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Grand Openings Coming Soon!

It is apparent to commuters driving on the west end of the Katy Freeway Corridor that construction of the first two Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program contracts is rapidly approaching the finish line. That's right! The State anticipates that Contracts A and B will be complete by summer 2006 and both contractors are currently on target to meet or even beat the projected completion dates. Contract A includes the reconstruction of three miles of IH 10 from the Harris-Fort Bend County Line to east of SH 99. This contract is in the final stages of construction as Balfour Beatty Construction completes the new IH 10 eastbound mainlanes bridge near Katy Mills Mall. Likewise, Contract B, which picks up where Contract A ends and extends approximately seven miles to west of SH 6, is in the final stages of construction. On this contract, Williams Brothers (WB) Construction is focused on completing the new IH 10 mainlanes and intersections at Mason Road and Barker Cypress. *(See the contract A and B summaries inside for more details about the contractors' work.)*

The contractors on both projects will soon be finished with the construction of the major structures on their jobs and will be able to open the traffic lanes in the final configuration. The contractors will then focus on completing any remaining concrete work, striping, painting, plantings and "punch list" activities. The Houston District of the Texas Department of Transportation and all of our Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program partners are watching with great anticipation to see a portion of the long awaited improvements along the IH 10 Corridor delivered to the driving public. We hope you are equally as excited!



The State anticipates that Contracts A and B will be complete by summer 2006 and both contractors are currently on target to meet or even beat the projected completion dates.



Construction Program Status



Website

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

www.katyfreeway.org/construction_photos/construction_photos_main.html

Contract A Update

Harris-Fort Bend County Line To SH 99

Over the last couple of months, the maze of columns west of Katy Fort Bend grew as the contractor completed the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes and begins concentrating on the final center portion of the bridge over Katy Fort Bend and US 90. At the beginning of January 2006, the new IH 10/US 90 intersection was opened to traffic. In the coming months, the contractor is expected to complete the IH 10 eastbound mainlanes bridge over Katy Fort-Bend and US 90.



Contract A - Columns for the new IH 10 eastbound mainlanes bridge over Katy-Fort Bend and US 90 (looking east).

Contract B Update

SH 99 to SH 6

The contractor recently started the last two milestones (demolition and reconstruction of the Mason and Barker Cypress bridges) on this contract. On November 21, 2005, IH 10 westbound traffic was switched onto the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes bridge over Mason. Cross-corridor traffic at Mason was reopened in January 2006 and the opening of Barker Cypress is also expected before the end of January. The contractor will also complete the IH 10 eastbound mainlanes during the next few months.



Contract B - A portion of the old Mason bridge over IH 10 remains as construction of the new IH 10 mainlanes bridge over Mason continues. (looking east)

Contract C1 Update

SH 6 To Dairy Ashford

Construction over the last couple of months has created a new look to the IH 10 westbound frontage road at the SH 6 intersection by raising the intersection more than 10 feet. The contractor will continue to work on the IH 10 westbound mainlane bridge over SH 6, while construction on the IH 10/Eldridge intersection will take place during the next few months.



Contract C1 - Computer generated rendering showing proposed conditions once construction is completed.

Contract C2 Update

East of Eldridge to East of Kirkwood

The contractor has made significant progress on the IH 10 westbound mainlanes from east of Kirkwood to west of Dairy Ashford. Beams for the bridges of the Dairy Ashford and Kirkwood intersections have been placed with only the roadway construction remaining to complete the bridges. In the upcoming months, traffic will be switched onto the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes.

Contract D Update

IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange

With traffic switched onto the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes, the contractor concentrated on the center portion of the new IH 10 mainlanes as well as the columns for the new direct connectors at the IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange. The contractor is expected to switch traffic onto the center portion of the IH 10 mainlanes in the coming months. Work also continues on the columns for the two Beltway 8 frontage road flyovers.

Contract E1 and E2 Update

Between Beltway 8 and IH 610

The contractor completed a major milestone by switching traffic onto the new IH 10 westbound mainlanes from west of Wirt to west of Gessner. The contractor has also made significant progress on the sound wall west of Bingle/Voss. As construction continues over the next few months, the contractor will focus on completing the westbound mainlanes and reconstruction of the center portion of the IH 10 mainlanes. Traffic was switched onto the new IH 10 westbound frontage road from Silber to west of Antoine at the end of December 2005.

