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Katy Freeway Reconstruction is on the Fast Track!

In June 2003, the Houston District of the **Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)** began the long awaited reconstruction of the IH 10/Katy Freeway. Almost two years later on March 31, 2005, the **Texas Transportation Commission (TTC)** awarded the eighth of nine major construction contracts associated with the reconstruction program. Although there is one major contract remaining to be awarded in January 2007, the award of the eighth contract represents the start of the last of the major contracts required to meet the anticipated substantial completion date for the IH 10 mainlanes and tollway targeted for December 2008.

In order to stay on schedule to meet the December 2008 date, the contractors must continue to work at the extraordinarily fast pace witnessed since the award of the first contract. This means virtual around the clock construction—24 hours a day, seven days a week with only a few exceptions (i.e. float days and major holidays). Additionally, multiple construction elements (such as right-of-way acquisition, demolition, utility relocations and roadway construction) are happening concurrently, rather than sequentially as typically done under a traditional scenario.

There are significant advantages to accelerating the reconstruction program. The advantages can be realized in terms of time savings, road-user benefit, and overall program cost. Undeniably, there are some cost increases associated with accelerating construction that would not necessarily be included in a traditional construction program approach (i.e. the need for temporary utility adjustments and inflation of right-of-way costs due to eminent needs). By implementing a “fast track” program the reconstruction of IH 10 is slated for completion in six years, compared to the 10-12 years a program of this magnitude would require given traditional construction phasing. Most agree, Houston simply can't afford to wait until 2013 or 2015 to reap the benefits of planned improvements along IH 10.



IH 10/Katy Freeway at Beltway 8

Element of Construction	Duration of Closure of Facility Required for Reconstruction (Days)		Time Savings (Days)
	Fast Track Schedule	Traditional Schedule	
IH10/ Fry Road Intersection	109	256	147
Beltway 8 North to IH 10 West Direct Connector	204	304	100

Sample comparison of time savings using elements of the construction



Construction Program Status

As of March 31, 2005 8 of 9 major contracts associated with the Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program are underway:

Contract A - from Harris-Fort Bend County Line to east of Grand Parkway/SH 99—Contractor Balfour-Beatty Construction (BBC)

Contract B - between Grand Parkway and SH 6—Contractor Williams Brothers Construction of Houston (WB)

Contract C1 - from east of Eldridge to west of SH 6 was awarded to WB on March 31, 2005

Contract C2 - east of Eldridge to east of Kirkwood was awarded to BBC December 16, 2005

Contract D - the IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange—Contractor WB

Contract E1 - east of Campbell to east of Beltway 8 was awarded to WB on January 27, 2005

Contract E2 - east of Campbell to east of Silber was awarded to WB on February 24, 2005

Contract F - the IH 10/IH 610 Interchange—Contractor WB



Website

Check out the Katy Freeway Website for more photographs of the on-going construction along the Katy Freeway at:

www.katyfreeway.org

Contract A Update

Balfour Beatty Construction Company completed their first milestone by closing and reopening the Grand Parkway/SH 99 to traffic in 18 days. This contract has seen significant changes during this period with several major traffic switches occurring. Traffic was switched onto the new IH 10 mainlanes bridge over Grand Parkway/SH 99. Traffic was also switched onto the new IH 10 eastbound mainlanes bridge over US 90/Katy Fort-Bend Road. Along with the switches, the contractor continues work on both the eastbound and westbound frontage roads on the contract.



New IH 10 mainlanes at SH 99

Contract B Update

Williams Brothers Construction Company focused their resources on completing Fry Road intersection and restoring cross-corridor access. The contractor was able to complete the milestone on March 24, 2005. On April 15, the Park Ten intersection was opened. This intersection was the last of three new intersections, including South Greenhouse and Westgreen, to be constructed as part of this contract. Substantial progress was also made on the IH 10 mainlanes over Park Ten Blvd and Fry Road. These mainlanes are expected to be completed within the upcoming month.



Placing beams for the IH 10 mainlanes at Fry road

Contracts C1 and C2

Please refer to sidebar at lower right corner

Contract D

Construction on this contract has continued with significant work being done on the Wilcrest intersection which is the first intersection to be constructed on Contract D. The IH 10 westbound mainlanes work at the Beltway 8 has continued with construction of highway bridge foundation. Pavement has been constructed for the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes between Wilcrest and Kirkwood.

