



*"Marking the One Year Anniversary of the Start of Katy Freeway Reconstruction."*

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**One Year Later**

One year ago, the **Houston District of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)** began the long awaited reconstruction of the IH 10/Katy Freeway. The official ground breaking ceremony was held on June 28, 2003 where in the company of more than 150 people, federal, state and local officials marked the beginning of the construction with the symbolic turning of dirt. One year later, three of the nine major construction contracts are well underway, with the fourth, the I-10/Beltway 8 Interchange contract, having recently been awarded on July 29th.

Anyone who has driven along the Katy Freeway over the course of the last twelve months, will likely have noticed that the contractors are working virtually nonstop and swiftly progressing through the various phases of construction. The construction contractors are working hard to stay on-target with their very aggressive, fast-paced schedules and are on track to finish according to schedule and are meeting interim milestones. Details regarding the status of the three contracts (Contracts A, B & F) that are currently under construction are provided on page 2.

**The Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program** involves the complete reconstruction of approximately 23 miles of the Katy Freeway and approximately two miles of IH 610 including the IH 10/IH 610 interchange. This \$1.4 billion construction program (\$2.2 billion total program cost) is one of the largest highway construction programs in the state's history and the first project in the nation to convert a portion of an interstate highway into toll lanes. The reconstruction program consists of nine major construction contracts ranging from \$30 million to \$263 million. Construction started in June 2003 and is scheduled to end in early 2009.



*Columns for IH 610 to IH 10 westbound direct connectors*



*Wielding gold shovels at the June 2003 Katy Construction Ground Breaking Ceremony are FHWA Administrator Mary Peters, Texas Representative Talmadge Heflin, US Congressman John Culberson, Harris County Judge Robert Eckels and former Texas Transportation Commission Chairman and City of Houston Mayor Bob Lanier.*



**The Katy Freeway** is one of the most congested freeways in the U.S. Originally constructed in the 1960s, it was designed for approximately 60,000 vehicles per day, but typical weekday traffic is now approaching four times that figure.

**The Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program** calls for widening the roadway from 250 feet to 410 feet. The design reflects TxDOT's plan to construct a corridor with flexibility that will initially operate with four general-purpose lanes, two toll/managed lanes and three frontage road lanes in each direction. Upon completion, the capacity of the corridor will be expanded to meet current safety standards and address traffic demands projected for the year 2020.



### Construction Program Status

At the moment, TxDOT has three active contracts underway as part of the Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program which includes:

- 1) **Contract A** - from Harris-Fort Bend County Line to east of Grand Parkway/SH 99 (Contractor Balfour-Beatty Construction).
- 2) **Contract B** - between Grand Parkway and SH 6 (Contractor Williams Brothers Construction of Houston-WB).
- 3) **Contract F** - the IH 10/IH 610 Interchange (Contractor Williams Brothers Construction of Houston-WB).



Check out the Katy Freeway Website for more pictures of the on-going construction along the Katy Freeway at: [www.katyfreeway.org](http://www.katyfreeway.org)

### Contract A Update

Balfour-Beatty completed the asphalt overlay of the existing mainlanes and excavation of the detention pond at Pin Oak. Presently the contractor is performing storm sewer installation and new roadway construction. The contractor has completed significant work along the new westbound frontage road and the new SH 99 southbound frontage road bridge. Balfour-Beatty is nearing completion of the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes overpass at SH 99 and have recently begun reconstruction of the eastbound frontage road between Katy Fort Bend Road and SH 99.



Overview of IH 10 construction at SH 99

### Contract B Update

As the first of the three contracts awarded in 2003, William Brothers has made great strides in the progression of work over the course of the initial twelve months of construction. The contractor has

completed construction of the new westbound frontage road which officially opened to traffic January 27, 2004. Additionally WB completed the installation of the storm sewer culverts along the north curb line of the westbound frontage road.

Currently WB is working on the construction of the IH 10 mainlane overpasses and adjoining mainlane pavement at Greenhouse, Westgreen and Park Ten Blvd. Work along the eastbound frontage road is also progressing, along with the installation of the storm sewer culverts on the south side of the freeway nearing completion.

The contractor anticipates completing the construction of the new mainlanes at Greenhouse and Westgreen in late July 2004 and then will begin reconstruction of the intersection and mainlanes at Fry Road.



Construction of Park Ten Boulevard intersection

### Contract F

Williams Brothers Construction is “on the move” as they transition smoothly through the initial phases of the reconstruction in the IH 10/IH 610 Interchange area. Work on this contract, which includes the expansion of the IH 10 mainlanes, reconstruction of the mainlanes of IH 610 and reconstruction of the eight freeway-to-freeway direct connectors began in October of 2003. Construction along the IH 610 portion of the contract is swiftly progressing, with the construction of the Post Oak, Woodway and Memorial Drive bridges being completed in three stages. The contractor completed construction and opened to traffic the new southbound frontage road between Woodway and Post Oak April 24, 2004. Simultaneously WB is making significant progress on the work related to the reconstruction of IH 10 eastbound and westbound direct connectors to IH 610 southbound and work along the east and westbound frontage roads of IH 10.



Placing of a beam for IH 610 southbound mainlane bridge. (at Memorial Dr. intersection)

### Contract D

Contract D is TxDOT’s most recent construction contract awarded on the Katy Freeway Project. The contract was awarded to Williams Brothers Construction Company in the amount of \$250 million. The contract involves the expansion of IH 10 and reconstruction of the eight freeway-to-freeway direct connectors. The traffic control plan calls for the first two years of the project to be dedicated to the expansion of the IH 10 mainlanes. The actual reconstruction of IH 10/Beltway 8 direct connectors will not begin until January 2007, at which time the contractor will only reconstruct the connectors two at a time. More details regarding the sequencing of construction is available on the Katy Freeway website at [http://www.katyfreeway.org/ContractD\\_dc3.html](http://www.katyfreeway.org/ContractD_dc3.html)



Check out our website where you will find this interactive graphic displaying information on Beltway 8 direct connector closure durations.



