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New HOV Lanes On The Way!

Construction begins on next HOV lanes

The area's High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) System is stretching south as construction gets underway on the new I-35E South R. L. Thornton / US 67 Marvin D. Love Freeway HOV lanes between downtown Dallas and I-20. The lanes are scheduled to open in late 1999.

Representatives from DART, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and state and local officials will participate in a groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, February 19, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce, 660 South Zang.

Nearly 85,000 commuters now travel on DART's 18-mile network of HOV lanes every weekday. HOV lanes are open to vehicles carrying more than one passenger and to motorcycles.

The estimated construction cost of the US 67/I-35E lanes is \$37 million. DART's share of the cost is about \$5 million with the balance funded by TxDOT and the federal government. The lanes are a joint project of DART and TxDOT. DART is responsible for operating the HOV lanes and DART Transit Police enforce the HOV lanes. HOV lane violators face fines up to \$200.00.

The new lanes will be 11.1 miles and are projected to save 19,000 users about 14 minutes of travel time each day.

The section along US 67 Marvin D. Love Freeway from north of I-20 to Polk Street will be concurrent flow lanes allowing users to travel in the same direction of traffic.

Between Polk and downtown Dallas, the concurrent flow lanes change to a single, barrier-separated reversible lane running in the median of I-35E South R. L. Thornton Freeway.

It will be open to northbound commuters during morning rush hours and southbound commuters during afternoon rush hours.

Northbound commuters will be able to enter the new I-35E/US 67 HOV lanes at Camp Wisdom Road, Loop 12, Polk and I-35E South R. L. Thornton. Northbound exit points will be Loop 12, Polk Street, and Jefferson Street in downtown Dallas.

Southbound commuters will be able to enter the lanes at Houston Street in downtown Dallas, southbound I-35E Stemmons or eastbound I-30 East R. L. Thornton. South of downtown, motorists will enter at Polk or Loop 12. Southbound exit points will be I-35E, Polk, Loop 12 and Camp Wisdom Road.

Construction is being done in two phases. Phase one is 8.6 miles from I-20 to Marsalis. Phase two construction, scheduled to begin in August, will extend the lane north 2.5 miles from Marsalis to Jefferson in downtown Dallas.

DART's newest HOV lanes opened last March on LBJ freeway -- Texas' busiest freeway. Already, the lanes are the fourth busiest in the United States, carrying more than 44,000 commuters each weekday. DART also operates HOV lanes along Stemmons Freeway and I-30 East R. L. Thornton Freeway.

An HOV lane on North Central Expressway from LBJ Freeway into Plano will open in 2002.

By 2010, the DART Transit System plan calls for 98 miles of permanent HOV lanes located throughout the service area.