



CLINT COINTMENT  
Parish President

# *Parish of Ascension*

OFFICE of COMMUNICATIONS

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Long-awaited Highway 42 nearing completion**

Ascension Parish President Clint Cointment requested a status update from LA DOTD on the long-awaited improvements to Highway 42 in the northern part of the parish.

“Highway 42 is a major east-west thoroughfare for us,” said Cointment. “Work has been going on for a long time, and planning has gone on even longer. I wanted to find out where things stood.”

According to information received from the state, the project is expected to have all lanes of traffic open by the end of 2020. Originally, this was projected to happen by Thanksgiving of this year but shutdowns due to COVID-19 adversely impacted the project. Barring any other work stoppages due to unforeseen circumstances or adverse weather, the contractor is on schedule for opening all lanes of travel in late December 2020. The project, once it is complete, will have curbs, sidewalks, two west bound travel lanes, and two east bound travel lanes. All travel lanes will be 11 feet wide, and there will be a center median island. The north side of LA 42 will have a 6 foot sidewalk along the back of curb, while the south side will have a 10 foot multiuse path.

Curb work on the median is currently near Rouses and progressing eastward. The outside curb work is near Manchac Acres, Muddy Creek to John Broussard Road, and LA 44. Once enough curbing is installed the paving operation will begin applying approximately 15 inches of asphalt.

Since LA 42 is an existing road that has remained open during construction, it sometimes appears the lanes are narrower or the drainage is substandard. What is actually occurring is the contractor is forming the required combination curb and gutter, and then filling the roadway

with successive small thicknesses of asphalt, to ensure compaction. This manner of construction makes it hold water within the roadway while under construction. Temporary holes are cut into the catch basins for draining the roadway, but they do not receive runoff at the capacity of the box inlet as designed. Unfortunately, the project has been receiving a lot of rain and some areas have been inundated. While the water is not so deep that a vehicle can't pass, it does present a potential for vehicles to hydroplane. Once the asphalt is flush with the curb and gutter, the standing water problem will be alleviated, and the drainage will perform as designed. DOTD cautions all motorists to use precaution while navigating a roadway under construction, especially during inclement weather.

The existing roadway between the curb and gutter is two feet narrower than what the finished product will be which makes driving between them feel restrictive. Once the asphalt is flush with the gutter, drivers will have two 11foot travel lanes in each direction. This same is true for the left turn lanes throughout the project length. Once all asphalt is in place, flush and level with the gutter, it will be easier for larger vehicles and vehicles with trailers to negotiate these left turns. The turn lanes also have mountable curbs that are thick and designed to have non-typical vehicle traffic roll over them.

DOTD reports that the contractor is diligently working during all days that the weather permits, and is confident of completing Highway 42 by the end of this year.

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Photo # 1 - Hwy 42 looking west from Hwy 44

Photo #2 - Hwy 42 looking east

Photo #3 - Hwy 42 in Prairieville