### What’s New!

Now on Display at the Katy Freeway Reconstruction Office are 3 “to-scale” models of the IH 10 Freeway. Come by the office to see what the freeway will look like at:

- The IH 10/IH 610 Interchange
- The IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange
- The IH 10/SH 6 Intersection

The Katy Freeway website has evolved into a great resource of information on the program. Over the past year several new pages were added to the enhance the site. Some of the most recent additions include:

- Graphics depicting the construction phasing of the IH 10/IH 610 and IH 10/Beltway 8 interchanges.
- A Katy Tollway Page to explain the IH 10 toll facility operation
- A before and after rendering of the IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange

### Public Corner

Recognizing that a reconstruction program of this magnitude is expected to generate high public interest, TxDOT established the Katy Public Information Office to provide a central point of contact for the program. The purpose of the Katy Public Information Office is to facilitate the exchange of information with the public and provide a centralized location for residents, the media and other stakeholders to obtain information on the program (i.e., view maps and plans and find out about alternative routes, lane closures, construction updates, community impacts, and commute options). For questions, to make an appointment or to schedule a speaker for your group contact:



Program briefing of Congressman John Culberson held on January 16, 2004 at the GEC office.

**Katy Freeway Public Information Office**  
11757 Katy Freeway, Suite 1100  
Houston, TX 77079  
281-589-5924  
[www.katyfreeway.org](http://www.katyfreeway.org)



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Visit the [Katy Freeway Web site](http://www.katyfreeway.org) for more FAQs on the program

**Q: What is the current projected completion date?**

A: December 2008 is the projected date of substantial completion of the program. Ultimately, there will be some additional vegetative landscaping, noise walls and final signing/stripping contracts that will be awarded and are projected for completion in early 2009.

**Q: Is all the needed land on the north side of the freeway?**

A: No, not all of the land needed is located on the north side of the freeway. There are many areas, especially corner clips, proposed on the south side of the freeway as well as significant land acquisition in other areas which are located on the south side of the freeway. Copies of the maps for this project are available for your review and inspection at the Katy Freeway Public Information Office.

**Q: Can I view and download maps of the proposed freeway improvement on-line?**

A: Yes, the schematics (maps) can be viewed, downloaded and printed on the Katy Freeway website at: [http://www.katyfreeway.org/program\\_overview.html](http://www.katyfreeway.org/program_overview.html). From the homepage, click on the "Program Overview" link and then the "Schematics" link and a list of each intersection along the corridor will be provided to select the map(s) of your choice.

**Q: How many lanes will the freeway have? (Toll lanes included)**

A: The facility will have at least nine lanes (four mainlanes, two toll/managed lanes and three frontage road lanes) in each direction plus ramps and auxiliary lanes. The exact number of lanes depends upon the location.

**Q: Will the bridges at Barker Cypress, Fry, Mason and the Grand Parkway be replaced? If so what style will the new ones be?**

A: Yes, the overpasses at Fry, Mason and Barker Cypress will be reconstructed as fully directional at-grade intersections with U-turns and will be at grade with the mainlanes of the freeway over the intersections. As a result, west Houston residents, businesses and commuters will have the benefit of significantly improved urban intersections, better traffic flow and improved turning movements accommodations. TxDOT is also constructing three new grade-separated intersections at S. Greenhouse, Westgreen and Park Ten which should also help to improve mobility and access in the west Houston area.

**Q: What will be done at the intersections at SH 99 and SH 6?**

A: SH 99 and SH 6 will be reconstructed as part of the Katy Freeway Reconstruction, the mainlanes of SH 6 will be elevated to cross-over the mainlanes of IH 10. The mainlanes of SH 99 over IH 10 will be built as a separate project. The frontage roads of both will be "at grade" and will go underneath the mainlanes of IH 10.

**Q: What happens to METRO's HOV operation and is there any provision being made for future light rail in the Katy corridor?**

A: We refer to the center lanes as "toll/managed lanes" because they will still be accessible without fees/tolls for METRO buses (at all times) and high occupancy vehicles/carpools with 3+ people (during peak periods). Commuters with less than 3 people in a vehicle will have the option of driving in the "general purpose" lanes or paying a toll to drive in the "toll/managed lanes". Additionally, METRO is contributing funds to the project to reinforce the bridge structures and include anti-corrosion protection to provide for an easier transition if they decide to pursue some form of rail transit within the right of way in the future. For more specifics about potential/future rail options within the Katy corridor contact the Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO).



## Interesting Facts About the Katy Freeway

- The pavement of the Katy Freeway is more than 30 years old.
- Maintenance costs are reaching \$7.9 million per year. That's \$197,500 per mile, almost four times the normal maintenance cost of \$50,000 per mile.
- The Katy Freeway has the highest daily truck volumes of any roadway in the state of Texas.
- IH 10 is part of the "land bridge" from Los Angeles, CA to Jacksonville, FL, a transcontinental route from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic.
- When IH 10 was originally constructed Houston was a much smaller city and because the area was mostly rural the Highway Department designed the freeway as a "Rural Freeway." With the explosion of urban population growth over the last three decades, the design is now obsolete.



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