



THE 635EXCHANGE



Steel Girders at Greenville Avenue Cross Street Bridge

Volume 4 | Fall 2022

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT'S NEW DIRECT CONNECTORS

A Look at the First New Connector Ramps to Open at Interstates 635 and 30

This year's openings of the first new direct connectors at the I-30/I-635 interchange testify to the progress made for 635 East in 2022. This portion of the project falls within Mesquite city limits (Segment 3) and allows the estimated 230,000 vehicles to pass between the two major interstate highways.

Drivers welcomed three new operational direct connector ramps at the interchange, while

several others continued to take shape at the multi-level junction. This also led to taking down old direct connectors that were no longer in use, to replace the existing outdated connections that have served northeastern Dallas County for decades.



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The Southbound I-635 Split

Exit 8 along southbound I-635 introduced a new split-ramp configuration located past Galloway Avenue. This replaced the old ramp access further south, requiring drivers to take an earlier exit on the right around Galloway to access the new ramp. Upon exiting, the new connection climbs up in elevation to reach a fork in the road, where drivers may choose to drive in the left lane to access eastbound I-30 or in the right lane to access westbound I-30.

The two direct connectors were officially opened a few months apart in the spring. The best way to access Exit 8 is to remain in the right lane as early as La Prada Drive and follow signs for I-30 toward Texarkana and Dallas.

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TEXAS
CLEAR
LANES

NEW DIRECT CONNECTORS: CONTINUED

South to East Direct Connector:

- 27 spans
- Tallest point is over 85 feet in elevation above ground level
- About 8,000 cubic yards (CY) of concrete required to build the direct connector
- 140 concrete girders
- Approx. 1.5 million pounds of reinforcing steel
- Approx. 3,200 feet in length

South to West Direct Connector

- 24 Spans
- Tallest Point is over 57 feet in elevation above ground level
- More than 8,200 cubic yards (CY) of concrete required to build the direct connector
- 129 concrete girders
- Approx. 1.1 million pounds of reinforcing steel
- Approx. 3,104 feet in length

North to West Direct Connector

- 17 spans
- Tallest point is over 90 feet tall in elevation above ground level
- Approx. 4,200 cubic yards (CY) of concrete required to build the direct connector
- 56 Concrete girders
- Approx. 1.4 million pounds of structural steel girders
- Approx. 1.2 million pounds of reinforcing steel
- Approx. 2,034 feet in length

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The Northbound I-635 Direct Connector to Westbound I-30

Exit 8A is the first fully constructed direct connector to open along the northbound I-635 mainlanes. Access to the new ramp can be found north of Town East Boulevard. Drivers must remain in the right lane prior to Town East to access the new ramp.

The north-to-west connection will mirror the split-ramp configuration of Exit 8 along southbound I-635. Eventually, it will share access with the north-to-east connector ramp set to open in 2022.



More to Come

The project team anticipates the completed construction of several more direct connectors by the end of the year into the winter months. The next three ramps that are in the queue include:

- The Eastbound I-30 direct connector to Northbound I-635 (Exit 56B)
- The Westbound I-30 direct connector to Southbound I-635 (Exit 56A)
- The Northbound I-635 direct connector to Eastbound I-30 (Exit 8)

Bridge demolition of the old direct connectors will immediately follow the sequence when construction of elevated ramps are complete at the I-30/I-635 interchange.

Once crews reach this important phase of the project, more activity will be possible along the northbound and southbound I-635 mainlanes at I-30. This includes constructing more sections of continuous I-635 frontage roads in this area, as well as bridge and roadway construction near the Gus Thomasson Road and Galloway Avenue intersections.

To receive traffic alerts and notices, especially about new available direct connectors, please sign up for alerts by visiting: [635east.com/receive/](https://www.635exchange.com/receive/) ■

PLC JOINS COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN VARIOUS EVENTS

PLC participated in numerous community engagement opportunities during the spring and summer months. From helping commemorate a project milestone to building stronger connections with stakeholders, our project team loves to engage with the communities surrounding 635 East.

Lake Highlands Milestone Recognition Event of Skillman Bridge

In May, TxDOT and PLC joined City of Dallas Council Member Adam McGough, representing District 10, and other local leaders for an intimate gathering near the overpass bridge at Skillman Street. A tightly knit community of dedicated leaders and neighbors has advocated for the 635 East Project for nearly 20 years. This milestone event provided a chance for representatives of the Lake Highlands community to celebrate meeting a mid-project goal – the demolition of Skillman Street bridge in summer 2022, in preparation for the bridge's full reconstruction. Attendees shared several heartfelt stories, memories, and cast a hopeful vision for the future. TxDOT Dallas District Engineer, Mo Bur described the planned signature Skillman steel arches as “the crown center piece of the \$1.7 billion project.” The speakers also included Dallas Council Member Omar Narvaez (District 6), who chairs the City of Dallas Transportation & Infrastructure Committee; and Dr. Theresa Daniel, Dallas County Commissioner (District 1), who formerly served as the elected chair for the Regional Transportation Council.

