I-30 MOBILITY TASK FORCE
keep30moving.org

Podcast #1

Title: General Overview

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WEBB

Welcome to the first podcast for the Interstate 30 Mobility Task Force. I am your host Brandon Webb. With me today is Jason Crawford the mobility coordinator for this project. Welcome Jason.

CRAWFORD

Thanks Brandon. It's great to be here to talk to you about this construction project on Interstate 30 in Arlington, Texas.

WEBB

You mentioned Arlington Jason, now, more or less between Dallas and Fort Worth here in the Metroplex. Tell me about where the construction will be taking place there on Interstate 30.

CRAWFORD

Well, construction is going to be along I-30 from just west of Cooper Street in Arlington, back to the east, to the Dallas County Line. But most of the work is going to be occurring between Cooper Street and Ballpark Way.

WEBB

Tell us a little bit about what is actually being built, and the construction itself.

CRAWFORD

Yeah. TxDOT is really modernizing the old Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike that was opened in 1957. A lot of the Interstate that you see out there right now, the infrastructure is built around that old turnpike design. Anyone that lives in Arlington or has used the Collins Street Exit will understand the curvy roads and exits; that was the old turnpike design. The new I-30 mainlanes are going to be dug down and lowered into the ground much like

how Central Expressway is in Dallas, where the highway is below the surface streets. The project is also going to have continuous frontage roads through the I-30 area, which the old turnpike design didn't have that, but it will now. Going from Cooper Street, back towards Ballpark Way, will be continuous frontage roads providing greater mobility and access within the corridor. There will also be managed lanes in the median providing access to the new Baird Farm Bridge, but also some of the managed lanes will extend Beyond Baird Farm up to about where Center Street is now. So when constructed, managed lanes will be accessible from about Center Street, then heading east into Dallas to about Sylvan Avenue, making about a 16-mile length of managed lanes.

WEBB
Now you mentioned Baird Farm, or the Baird Farm Bridge. And I know there are some other bridges that are involved in the project. What can you tell me about them, Jason?

CRAWFORD

Sure, I typically get this question when I meet people. The Center Street Bridge is a new north-south connection for motorists to cross I-30. That's going to be near Lincoln Square and to get access into downtown Arlington to the south. The Center Street Bridge is between the existing Cooper Street Bridge and the Collins Street Bridge.

I mentioned the new Baird Farm Bridge between Collins Street and Ballpark Way. This new access will improve north-south mobility and also act as a gateway into the Arlington Entertainment District to access several venues that we know about down there: the Ballpark, soon-to-be Glorypark, and the currently Cowboys Stadium under construction.

The third bridge is the reconstruction of Collins Street. This new bridge will provide an additional lane in each direction and turnarounds for the frontage roads. This will improve mobility for the more than 40,000 cars and trucks that currently use that bridge.

WEBB

This sounds very comprehensive. It sounds like a lot of work. Tell me about the project costs and also when the project is slated to be completed.

CRAWFORD

You're right, there is a lot of work going on out there, and the dirt really is flying. The cost for this project is about $160 million. Plans are to have the project completed in 2011. During construction, traffic will be opened on both temporary and permanent pavements and on bridges as they complete the work.

WEBB

Tell me something maybe that makes the project a little bit unique. I know that there are some aspects that we can look forward to as we see it going up, but what sort of makes this project look different than others?

CRAWFORD

There's a lot of local influence on the aesthetic style of what you're going to see. For instance, along the mainlanes of I-30, around where Center Street and Collins bridges are, there are going to be wall murals that will depict some of the history and culture of the local area. Also, the bridges that are being designed are going to have aesthetic features. There are actually architectural details to those bridges that will make them more pleasing to the drivers that are going by or pedestrians that are using the bridge.

WEBB

It seems like an effort the department has put a lot of emphasis on lately, making these transportation projects look as if they really belong and they reflect the values and the interests and the geography of their community that they're in. Are you able to talk about any of the specific elements that you might see on these projects after they go up? Like, for example, a specific kind of paint color that is reflective of the area or an architectural detail that has sports, for example, as a theme? Are there any specifics that come to mind related to aesthetics?

CRAWFORD
Well, the wall murals that I was talking about, in the depressed area of I-30, will actually have depictions like that. They're going to have depictions of the Texas Rangers for instance, are on one of the wall murals. Some of the wall murals will be painted, some may be pre-cast. But they're trying to bring a lot of aesthetic quality to the projects, not just simply a road going through a place with nothing that attaches itself to the local area.

WEBB
Jason, we appreciate your time today, very much. You've given us a broad description of the project and we will look forward to talking with you again in the future about the Keep 30 Moving Project.

CRAWFORD
Thanks a lot Brandon. It was great being here and I love talking about this project.

WEBB

That's a wrap on our first podcast here. We planned on putting together an interesting lineup for you for these podcasts over the course of construction. Be sure to check back for updated content or sign up for an RSS feed to be notified when we post our next podcast.

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This one has been brought to you by the Texas Department of Transportation at KeepTexasMoving.com. Keep your eyes and ears on keep30moving.org. For the I-30 Mobility Task Force, I'm Brandon Webb, be well.