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The SC 133 (College Avenue) road widening and bridge replacement project might face a delay of up to two months. The project was initially set to begin in early summer.

SC 133 bridge project might be delayed

BY GREG OLIVER
THE JOURNAL

CLEMSON — A SC 133 (College Avenue) road widening and bridge replacement project might not begin this summer after all.

Rob Perry, program director for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, said it all depends on how far Thrift Development wants to go on a redesign for value engineering as well as final reviews and approvals of the bridge design by Norfolk Southern and the SCDOT.

"My hope is that it will begin this summer but, at this point, I am unable to give a firm date when shovels will hit the soil," Perry said.

Officials say the project is a system upgrade that will greatly improve traffic flow at the intersection of SC 133 and US Highway 123. The existing railroad bridge will be removed and a temporary bridge installed for trains to use as well as an additional track for future light rail capabilities. The project will widen SC 133 to add two lanes.

In 2008, Clemson learned it would receive $6.14 million in federal stimulus money to go with the $4.5 million the city had already budgeted for the project. While the actual cost of the project is only estimated at $8 million, the remaining $2.5 million will be applied to the Sheep Farm Road project in Oconee County.

Perry said the project was awarded to Thrift Development of Seneca last month.

"Thrift has hired a consultant to do a more thorough plan review to see if they can make some changes to construct the project faster than the estimated 21 months, reduce costs and potentially eliminate the steel piles the plan calls for," Perry said. "I'm not sure if there will be any actual plan changes, but SCDOT is committed to getting the best project we can."

Clemson City Engineer Kent Guthrie said it could take "a couple of months" before the project gets under way.

While the bridge replacement project remains in a holding pattern, Perry said right of way acquisition for the Sheep Farm Road project is wrapping up.

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