Contracts E1 and E2

Williams Brothers is the contractor for both of the "E" contracts as well as the contractor on the two abutting interchange contracts. On January 27, 2005 the Texas Transportation Commission awarded WB Contract E1, the work between Beltway 8 and Campbell. WB submitted the lowest bid in the amount of \$204 million. On February 24, 2005 the TTC awarded WB Contract E2, the work between Campbell and Silber. WB submitted the lowest bid in the amount of \$159 million which was less than \$5,000 over the engineer's estimate.

WB mobilized their construction crews in February and March, 2005 and began work on both contracts*. The initial phases of work included installation of an asphalt overlay on both the westbound and eastbound mainlanes throughout the project limits and conversion of Old Katy Road throughout the project limits to westbound only (from Campbell to west of Beltway 8)

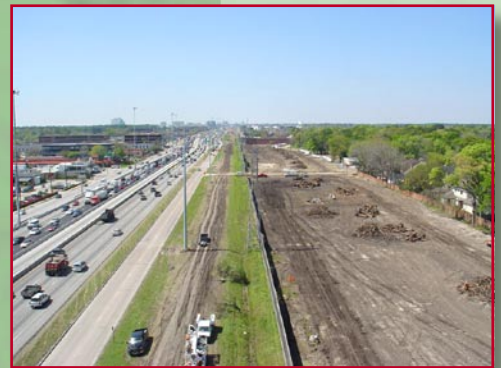
*Because of commonalities in the construction phasing, the two "E" contracts will be referred to as one throughout the construction phase.

Contract F

Several portions of new roadway were opened to traffic during the last period. Traffic was switched onto the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes near the MarqE. The opening of the new IH 10 Tollway/Managed Lanes bridge allowed drivers to access the Northwest Transit Center from IH 10. Work also continued on the northbound and southbound IH 610 mainlanes over IH 10 including the bridges over Memorial, Woodway and Post Oak Blvd intersections and over Buffalo Bayou.



Overview of construction at IH 10/Wilcrest (looking west at Wilcrest).



An aerial photo of the construction area recently cleared by the contractor (looking west towards Campbell).



Contract C1

With a successful bid of \$153 million, WB was approximately eleven percent under the TxDOT estimate. Work began on the project in mid-April 2005. Although there is one major contract remaining to be let in January 2007, the award of Contract C1 represents the start of the last of the major contracts required to meet the anticipated substantial completion date for the IH 10 mainlanes and tollway targeted for December 2008.

Contract C2

With a successful bid of \$84 million, Balfour Beatty Construction Company came in approximately three percent under the TxDOT estimate. Work began on the project in March 2005.



Traffic was recently switched onto new IH 10 westbound mainlanes between North Post Oak and Silber (looking east at North Post Oak).



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Visit the *Katy Freeway* Web site for more FAQs on the program

www.katyfreeway.org/faqs/f_a_q_s.asp

Q. What will happen at the Eldridge Parkway intersection? Will IH 10 be elevated from its current state?

A. Currently, the Eldridge intersection at IH 10 is depressed. The Eldridge intersection will be raised approximately 11-12 feet, to what is commonly referred to as "at grade." The IH 10 mainlanes will cross overhead (as they do now, but higher).

Q. When will construction start at the Dairy Ashford and IH 10 intersection, and what is the estimated time frame for the construction?

A. Freeway reconstruction in the area of Dairy Ashford will be a part of Contract C2 (between Eldridge and Kirkwood), which began late March 2005. The intersection of Dairy Ashford and IH 10 is the first intersection in the contract to be rebuilt and is anticipated to be complete early Fall 2005.

Q. After Fry Road is completed, which intersection will be next, and when will reconstruction of the intersection begin?

A. The next intersections to be reconstructed will be Mason Road and Barker Cypress Road. Construction on Mason Road will begin June/July 2005. The contractor has a maximum of 105 days to reopen and restore cross corridor access at Mason Road. The reconstruction of Barker Cypress Road will start approximately one month later. The contractor has a maximum of 88 days from the time the Barker Cypress bridge is totally closed to reopen and restore cross corridor access.

