

Metro Area STACK Project Without Delay

JACKSON, Miss., Wednesday, January 26, 2005—According to officials at the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Phase III of the largest highway construction project in recent history is swiftly moving along and on schedule to be completed in December of 2006.

For many years, Hinds and Rankin County residents, as well as traveling motorists in the area, have experienced crowded roadways at the I-20, I-55 and Highway 49 interchange, also known as the Stack. In mid-March of 2003, construction began on a \$58 million project to improve this major junction. This reconstruction is a much needed and highly anticipated addition to the state's infrastructure and will include a new fly-over bridge connecting the three roadways, along with six other new and existing bridges.

Hill Brothers Construction and Engineering Company of Falkner, Miss., the lowest bidder for the project, is currently working on the riding surfaces of newly constructed bridges north of I-20. Added lanes on the east and west US 49 frontage roads have been built and traffic will be switched to these lanes in the next couple of weeks for re-construction of the existing frontage roads. The flyover bridge, above I-20, to US 49 is underway and will be constructed over the next several months. Overall, the project is approximately 55% complete.

To ensure minimal impact to the public, all existing interstate lanes are to remain open during the day but may be closed at night and over the weekend. Lanes are being closed on U.S. 49 during the day, but work inside these lane closures is occurring during what is considered non-peak hours.

Conceptual plans for the Stack were developed in the late 1970's for four separate phases of the project, and right of way was obtained in 1980. After enough funding was available, construction began on Phase 1 in 1992 with a total cost of \$7 million and continued to Phase II, a \$30.2 million project beginning in 1997. The fourth and final phase of the Stack has been planned, but is dependent upon the availability of funds. With a construction estimate of about \$35 million, it will include the replacement of pavement on I-20/55 from Gallatin Street to the Pearl River and a new roadway from Gallatin to State Street.

For more information, please call the Mississippi Department of Transportation External Affairs Division at (601) 359-7017.

Working Your Way Through The Work Zone

- Slow down. And then slow down some more. Excess speed is the leading cause of work zone accidents. Pay attention to the posted speed limit.
- Don't tailgate. Stay a good distance from the car in front of you to avoid rear-end collisions. Drivers often have to make sudden stops, and most of us aren't used to stopping on the interstate.
- Expect the unexpected. Normal driving conditions do not exist in and around work zones. Anticipate the unexpected and be ready to respond quickly.

- Be courteous. We're all in this together. When someone needs to merge, let them in. Don't speed up or slow down unnecessarily.

Working Hours

Motorists can expect lane closures throughout the duration of the project.

When is the construction scheduled to begin?

To minimize inconvenience to our customers, MDOT will open all Interstate lanes during the day and close lanes only at night and during weekends. At times, lanes will be closed on U.S. Highway 49 during the day, but the work will take place during non-commuter hours. Below is a list of times that motorists can expect to find lanes open.

Interstates 20 and 55

- I-20 westbound and I-55 northbound – All lanes will be open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- I-20 eastbound and I-55 southbound – All lanes will be open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

U.S. Highway 49

- U.S. 49 northbound – All lanes will be open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- U.S. 49 southbound – All lanes will be open Monday through Friday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.