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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Pete Ricketts, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nebraska Department of Transportation Details Road Forward for Important Northeast Nebraska Expressway

November 20, 2019 (Lincoln, Neb.) — Today the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) released an update on ongoing efforts to convert the remaining 48 miles of US-275 between Norfolk and Fremont from a two-lane highway to a four-lane expressway. The expansion will increase capacity and support economic growth along a key roadway connecting Nebraska’s northeast communities to the state’s urban hub.

Officially created in 1988, the Expressway System was designed to link communities to the Interstate System using four-lane highways. The NDOT prioritized the remaining segments along the US-275 corridor during the selection processes for the Build Nebraska Act and the Transportation Innovation Act. Due to the state’s infrastructure investments, all four segments of US-275 are funded for design or construction.

Segment Updates

US-275 Scribner to West Point

The southernmost portion of US-275, the Scribner to West Point segment, is currently in the procurement stage of a design-build delivery project. The procurement is being done concurrent with development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate constraints and permitting issues associated with wetlands, frequent flooding and levees along the proposed alignment. In late 2018, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) notified NDOT that an EIS would be required and both parties began work to minimize impacts to the project schedule.

In an effort to streamline the federal permitting process, the USACE opted to apply Executive Order 13807 or “One Federal Decision” to manage cooperating agencies and their authorization requirements under one umbrella. The USACE and NDOT have been working together to keep the proposed project timeline of construction in 2021, with hope work could begin as soon as the agencies could agree on plans for environmental impacts.

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Additionally, NDOT made the decision in November 2019 to alter the delivery mechanism for the segment in order to mitigate project risk by directly managing the schedule. Changing the contracting process to a design-bid-build allows the NDOT to build off design work from the shortlisted design-build teams and sequentially manage the final design and construction of the project to ensure efficiency and control for project cost.

About the Segment

US-275 Scribner to West Point will improve approximately 18.5 miles of US-275, located in Cuming and Dodge Counties. The rural portions of this corridor will be upgraded from a two-lane highway to a four-lane expressway with a bypass constructed around Scribner. A five-lane two-way-left-turn-lane section will be constructed north and south of the existing four-lane section in West Point. The existing four-lane concrete section in West Point from 13th Street (R.P. 116+63) to Logan Street (R.P. 118+07) will be used in place.

US-275 Norfolk to N-15 and N-15 to Wisner

To support accelerated delivery, the northernmost portion from Norfolk to Wisner is set to be constructed in two segments. In 2019, NDOT selected a consultant to lead work to improve the approximate 16 miles of US-275 from N-57 just east of Norfolk to the east junction of US-275 and N-15 to Wisner. Preliminary design and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review are currently underway and expected to be complete in 2020.

The NDOT submitted an application for the US Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program to support construction of the Norfolk to N-15 portion of US-275 in July 2019. Funding for the project was not included in the list of 55 projects selected for the \$900 million in grants announced by U.S. Secretary Elaine L. Chao on November 12, 2019.

The NDOT is committed to the delivery of the US-275 corridor and plans to reapply for the next round of BUILD grants with the hope that the Trump Administration continues its commitment to investing in rural transportation. The NDOT will continue with design and environmental work to best position the project for potential opportunities for competitive funding.

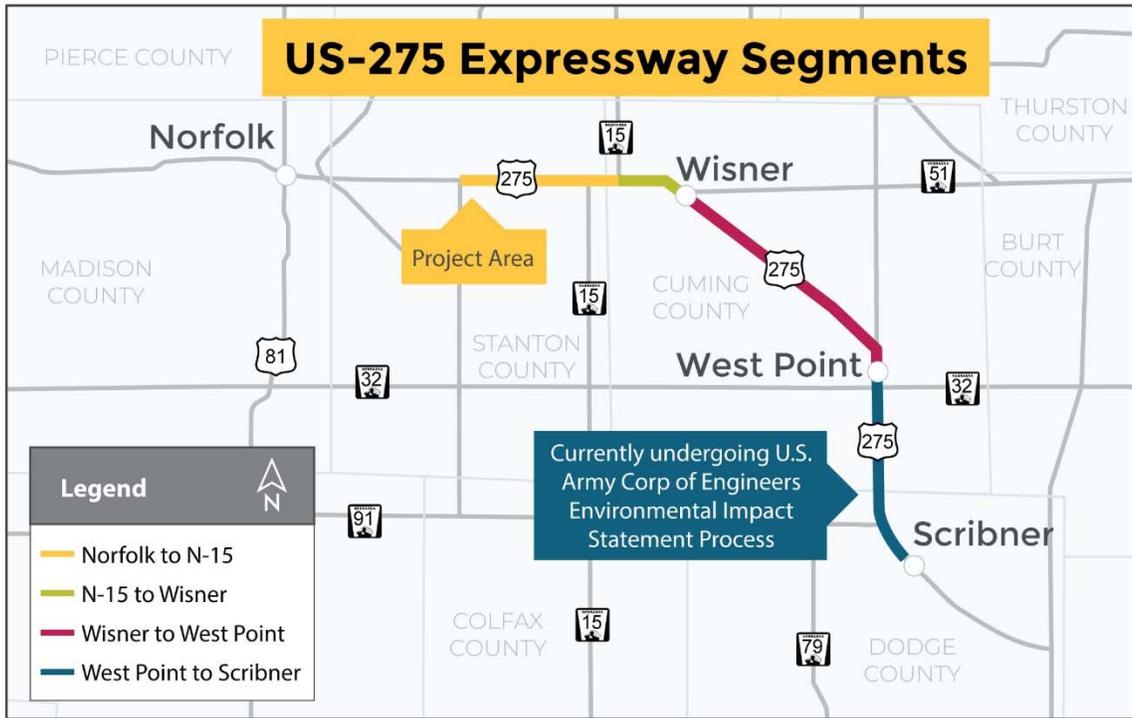
About the Segment

Norfolk to N-15 covers approximately 10 miles from the intersection of US-275 and N-57 east of Norfolk to the east junction of US-275 with N-15. The additional segment of N-15 to Wisner covers the remaining five-and-a-half miles of the highway. The project expands the existing two-lane highway to a four-lane expressway by constructing a new, parallel, two-lane roadway (called 2+2 construction) on one side of the existing US-275. A Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Resurfacing (3R) strategy would also be applied to the existing two lanes to extend the life of the roadway.

Wisner to West Point (West of Pilger)

Currently funded for design with construction estimated between 2024 and 2033.

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