
TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

For Immediate Release

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TXDOT NEGOTIATES CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT, SETTING IN MOTION MUCH-NEEDED \$1.6 BILLION EXPANSION ON TEXAS' NO. 1 CONGESTED HIGHWAY

Transportation agency partners with private company to design, construct expansion of I-35W starting mid-2013

AUSTIN — Each year, Texans waste more than 2 million hours sitting in traffic on I-35W near downtown in Fort Worth. With the completed negotiation of a new highway construction agreement this week, the Texas Department of Transportation hopes to cut that time by more than a third. The draft agreement with NTE Mobility Partners Segments 3 LLC (NTEMP3) will add two managed lanes each way on I-35W, or the North Tarrant Express, and rebuild the existing highway, which today tops TxDOT's [100 Most Congested Roadways](#).

“Texans have better things to do than to sit in traffic, and that’s why we’re proud to partner with the private sector to speed up a critical transportation project,” said Phil Wilson, TxDOT executive director. “TxDOT continuously strives to move aggressively with our priority projects in order to address congestion and help Texans spend less time on the road and more time with their families.”

Funding for the project highlights the region’s strong transportation partnerships. The North Central Texas Council of Governments has committed approximately \$89.5 million for the project, and identified another \$40.5 million for project contingencies. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Transportation invited the developer to apply for a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan of up to \$537 million to help fund the project. The project also is expected to receive \$273 million from Private Activity Bonds issued by the developer and \$446 million in developer equity. The scheduled improvements from north of I-30 to north of I-820 (Segment 3A) will provide \$1.4 billion of needed infrastructure to the Fort Worth area. The agreement also provides operations and maintenance until 2061.

“This is a project that I have been involved with for many years and seen advance through many considerable obstacles, but with the help of four different Fort Worth mayors, county judges, legislators, business leaders and other advocates, we have managed to keep advancing it forward,” said TxDOT Commissioner Bill Meadows. “This project will address mobility on the No. 1 most congested roadway in Texas. It is a project that is critical to the state’s economy and essential to the region. It is a quality of life issue as well as an air quality issue, and I am glad to be a part of its success.”

As part of this project, TxDOT will also make improvements to Segment 3B, which runs from north of I-820 to US 81/287. Segment 3B will be rebuilt and widened to include two managed lanes each way at a total project cost to TxDOT of \$234 million. Once constructed, Segment 3B will be turned over to NTEMP3 for operations and maintenance under the agreement.

TxDOT will host a public hearing **Thursday, Oct. 11 at 6 p.m.** at the TxDOT Fort Worth District Regional Training Center (2501 Southwest Loop 820, Fort Worth) to present the draft agreement. The public hearing is a requirement prior to executing the final Facility Agreement. The draft agreement will be submitted for review to the Texas Legislative Budget Board. The Texas Attorney General's office also will review the draft agreement for legal sufficiency. The final Facility Agreement is expected to be signed in early 2013. Construction is scheduled to begin in mid-2013 with substantial completion in mid-2018.

"We have been working together with the state for the past three years designing and building the first phase of the North Tarrant Express project, and look forward to getting this next segment along I-35W in Fort Worth underway," said Nicolas Rubio, president of Cintra US. "This is one of the most traffic congested areas in the United States, and we are proud to further serve the cities, region and state through our involvement in this public-private partnership as we all strive toward better mobility and a greater quality of life."

You can find out more about this project at www.txdot.gov, keyword: North Tarrant Express.

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Texas Department of Transportation

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail, and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 11,000 employees are committed to working with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas by maintaining a safe system, addressing congestion, connecting Texas communities, and being a Best in Class state agency. Find out more at www.txdot.gov. Fan us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/txdot; and follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/txdot.