LHPID Stronger Together Bash

In June, PLC joined members and friends of the Lake Highlands Public Improvement District (LHPID) for neighborhood festivities at the Stronger Together Summer Bash. The Forest Audelia Village Shopping Center was transformed into a block-party style event with food, games and numerous stations consisting of resources from local businesses, schools, community groups and services to neighbors interested in learning what could be available in the community around them.

RHCA Build Fort Worth Expo

In August, PLC joined various builders, small businesses, and services in the annual Build Fort Worth Expo hosted by the Regional Hispanic Contractors Association (RHCA). Networking with existing and new connections made for another great event in north Texas.

NTWGA Annual Golf Tournament

The North Texas Warrior Golf Association (NTWGA) is a 501 (c)(3) public charity, whose mission is to provide therapeutic and rehabilitative golfing experiences to wounded veterans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. PLC supported and helped bring awareness to the cause by sponsoring an annual golf tournament in September, which also consisted of a chance to compete with other local sponsors. |■



PROJECT PROGRESS: CURRENT FOCUS

- Completing Utility Relocations
- Drainage Installation
- Frontage Road Construction
- Cross-Street Bridge Construction
- Direct Connector Work at the I-30/I-635 Interchange

Progress photos are available on our website under the **View Tab** and updated monthly.



Skillman Street at I-635
September 2022



I-635 frontage roads at Royal Lane
September 2022



Galloway Avenue at I-30
September 2022

PLC JOB OPPORTUNITIES

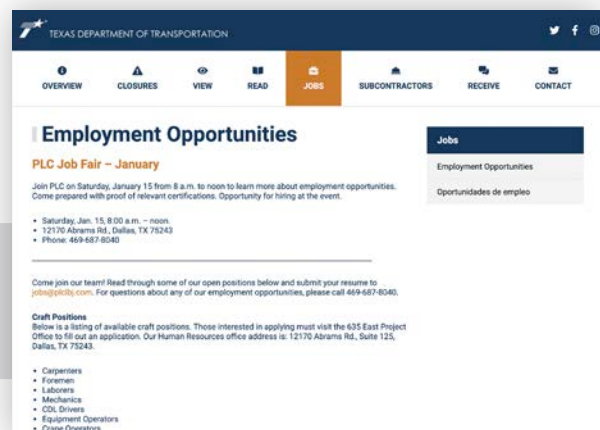
With construction activities increasing for the summer, Pegasus Link Constructors I-635 East team is actively seeking applicants for the following positions:

- Carpenters
- CDL Drivers (*Dump Truck, Water Truck, Belly Dump Truck, Concrete Truck*)
- Operators (*Loader, Excavator, Blade*)
- Equipment Operators
- Foremen
- Laborers
- Mechanics

Please apply in person at our project office:
12170 Abrams Rd. Suite 125, Dallas.

For questions about any of our employment opportunities, please call 469-687-8040.

Visit the **Jobs tab** on our website
for more information.



PLC CELEBRATES NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK WITH EMPLOYEES



TxDOT and PLC's commitment to safety is widely enforced on a continuous basis. Safety continues to be a value, belief and obligation that unites our crews across all departments and disciplines.

For a week in May, the project team joined many others across the nation to focus on construction safety, offering a week of festivities for the almost 800 foremen, craft and salaried employees working on the 635 East Project.

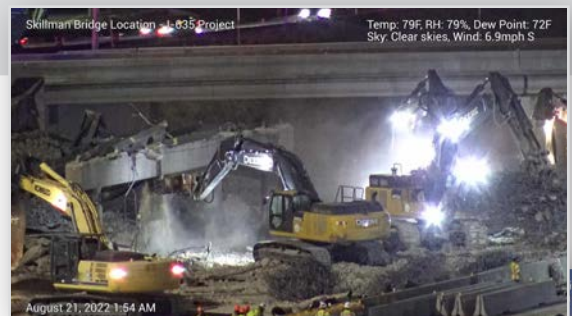
The lineup for the week consisted of discussions on safety topics, resources and best practices used on work sites.

Children whose parents or family members work along the project were able to share what safety means to them in an engaging art project, all submitted and displayed at the project's field offices. The gallery serves as a constant reminder of loved ones awaiting their families' safe travel back home after every work shift on a highly active construction corridor. ■

A BITTERSWEET FAREWELL TO THE SKILLMAN BRIDGE

In August, crews officially took down the historic Skillman Street overpass bridge at I-635. All lanes of both eastbound and westbound I-635 were closed overnight for a weekend as mainlane traffic was detoured to the frontage roads.

Originally built in 1967, the structure's full removal from service marks an important milestone as the project makes room for the construction of an iconic gateway to the Lake Highlands neighborhood. The project team safely shifted vehicle traffic onto the Skillman temporary bridge, which is situated directly west of the intersection. While the temporary bridge serves a short-term purpose of keeping traffic moving in and around Skillman over I-635, it is constructed as a permanent structure that will be removed once the signature Lake Highlands bridge is in place at the end of 2024. ■



DBE SPOTLIGHT: QMF STEEL

QMF Steel is a metal supplier, manufacturer and fabricator based in North Texas, owned and operated by a husband-and-wife team.