Contract F Update

IH 10/IH 610 Interchange

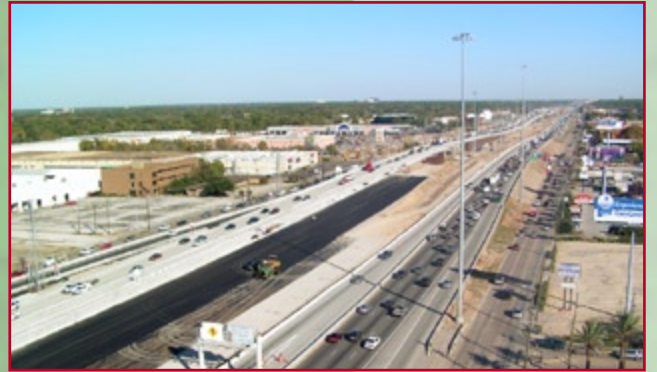
To create room for the construction of the new IH 610 mainlanes bridge over IH 10 and the new direct connectors several large bridges were demolished over the last couple months. The contractor also focused on construction of several direct connectors, Old Katy Road and IH 610 mainlanes near Memorial. Over the next couple of months, a substantial portion of Old Katy Road will be completed from IH 610 to west of Washington.



Contract C2 - An aerial view of the IH 10/Dairy Ashford intersection construction (looking west).



Contract D - Overview of IH 10 mainlanes construction near Wilcrest (looking east).



Contract E1 & E2 - Crews are placing the asphalt surface for the new IH 10 mainlanes near Bunker Hill (looking east).



Contract F - Overview of construction along IH 610 near Memorial (looking south).



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. Will customers always have access to the businesses along the corridor during construction?

Yes. The contractor is required to maintain access via driveways to all businesses during construction.

Q. Will the METRO HOV lane remain in operation during construction?

During peak periods, the HOV lane between SH 6 and IH 610 will remain open, however, closures of the HOV lane during off peak hours may be required to accommodate construction activities.

Q. Will any of the contracts be completing soon?

Contracts A and B, which were the initial contracts, are expected to be completed by Summer 2006.

Q. When the contractor demolishes bridges and roads on the project, what happens to the concrete the contractor removes?

After bridges and roads are demolished, the concrete and rebar is transported to recycling plants. Once the concrete is crushed, it is frequently reused as road base material for the new freeway.



Turning Up the Volume:

The IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange gets much needed relief with the construction of three new detention ponds

In an effort to mitigate rainfall runoff along the Program Corridor, TxDOT integrated a series of detention ponds into the design of the Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program. In particular, significant resources were dedicated to drainage improvements in the vicinity of the IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange. The State acquired a total of 36 acres of land for three detention pond facilities to be located in the northwest and southwest corners of the IH 10/Beltway 8 Interchange. The land, once occupied by Houston Gardens, Igloo and Café Ribs, will play an integral part in providing much needed runoff volume relief from the flooding problems that typically occur in the depressed section of the Interchange during intense rainfalls.

The design involves excavating the sites for the ponds to approximately 15-18 feet deep. The pond located on the former Houston Gardens site, referred to as the Southwest Pond, will accommodate the runoff from the depressed section of Beltway 8. A new pumping station will

be constructed adjacent to the Pond and will lift the storm water from the depressed section into this facility. The two ponds located on the north side of IH 10 separated by Rummel Creek and referred to as the Northwest Ponds, will accommodate the runoff from an adjacent major storm sewer system. A new underground storm sewer system will also be constructed to direct a portion of the water flow from Rummel Creek and route it directly into these two facilities. As all three ponds fill, they will accommodate the runoff that would otherwise impact Rummel Creek. As a result of the construction of these three ponds, TxDOT will essentially be providing enough storage volume to equal the size of a football field approximately 240 feet deep! Additionally, TxDOT will add a lasting aesthetically pleasing touch to these important facilities by extensively landscaping them with a series of trees inside the ponds along with decorative shrubbery and fencing surrounding the entire sites.

