

## **Construction on I-73 could begin by 2012**

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Breaking ground on Interstate 73 could be four years away.

Talk of creating the major artery has drawn interest for more than a decade.

Now it looks like construction could begin by 2012. ([Click here to read the Summary of Economic Impact](#))

On Tuesday, an independent consulting firm from Richmond traveled to different parts of Southwest Virginia sharing results on exactly how the interstate could jog the local economy.

First off, it's estimated about 5,000 people would be hired for the initial construction phase.

"Once the interstate is built, we expect to see about 2,300 jobs just from ongoing operations, gas stations, and restaurants," says Dr. Christine Chmura, with Chmura Economics & Analytics.

Analysts predict I-73 would take roughly nine years to complete. They say the road would pay for itself in 10 years. The total cost would be around \$4 billion.

Finding funding is still a key concern.