Steve and Sherrill Lester are proud Dallas natives who love driving through Texas and seeing the fruits of their labor along the way. Sherrill was working in advertising at Neiman Marcus early in her career when she and Steve had the opportunity to purchase a metal supply company in 1994. From Neiman Marcus furs and crystal to metal supply sold to manufacturers, Sherrill was ready to shift gears. Sherrill grew up watching and assisting her father, a hard-working machinist and business owner, by helping to make and package parts and go on deliveries to customers.

The purchase of QMF was born through a series of divine events and chance meetings, which Sherrill attributes to her faith in a loving and purposeful God. The company's roots are in the distribution and manufacturing of aluminum, stainless and steel materials. Eventually the company branched into fabrication for heavy highway construction by working on the LBJ Express Project, the central portion of the I-635 renovation between Luna Road and US 75. QMF fabricated the unique ornamental brown aluminum pedestrian railings for the eight bridges from Preston Road to Valley View Lane.

Though the small company began as Quail Meadow Farms (QMF) with two employees and humble aspirations, it now employs about 45 people full-time in Texas, and is still growing. Their fabrication work began by winning a \$500K contract, then a \$1M contract, and eventually a \$4.5M contract on successive projects.

Specializing in high quality, cost efficiency and decreased fabrication time, QMF Steel's customers are consistently pleased with the final product. The plant is filled with high tech computer-controlled lasers, robot welders and powder coating. Their shop is both ISO and AISC quality certified, and they deliver Buy America materials even through their welding processes.

Sherrill treats others with respect and appreciation; she believes it is best to tell the truth so that there are no surprises. Though she has often wondered how she is in this privileged position, she recognizes that QMF Steel has earned work because their dedicated team has proven to be trustworthy, successfully delivering for their clients again and again. As Sherrill explained, "God made each of us to be unique and have a unique contribution. We take pride in our ability to collaborate with our customers, which maximizes their success."

Sherrill and her husband met through work and eventually married. They have been married for 38 years, owning and operating QMF Steel for 28 of those years.

QMF Steel is a member of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program community for the Texas Department of Transportation and a member of the Regional Hispanic Contractors Association. QMF is also DBE certified in 12 other states and a nationally-certified Woman-Owned Business (WBE). In 2017, QMF Steel was awarded the SBA National Prime Contractor of the Year and the company was toured by cabinet member and SBA Director Linda McMahon. Thus far for the 635 East Project, QMF Steel has supplied bridge drains, drip pans and other miscellaneous metal bridge products.

Elsewhere in Dallas, readers may notice the distinctive stainless steel pedestrian handrails for the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge for the PLC Horseshoe Project. In Austin, QMF Steel furnished the LED-lit switchback rails for the 183 Bergstrom Highway project. |■

Photos below courtesy of QMF Steel



STREET PROFILE: LA PRADA DRIVE AT I-635

What to Expect at La Prada Drive

Key Improvements:

- Incorporation of a shared-use path providing a connection across I-635 between Woodmeadow Parkway and the northbound I-635 frontage road.
- Sidewalk and pedestrian access across the La Prada Drive intersection
- Added exit ramp along northbound I-635 to La Prada Drive (signed as Exit 10)
- Added entrance ramp from La Prada Drive to southbound I-635

A temporary long-term closure of access through the La Prada Drive intersection will be required lasting up to one year to achieve these planned construction improvements.

Please sign up for our traffic alerts to be notified of major project activities, lane closures and milestones: 635east.com/receive/ | ■

STREET PROFILE: GUS THOMASSON ROAD AT I-30

What to Expect at Gus Thomasson Road

Key Improvements:

- Pedestrian access for both directions of Gus Thomasson Road
- Dedicated “Texas- U-Turn” lanes will be constructed as part of the 635 East Project
- The final alignment of Gus Thomasson Road will be at the same elevation north and south of its intersection at I-30.
- The future I-30 mainlanes will be constructed as an overpass at Gus Thomasson Road.

A temporary long-term closure of up to nine months of the Gus Thomasson Road intersection at I-30 will be required to achieve the planned construction improvements.

Please sign up for our traffic alerts to become notified of major project activities, lane closures and milestones: 635east.com/receive/ | ■

ROUNDING UP AREA BUSINESSES



If you call an area near our project your workplace, please consider joining our Business Task Force (BTF). On our project website, we post helpful resources about construction for business owners, property managers and store managers who would like to communicate with their staff about the roadway changes and improvements as a result of the 635 East Project.

We also produce targeted and unique construction updates and videos for our BTF members. These Virtual Presentations are posted on our website and can be easily shared with your coworkers, employees, friends and neighbors. You may view our existing archive of virtual presentations here: 635east.com/business-task-force

You may enroll as an active member of the BTF. Please join by visiting our website, choose the Contact Tab and then select **Business Task Force**.



THE 635EXCHANGE

LET'S GET CONNECTED.



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