



MDOT seeks to re-open bridge in early May

Early May has been announced as the target date for re-opening the Popp's Ferry bridge to motorists.

City Engineer Damon Torricelli, who met with Mississippi Department of Transportation engineers in Jackson on March 27, said MDOT had ordered replacement concrete beams and pilings within days after a barge collision closed the bridge to vehicular traffic, and that plans were to award a contract by the second week in April.

"They've certainly fast-tracked the project and are making excellent progress in drawing up the plans and specifications for the accelerated advertising schedule," Torricelli said, noting that MDOT planned to advertise the job for five days instead of the customary 30 days, and would include an incentive bonus for the contractor.

Days after the March 20 barge collision, Mayor A.J. Holloway had said he wanted the bridge re-opened to motorists within 60 days. Said Torricelli: "From everything I've seen at MDOT, they are well on their way to meeting that deadline with room to spare."

Work on high-tech U.S. 90 nearly complete

By Wayne Brown
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The Mississippi Department of Transportation continues to provide a safe intermodal transportation network for the people of Mississippi. As rebuilding and recovery continues along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, MDOT is

dedicated to the task of maintaining and constructing Mississippi's highway system.

In Biloxi, several ongoing and completed projects are aimed toward the recovery and restoration of the Mississippi Gulf Coast infrastructure. The citizens of Biloxi are showing both patience and keen interest in a variety of construction projects and we are extremely grateful. The resilience and patience of Biloxi residents is graciously appreciated.

As part of the rebuilding effort, there are major traffic signalization projects ongoing. One of those projects is the rebuilding of Highway 90, which includes 54 signalized intersections spanning six cities and two counties over a 43-mile long corridor

MDOT is using the latest technology – a wireless broadband communication backbone, video detection and data collection, and closed-circuit TV cameras – to reduce traffic delays and congestion, and lessen the environmental impact from vehicle pollution.

The reconstruction of U.S. 90 from St. Louis Bay to Biloxi Bay is nearing completion as well. In fact, we're planning a formal dedication ceremony in mid-April.

Motorists can be extremely proud of the end result of this work.

In west Biloxi, we've restored a service road between Rodenberg Avenue and Camellia Street south of the highway. We've worked with the city to straighten the route at the south end of Eisenhower Drive and installed a new ramp at that intersection. We've improved intersections at Beauvoir Road and Veterans Avenue.

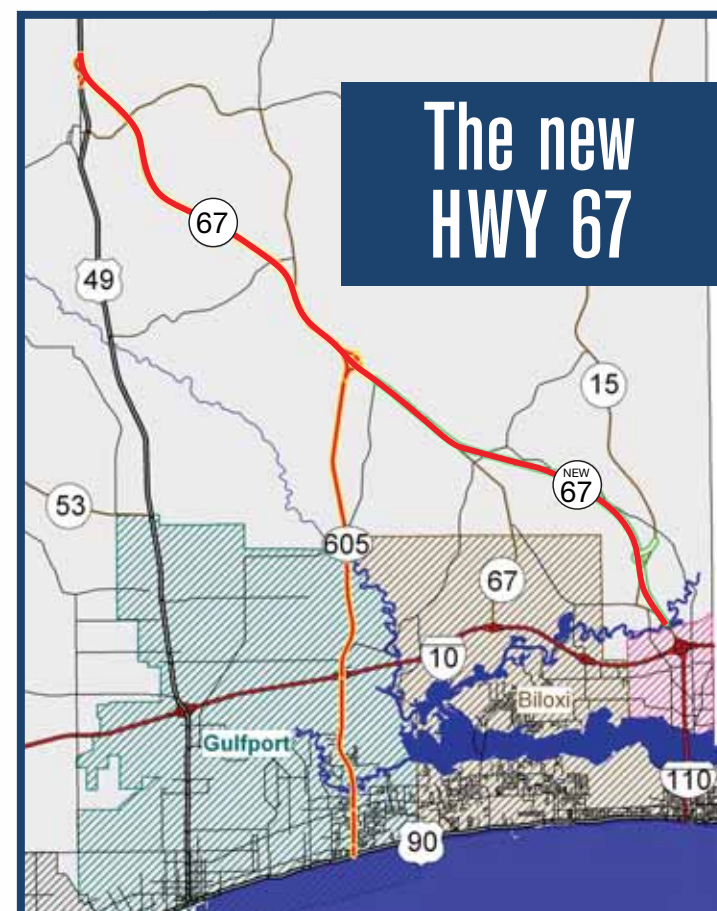
Sidewalks are in place north of the highway to provide a safe walking area for pedestrians, and you'll find well-lit crossings with pedestrian signals.

Each of these improvements is designed to help achieve our goal of not only to re-build these public roadways, but to build them back better, more efficient and safer than they have ever been.

In January, MDOT held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to coincide with the opening of four lanes of Highway 67 from Interstate 110 to Highway 605. The \$37.5 million project creates a four-lane corridor from I-110 all the way to Highway 49, providing both increased opportunities for economic development and an important hurricane evacuation route. The construction project creates a highway that meets current national standards and so improves the experience of travel for motorists.

We are all proud of the magnificent Biloxi Bay Bridge and pedestrian walkway. I would like to take a moment to remind the citizens of Biloxi to keep the trail a safe and enjoyable place to walk or ride by only bringing the most "well-mannered" pets along for the beautiful view.

MDOT's partnership with the City of Biloxi is a great privilege and we appreciate the ongoing support as we await the completion of various projects that will provide a vibrant future for the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast.



The new
HWY 67

The new Highway 67 will provide an important evacuation route for the upcoming hurricane season, which begins May 1. The route, which also provides a new gateway into Biloxi, also significantly reduces traffic time for those who previously traveled U.S. 49.