Q. Will the Silber Road exit off IH 10 be eliminated from either or both the eastbound or westbound side?

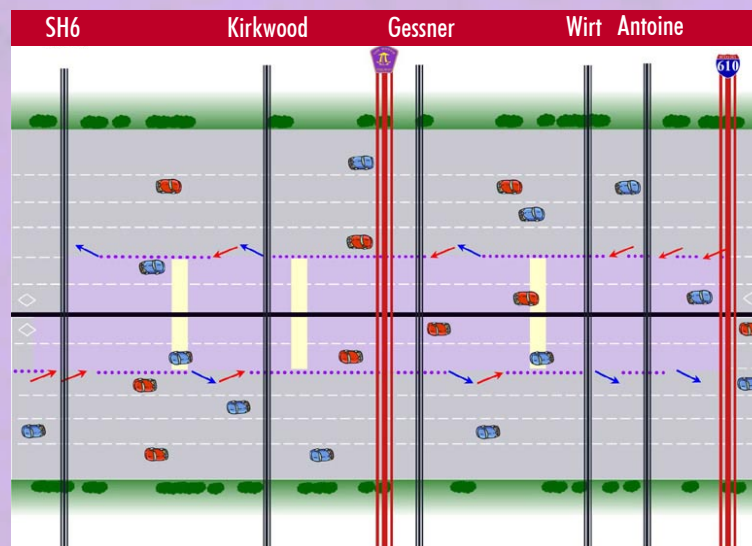
A. The IH 10 eastbound entrance ramp from Silber will be moved east of the IH 10/IH 610 interchange to reduce the merging movements before the ramps to IH 610. The westbound exit ramp to Silber will also be moved east of the IH 10/IH 610 interchange to reduce the merging movements near the off ramps from IH 610. These changes will improve the traffic flow on IH 10, while reducing the risk of accidents close to the interchange.

Q. How will the Katy Tollway operate?

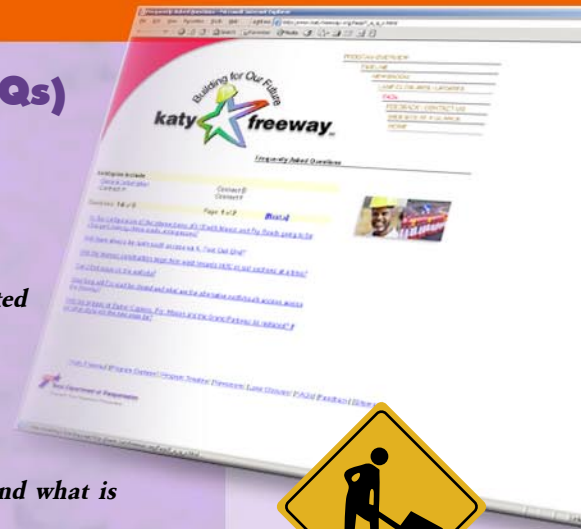
A. The Katy Tollway will be an EZ Tag-only facility with a total of three tolling locations between IH 610 and SH 6. Signage above the toll zones will indicate which lane drivers should in, based on occupancy, as they pass through the tolling zone. During peak hours, when 3+ party vehicles are free, the inside toll zone lane will be designated for travel. METRO buses will also be able to use the toll lanes without charge. The outer lanes will be designated for all other tollway users. Additionally, there will be space provided in the cross section for law enforcement officials to manage compliance.

For more information regarding the **IH 10 Katy Tollway**, view the attached link to the Katy Freeway website.

www.katyfreeway.org/toll_road.html



- Toll Lanes
- General Purpose Lanes
- Toll Zone
- Exit Ramps
- Entrance Ramps



Interesting Facts

- In 2003, the year Katy Freeway reconstruction began, it was estimated that there were 5.1 million person-hours of delay annually due to traffic congestion on the Katy Freeway. The value of that delay and the fuel wasted sitting in congestion amounted to just over \$100 million.
- By 2009, without the freeway improvements and with the projected traffic growth, it is estimated that there would be 9.3 million person-hours of delay equating to a time and fuel value of \$181 million annually.
- With the freeway improvements, it is estimated that annual delay in 2009 and subsequent years will be reduced by 6.8 million person-hours amounting to a savings of \$135 million per year.

Facts and statistics provided by Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) using data compiled from the Urban Mobility Study database.



For more information, contact the:

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