

FAQ: I-10 BR Segment 1 – January 2022

H.004100 I-10 (LA 415 to Essen Lane on I-10 and I-12), WBR and EBR Parishes

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF CONSTRUCTION FOR THE PROJECT?

The overall capacity improvement project for I-10 through Baton Rouge extends from LA 415 in West Baton Rouge Parish eastward across the Mississippi River and through Baton Rouge to east of the I-10 /I-12 split near Essen Lane, excluding the Mississippi River Bridge. This work is divided into phases. Phase 1 extends from just west of the Washington Street exit on the east side of the river to east of the I-10/I-12 split near Essen Lane. Phase 2 extends from LA 415 on the west side of the river to just west of the Washington Street exit on the east side, excluding the Mississippi River Bridge. Within Phase 1, the corridor will be further divided into segments for construction with Segment 1 being the first, which extends from just west of Washington Street to Acadian Thruway.

Three improvement projects from the overall corridor project were pulled from the scope and fast-tracked. The first, the Terrace Street exit ramp from I-110 southbound, was completed in 2019. The second, a flyover exit from I-10 westbound to College Drive, is presently under construction. The third, the Kansas City Southern (KCS) bridge will be replaced over Acadian Thruway and is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2022.

2. WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Segment 1's original limits included west of Washington Street to the Perkins Road on/off ramps. Through a value-added Construction Management-At-Risk (CMAR) contractor proposal, DOTD has decided to extend the limits of construction of Segment 1 farther east to include the I-10 overpass over Perkins Road and Acadian Thruway, the new Acadian Thruway interchange, and reconstruction of Acadian Thruway from Perkins Road to I-10.

3. WHY WAS THIS CHANGE MADE?

Primary reasons for extending Segment 1 include a reduction in total construction time and cost efficiencies in construction phasing.

- a) By constructing the Segment 1 extension at the same time as Segment 1, the project will shorten the forecast construction timeline from approximately eight years to approximately four years. This will benefit all motorists traveling on I-10 and on adjacent streets, as well as merchants and residents located along the corridor. Inconveniences from construction and traffic management activities will be fewer and the entire project will be fully completed much sooner.
- b) Inclusion of the Segment 1 extension expects to provide approximately a \$50 million cost reduction in Segment 1 construction costs. DOTD has employed a CMAR implementation model

for this contract, utilizing private sector innovation, which has revealed efficient and innovative design and construction techniques. These will save both time and money due to the condensed time frame of construction.

4. WHEN WILL CONSTRUCTION BEGIN AND WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS?

Initial construction will begin in February 2022 to relocate utilities running the length of the corridor, clearing the way for the new I-10 overpasses and roadway. This work may produce minimal impacts along surface streets as crews maneuver construction equipment, and it will affect interstate traffic with minimal nightly lane closures for construction access.

The Segment 1 timeline for construction activities will encompass four years. The first quarter of 2023 will see the initiation of heavy construction activity to the highway, beginning on the north side of I-10 throughout the corridor, including the Washington and Perkins/Acadian overpasses, as well as the City Park Lake Bridge. This initial activity is not expected to impact motorists on I-10 or on the surrounding streets, including traffic flow on Perkins Road. Construction impacts for areas east of City Park Lake, including the Perkins Road area, will begin during the first quarter of 2024.

The greatest impact to the corridor within Segment 1 will happen in 2024, when I-10 will be reduced to two lanes in each direction for a total of one year. In conjunction with interstate work, on/off ramps throughout the corridor will be closed at times to facilitate construction phasing.

To manage and mitigate increased traffic impacts due to the lane reduction, DOTD is analyzing several options that may alleviate the burden of delay, including temporary striping and signing improvements on existing roadways, commuter rail availability from Ascension Parish to Baton Rouge, working with local transit to provide potential stop locations along I-12, and an I-12 HOV lane. In addition to these options, DOTD will help to evaluate changes to transit delivery schedules to provide optimum route timing when traffic volumes are lower. DOTD is also considering work schedule relief in the form of flexible compressed schedules, where state agencies would work a four-day work week while still providing the same five-day work week coverage. Local businesses and universities would also be encouraged to offer the same flex scheduling where applicable.

5. I'M A PERKINS MERCHANT OR CUSTOMER. WHAT ABOUT PARKING BENEATH I-10 AT PERKINS?

Parking areas beneath the elevated I-10 are made possible by joint use agreements (JUA) with local entities, including businesses, churches, and schools. During the course of interstate construction, the availability of this parking will be temporarily removed. DOTD and its contractor are developing mitigation strategies to address this need and will seek to limit business interruption by including temporary parking areas, wayfinding signage, pedestrian pathways, and public notifications and messaging of construction activities and associated roadway impacts. DOTD intends to restore existing JUAs following completion of construction to the extent possible and with improved parking conditions.

