New HOV lanes mean faster commutes

Commuters who share the ride on I-30 (East R. L. Thornton) and US 75 (Central Expressway) are getting an early holiday gift - faster trips - with the opening of two more High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes December 17 and 21.

Thanks to the addition of six new miles of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-30 (East R.L. Thornton Freeway) on Monday, December 17, commuters can share the ride all the way from downtown Dallas, past LBJ Freeway, to Northwest Drive in Mesquite.

A new 14-mile HOV lane on US 75 extending north from the "High Five" interchange to Exchange Parkway in Allen is scheduled to open Friday, December 21.

HOV lanes are open to vehicles with two or more occupants, buses, motorcycles and other eligible vehicles. The current 43-mile HOV network supports more than 115,000 commuter trips each weekday.

The current I-30 (East R. L. Thornton) lane runs five miles from downtown Dallas to Jim Miller Road. This reversible lane - which supports westbound commuters during morning rush hours and eastbound commuters during afternoon rush hours - opened in 1991 and features Barrier Transfer Vehicles (BTVs) or "zipper machines" to open the lanes to traffic. Two more BTVs have been purchased to help with the expanded operation. The lanes are open Monday through Friday, from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m., and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The US 75 HOV lane will extend 14 miles northward from the High Five interchange and features a direct "connector" between the HOV lane on LBJ Freeway and the new Central Expressway HOV lanes, enabling motorists to transfer easily from one to the other. The top level of the "High Five" interchange is dedicated to HOV lane usage only.

HOV expansion continues
The regional expansion of HOV lanes, which ultimately will add 50 miles to the existing network, began July 31 with the opening of a new managed HOV lane on I-30 West (Tom Landry Freeway) -- between the Dallas/Tarrant County Line and Loop 12 -- that eventually will stretch between Dallas and Fort Worth.

A 12-mile extension of the I-635 (LBJ Freeway) HOV lane, from U.S. 75 (Central Expressway) to I-30 will roughly double the length of HOV lanes in the LBJ corridor, one of the nation's busiest freeways. It is scheduled to open in 2008.

Call 214.979.1111 for more information on using the new lanes visit www.DART.org/HOV.