and eight lanes , with exits at Northwest 12th Street at mile 26 , Northwest 41st Street at mile 29 , and at Northwest 74th Street at mile 31 . Half a mile north of Northwest 74th Street lies the Okeechobee Toll gantry , with the HEFT then intersecting Northwest 106th Street / Beacon Station Boulevard at mile 34 . The tollway starts to curve in a north @-@ easterly direction and comes to exit 35 with US 27 . Afterwards , the expressway fully enters an undeveloped portion of Miami @-@ Dade County until the next exit at I @-@ 75 northbound at exit 39 , which is a northbound only exit , with the southbound direction of the Turnpike Extension receiving some traffic from I @-@ 75 south . North of the I @-@ 75 interchange , the HEFT becomes a four @-@ laned highway again . It crosses the Broward County line , entering the suburban community of Miramar , and then curves eastward . The expressway has an interchange with SR 823 (Red Road) at exit 43 , after which the Turnpike Extension is just one block north of the Miami @-@ Dade County line for the remainder of the tollway 's length . Residential and commercial developments line both sides of the HEFT through here . The next exit is with SR 817 (University Drive) at exit 46 , allowing access to Sun Life Stadium and the Calder Race Course . The Miramar Toll gantry then follows the interchange before the Turnpike Extension ends four miles north of the Golden Glades Interchange at the mainline of Florida 's Turnpike .

= = Tolls = =

The HEFT is an all @-@ electronic toll road that only accepts tolls via SunPass transponders or billing by the toll @-@ by @-@ plate at a higher cost . The toll road does not accept cash . The toll gantries are located at the former toll plazas , which closed on February 19 , 2011 . As of July 1 , 2015 , the total cost for a two @-@ axled vehicle to drive the whole length of the Turnpike Extension is \$ 4 @.@ 24 with SunPass and \$ 5 @.@ 28 via the toll @-@ by @-@ plate system . The HEFT has a toll gantry approximately every 12 miles (19 km) , compared to toll plazas every 45 miles (72 km) on average on the mainline . In addition to the mainline toll gantries , most interchanges have individual toll gantries for entering or exiting vehicles ; typically , these can be found either on the northbound entry and southbound exit , or the southbound entry and northern exit . Most of these gantries charge \$ 0 @.@ 53 via SunPass or \$ 0 @.@ 79 via toll @-@ by @-@ plate per entry or exit , but the Allapattah Road , Northwest 74th Street and Northwest 27th Avenue interchanges charge \$ 0 @.@ 79 via SunPass or \$ 1 @.@ 06 via toll @-@ by @-@ plate .

= = Services = =

The Snapper Creek service plaza is the lone service plaza on the HEFT , located at mile 19 in the median of the expressway . It is accessible from both directions . The service plaza is open 24 hours a day , featuring a gas station and a convenience store .

= = History = =

After the Turnpike mainline was completed in 1964 , the Turnpike Authority (precursor to Florida 's Turnpike Enterprise) explored several extensions to the Turnpike system , including an expressway in western Dade County from Florida City to the Turnpike mainline at the Dade / Broward county line . Construction on the tollway began in July 1971 . The northernmost thirteen miles of the tollway between US 27 and the Turnpike mainline was open to traffic on May 1 , 1973 , at a cost of \$ 22 million and a \$ 0 @.@ 40 toll to motorists . During the first half of 1974 , the expressway between Campbell Drive (SW 312th Street) and US 27 was opened in five stages , with the road running uninterrupted from the Turnpike in Miramar to Homestead on May 20 , 1974 , with the last section to Florida City connecting to US 1 completed later in 1974 . The total toll of the expressway was \$ 0 @.@ 80 .

The HEFT has used mile @-@ based exit numbers and an open toll collection system since its opening ; both concepts that were implemented on the Turnpike mainline in the late 1980s and early 1990s .

On April 27 , 1986 , the Okeechobee toll plaza opened with a \$.25 toll , with the toll plaza at the US 27 exit being removed , and tolls at the Miramar plaza being lowered from \$.40 to \$.25 . On February 2 , 1989 , tolls on the Expressway doubled from \$ 1 @.@ 00 to \$ 2 @.@ 00 , with \$.50 being charged at each toll plaza . Toll hikes , raising the cost of travelling the expressway from \$ 2 to \$ 3 were supposed to take effect on the Homestead Extension in 1993 to match the rest of the Turnpike , but Hurricane Andrew 's impact in the area in 1992 had the state delay toll hikes on the highway until July 9 , 1995 . In 1997 , the Bird Road toll plaza was reconfigured to its current two part form to accommodate the then @-@ bottleneck section of the expressway . The SunPass electronic toll collection system was implemented during 1999 , with the toll plazas being reconfigured to allow lanes dedicated to transponder users . A toll hike took effect on March 7 , 2004 , increasing the toll rate for non SunPass users to \$ 4 for a full length trip , with SunPass users still using the 1995 toll rates .

The portion of the HEFT between Exits 11 (Cutler Ridge Boulevard) and 16 (State Road 992) was designated the " John F. Cosgrove Highway " in 2008 by the Florida Legislature , following his death in 2006 . A lawyer and former legislator , Cosgrove was also the first mayor of Cutler Bay , a city along the HEFT . He was instrumental in passing legislation to keep insurers from leaving the state following Hurricane Andrew .

On February 19 , 2011 , the HEFT ceased cash toll collections , becoming an exclusively electronic toll road , a move that was announced in November 2009 . The manned toll plazas were converted into all electronic toll gantries , and the only ways to pay are either by SunPass transponders or billing by the toll @-@ by @-@ plate program .

In 2007 , legislation was passed in Florida to index toll rates across the state to the national Consumer price index (CPI) , to be enacted by the end of June , 2012 . As a result , the toll rates on the HEFT were raised on June 24 , 2012 , an increase of 11 @.@ 7 % to reflect the previous five years . In keeping with the legislation , SunPass and toll @-@ by @-@ plate rates were then raised again on July 1 , 2013 by 2 @.@ 1 % . Since the indexing of tolls to the national CPI , the entry and exit toll rates have risen by approximately 30 cents , in some cases more than double their pre @-@ 2012 rates .

= = Exit list = =

Despite being designated by the Florida Department of Transportation as a separate route (SR 821) from the main portion of Florida 's Turnpike (SR 91) , the HEFT 's exit numbers are regarded to be a continuation of the Turnpike 's mainline .