

# Star-Telegram

## New bridge is opening today in Hurst

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HURST -- Motorists will once again find it easier to move north and south through Hurst.

The new Hurstview Drive bridge over Texas 121/183 will open at 10 a.m. today, officials with the North Tarrant Express project said.

The bridge had been closed since April as part of the \$2.5 billion freeway makeover.

Officials also announced Friday that the North Tarrant Express, which began in January 2011, has reached its halfway point. The developer has promised to complete its work by the end of June 2015, according to its contract with the Texas Transportation Department.

With the announcement, construction appears to be several months ahead of schedule, but officials declined to discuss specifics, other than to say they are on schedule to meet their deadline.

The project affects Northeast Loop 820 and Texas 121/183 in Northeast Tarrant County, and the developer is NTE Mobility Partners, a team of companies led by the U.S. subsidiary of Spain-based Cintra.

NTE Mobility Partners spokesman Robert Hinkle announced the opening of the Hurstview bridge and the project's 50 percent completion Friday morning during a Northeast Tarrant Transportation Summit held by Tarrant County Commissioner Gary Fickes.

Speaking to an audience of several hundred people in Hurst, Hinkle quipped that Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley had asked him about twice a week for several months when the bridge would reopen.

"Judge Whitley lives on the north side of the bridge, and his church is on the south side," Hinkle said.

"He's been telling me it's my fault people are not getting to God. I'm waking up in the middle of the night thinking about that."

Motorists trying to get from one side of Hurst to another are likely to cheer the opening of the bridge, but it may not make much difference for traffic passing through the city.

The eastbound frontage road between Precinct Line Road and Cavender Drive will be closed for up to three months, so drivers using the Hurstview bridge won't have a direct connection to Texas 121/183.

"You can go north and south across the bridge, but you won't be able to turn east onto the frontage road," said Lara Kohl, spokeswoman for Bluebonnet Constructors, the firm overseeing construction. "This is a local-access bridge only, not connected to the main lanes of the expressway, and it never was."

Staff writer Terry Evans contributed to this report.

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