Glenn Highway Capacity Improvements Phase II

Project Background

The Glenn Highway serves more than 50,000 drivers per day. During peak hours, the Glenn can become congested with traffic, resulting in delays and driver frustration. The Glenn Highway is the only road connection between Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) completed the northbound phase I in 2015. This is a State-funded project and, due to funding constraints, the second phase of the project was put on hold after the completion of phase I. Funding is now in place, and a contract has been signed to begin phase II southbound work. DOT&PF is now proceeding with planned improvements to the southbound lanes of the Glenn Highway between the Hiland Drive interchange and the Artillery Road interchange.

The Team

DOT&PF is using a Design/Build (D/B) method for project delivery, in which one team works under a single contract to provide design and construction services. A team led by Kiewit Construction was selected based on staffing, proposed design concept, and price.

Kiewit’s team includes Hansen as their primary designer and PND for phase II design support. R&M Consultants are part of the Kiewit D/B team as the independent quality firm to review project design and field construction.

HDR was hired by DOT&PF to assist in developing the project and to assist with managing design and construction.
The Design

The complete design of both north- and southbound lanes was completed in phase I of the project. Phase II, southbound work, will begin in 2019 and runs along the existing corridor, starting at the Hiland Road overpass. The old southbound highway will become the frontage road and the new road alignment will swing to the east, parallel to the northbound lanes. The new southbound bridge will be constructed at the same elevation as the northbound bridge, while the old bridge will stay in place as part of the frontage road. From the bridge going north, a retaining wall will separate the frontage road from the new southbound lanes. These lanes will rejoin the existing highway alignment just before the Artillery Road overpass. Eagleview Drive will be relocated to connect to the frontage road west of the new southbound lanes. Construction is slated to begin in the third quarter of 2019.
Phase II is in progress and includes:

- An additional southbound lane to the Glenn Highway between Artillery Road and Hiland Drive
- Accommodations for a possible future high occupancy vehicle lane
- A reduced grade for the downhill approaching the Eagle River Bridge
- A new southbound bridge over Eagle River to accommodate the additional lane

Construction

Beginning in the third quarter of 2019, during construction of phase II (the southbound lanes), drivers will experience temporary lane closures or detours during off-peak travel times.

In 2020 a detour route will move southbound traffic onto two new, to-be-constructed lanes on the northbound bridge. This will likely require that the northbound traffic be reduced to two lanes for part of one construction season. Once the northbound bridge has been prepared, southbound traffic will be rerouted to the two new lanes, which will be separated from northbound traffic by a barrier. Lane management systems will be used to direct traffic flow. Each direction—north- and southbound—will have two functional lanes of traffic.

DOT&PF anticipates that this temporary traffic realignment will be required for up to 5 months while the new southbound bridge is constructed. Upon completion of the new bridge, southbound traffic will resume along its new permanent alignment.

Drivers will be notified of lane closures and other traffic changes through radio and print media advertising, electronic signage, social media, the project website, and regular e-mail updates to individuals who have signed up for the project's contact list.

Schedule

The project is being constructed in two phases. Phase I, the northbound lanes, was completed in 2015. Phase II, the southbound lanes, begins in 2019 and will be completed in 2020.