



Photos by Michael Heinz/Journal & Courier

Maximus Grimes (left) and Clint Moore sport Park East Boulevard T-shirts Thursday as they get ready to open the new road with a fire truck ride. Connecting Indiana 26 to McCarty Lane, Park East is an alternative to Creasy Lane.

New eastside route opens

By CURT SLYDER

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Shortly after 10 a.m. Thursday, a Lafayette fire truck carrying Mayor Tony Roswarski and a couple of young children representing future drivers became the first official vehicle to travel the city's newest road.

Roswarski and other city dignitaries cut the ribbon to open the new Park East Boulevard. The mayor and two children from Tippecanoe County Child Care East then hopped aboard a fire truck for a brief journey up and back down the road.

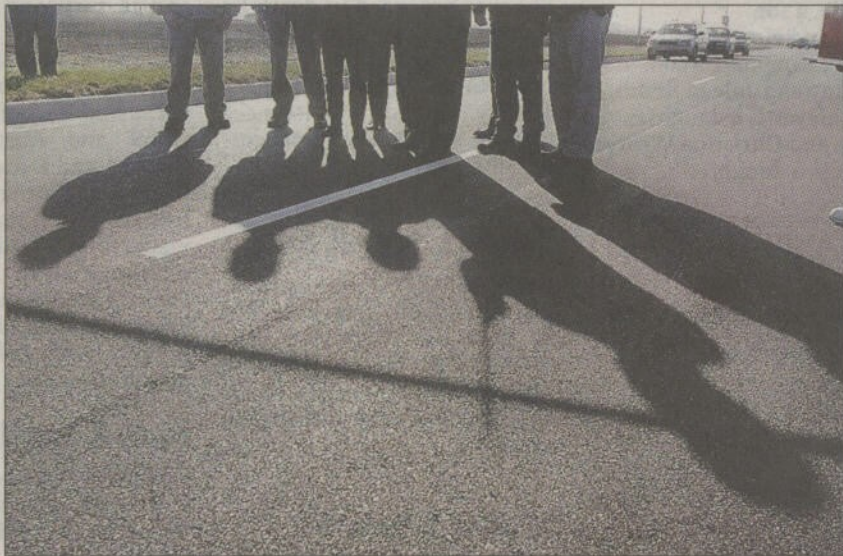
Located east of Creasy Lane, the four-lane road is being touted as a north/south alternative between Indiana 26 and McCarty Lane.

"This .65-mile extension of Park East Boulevard is very important to Lafayette's growth and to our economic development," Roswarski said. "And we also know, I don't think anybody will argue, that certainly everybody likes traffic that flows."

In addition to taking some of the pressure off the busy intersection of Ind. 26 and Creasy Lane, the road is hoped to eventually become a major north/south thoroughfare between Indiana 38 and Ind. 26, the mayor said.

No timetable for that extension has been determined.

The \$4.5 million road was paid for through a mixture of funds from a city tax increment financing district, sewer funds and private funds from



As he cuts the ribbon, Mayor Tony Roswarski casts the longest shadow.

developers of the new Cascada Business Park that surrounds the new road.

Officials hope the new road will spur development in the new park.

"It would normally take 15 to 18 months to build a project like this," said city engineer Jenny Bonner. This project "was accomplished in a mere eight months."

But Clint Moore and Maximus Grimes hardly noticed the new road. Both four-year-olds were all smiles as they rode in the fire truck.

Moore said he liked "blowing the siren."



Thomas Maxfield/Journal & Courier