Several design workshops have already been conducted for the area west of the Perkins/Acadian overpasses. Additional workshops are slated for the area, including the Perkins Road business district during April 2022. At these events, specific design solutions can be examined and critiqued, and alternatives proposed. DOTD has committed to implementing context-sensitive solutions and community connections in the vicinity of the Perkins Road ramps, including a new connecting roadway,

a multi-use path from the Perkins Road overpass to Perkins Road near the Acadian Village Shopping Center, new parking areas, and additional green space.

6. WHAT ABOUT THE RAILROAD ACROSS ACADIAN?

KCS owns the rail line that crosses Acadian Thruway between Perkins Road and I-10. KCS has prepared plans for a new railroad bridge over Acadian Thruway which will result in higher clearances and a wider span, allowing lanes to be added to Acadian Thruway from Perkins Road to I-10. Construction of these rail improvements is slated to conclude in late 2022.

7. ARE THERE RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPACTS?

Most construction work along the corridor occurs within existing DOTD right-of-way (ROW). During the environmental study phase of this project (completed in 2019,) several properties were identified for acquisition by DOTD, and state officials have met with and are currently negotiating acquisition of these parcels (or portions of parcels). Additionally, during the detailed design of Segment 1 in 2021, the need for additional ROW along properties fronting Braddock Street was identified for the purpose of providing a new sidewalk to enhance community connections. Meetings were held with these property owners, who are pleased with the provision of a sidewalk at the front edge of their properties, and negotiations for acquisition of ROW by DOTD are ongoing in this area as well.

8. HOW WILL TRAFFIC NOISE BE CONTROLLED?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Louisiana DOTD have determined to install noise walls along both sides of the interstate as per the environmental assessment document. These walls will extend 14 feet above the interstate roadway. In some areas, such as on the bridge across City Park Lake, these noise walls will be made of a clear acrylic material which will reduce traffic noise while preserving scenic views across the lake. For other areas of the corridor, other options are being considered for noise wall materials, and these will be presented to the public in February at public open house events and via an online preference poll.

9. TREES WERE REMOVED AT THE I-10 / I-12 SPLIT. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OTHER TREES ALONG THE I-10 CORRIDOR?

During interstate construction, it has been necessary to remove some existing trees. Through an agreement with DOTD as part of the College Drive flyover project, Baton Rouge Green will manage a tree planting program in which the state has committed to replacing two trees for every one removed due to interstate construction. The trees are available for planting along I-10 within the limits of LA 415 to Essen Lane.

There are also trees along the ROW and fence lines west of Perkins Road. A professional arborist has already conducted a site visit to inventory and assess these trees. DOTD and its contractor, with guidance from the arborist, are devising strategies to save and preserve as many native trees as possible. Where removal is unavoidable, native trees will be replaced along the corridor where space allows for their growth.

10. WHAT WILL BE THE HOURS OF CONSTRUCTION?

To expedite construction, the contractor is anticipating deploying work shifts for progress around the clock as weather permits. However, the types of work conducted overnight will be, to the extent possible, tasks that are less noisy. For example, drilled shafts will be used predominantly throughout the

corridor, instead of piles, to minimize noise. Where drilled shafts are not feasible, such as for the City Park Lake Bridge, driven piles will be used. Pile driving and drilled shaft work will be limited to daylight hours.

11. WHERE WILL THE CONTRACTOR STAGE MATERIALS? WHAT ABOUT WORK ZONES?

Contractor work zones, including equipment positioning and material “lay-down” yards, will be positioned within the project ROW. In certain circumstances, the contractor may be permitted to secure the use of contiguous parcels for temporary storage of non-hazardous materials or equipment during the construction timeframe. Afterwards, these parcels will be returned to commerce.

12. WILL THE COMMUNITY HAVE OPPORTUNITIES IN 2022 TO PROVIDE INPUT ON ENHANCEMENTS, CONCERNS, ETC?

Yes. Public open house events are being held in conjunction with this announcement in February 2022. Further, a round of open house events is anticipated in April 2022, focused on the design of temporary and permanent improvements to the Perkins Road area. These are part of the community connections and context sensitive solutions effort of the project. Input opportunities will be available both in person at these events and online through polls and interactive mapping platforms. Comments are received through the “submit a comment” page of the project website at i10br.com.