

NEBRASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Pete Ricketts, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nebraska Department of Transportation Confirms Schedule for Lincoln South Beltway

April 10, 2020 (Lincoln, Neb.) — Today, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) confirmed the Lincoln South Beltway is on schedule to be open to traffic in spring 2023. The Department has been working closely with the contractor on the project, Hawkins Construction of Omaha, since March 23 to overcome financial challenges that threatened to delay the project. Confirmation that Hawkins is able to deliver on the original schedule comes after the announcement that all conditions required for Financial Close have been satisfied.

“Today is a good day,” said NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis. “When we are able to provide our industry partners the freedom and the flexibility to deliver, Nebraskans win. Neither the NDOT nor the Hawkins team skipped a beat in reacting to safeguard the project’s schedule. We’ll continue to work closely with Hawkins to open this historic project to traffic in 2023.”

In 2019, NDOT announced the use of an innovative financing approach to accelerate construction and allow the project to be built over three years but financed over the original timeframe laid out in the phased construction approach. The South Beltway was unique in that the contract signed in January 2020 provided for a partnership between NDOT and Hawkins Construction to extend the payments for work completed beyond the project completion date.

The approach requires NDOT to pay a set amount quarterly and the contractor to obtain financing to cover costs throughout the duration of construction. Due to the instability in the financial markets from COVID-19, Hawkins Construction notified NDOT in March that they were unable to finalize their financial package within the originally scheduled timeframe.

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“Dirt is turning and we are invested,” said NDOT Director Kyle Schneeweis. “We understand there is a lot of uncertainty in our lives today but we are focusing on delivering what is in front of us and planning the best we can with what we know. We’ve got decades of experience at the NDOT to guide us. We’re committed, and our industry partners are committed, to providing for the best possible transportation system for the movement of people and goods.”

The Lincoln South Beltway is the largest and one of the most complex projects the NDOT has undertaken. The \$352,191,375 contract covers construction of an 11-mile east-west four-lane freeway that will reduce congestion on Nebraska Highway 2 through Lincoln and improve regional mobility. Construction began in February 2020 with NDOT, Benesch and Hawkins Construction hosting a pre-construction meeting on March 11 to layout final project phasing and detour routes to the public.

The NDOT has been working towards delivery of the South Beltway for decades and following passage of the Build Nebraska Act, the NDOT was able to partner with City of Lincoln, Lancaster County and the US Department of Transportation to secure funding and prioritize the project.

#NDOT#

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