County Commissioners, but no agreement could be reached as to what kind of material to use. It was at this stage when the panic in the fall of 1907 spread over the country and the whole matter was temporarily dropped.

Again the road question was revived soon after the first of the year (1908) and the matter definitely decided to build the road, a part of it shell and the balance brick. Actual work started in May, 1908. On December 13, 1908, though the road was only partially completed, an automobile party headed by Charles A. Clark passed over it, making the run from South Jacksonville to Pablo Beach in 1 hour and 45 minutes. These were the first automobiles to pass over the future Atlantic Boulevard.

The road continued in a partially completed condition for another year and a half and it was not until July 28, 1910, that the formal opening of the highway was celebrated. A hundred or more decorated cars moved in parade through the down-town streets, then crossed over on the ferry and assembled in South Jacksonville. The christening took place at the new concrete bridge over Little Pottsburg Creek, when Miss Marie Hyde broke a bottle of champagne over the north approach and officially christened the road “Atlantic Boulevard”. The assemblage then drove to the beach to witness automobile racing by local drivers. The ceremonies ended with a brilliant banquet at the Continental Hotel. This celebration marked the completion of the road from South Jacksonville to the end of the Mayport road. Some months later the boulevard was extended to Neptune and a big celebration of the event was held at Pablo.

The building of Atlantic Boulevard was the beginning of highway development in Florida and it started the agitation for highways in the Southeast, for as soon as it was completed scouts were sent out to blaze the way for what then became highly advertised as a prospective Atlanta-Jacksonville highway. This agitation eventually resulted in the construction of the highways out of Jacksonville northward.

The increasing travel over the road to the beach finally began to tell upon its construction and in 12 years it became a patch-work of repairs showing stretches of at least five kinds of paving material. With the growing popularity of the beaches after the Jacksonville-St. Johns River bridge was built the road became entirely inadequate.