



Central Texas Turnpike 2002 Project Helps Make Seguin Primed for Future Growth

State Highway 130 is a planned corridor through central Texas that runs parallel to Interstate Highway 35 from just north of Georgetown, Texas, at State Highway 195, south to just east of Seguin, Texas intersecting at IH 10. The corridor is designed to greatly divert traffic around the heavily traveled Austin, San Marcos, New Braunfels, and San Antonio areas, thus creating great opportunities for future developments of single family residential, industrial, manufacturing, retail and distribution centers.

The highway, which began construction in October 2003, is scheduled to be completed through to Seguin in 2012. The first section, a 66 mile toll road, down through Austin and ending near Mustang Ridge will be operational within the next year and run by the state. The last 45 miles to Seguin is being built and eventually operated by Cintra-Zachry through Public-Private-Partnerships with the state thus allowing the state to concentrate funds to other transportation projects throughout the state since they will not be incurring all of the cost of building the last leg, segment 6, of State Highway 130.

Over the last 6 months a group has quietly begun the process of acquiring the land needed to complete segment 6 of the tollway. Since the inception of the plan, speculative entities have been slowly coming to town looking for commercial/industrial land plays along IH 10 in between the tollway and San Antonio. None have completely taken the dive for large land plays yet but the effects of the new highway are already being seen.

At the intersection of IH 10 and Highway 123 Bypass there have been many additions in the last few years, such as, 2 new restaurants and a hotel, surely the impact of the plan. Also further west towards San Antonio at IH 10 and highway 46, which links Seguin with New Braunfels, has also seen an influx of new restaurants, gas stations, and hotels. These are just a few small moves that have been made in Seguin that will eventually help to attract larger companies to the area. Developer Jim Ray, who helped develop The Rim in San Antonio, should close on the +/- 600 acres, originally planned for a Lowes distribution center, this week, just west of the intersection of IH10 and Highway 46, and plans a mixed use development.

In May of 2006, the city of Seguin's Destination Seguin committee, formed to make Seguin more enticing to companies looking to relocate or grow, got the city council to approve a bond worth a total of \$14.15 million to fund improvement

projects throughout the city. The projects included range from park improvements to roadways, utilities, and drainage. There are also rumors to extend sewer, which right now ends at Guadalupe street, all the way out to the intersection of FM 725 and IH 10 possibly even picking up the older subdivisions of Pecan Cove and Placid Heights.

There are a few other attractive incentives in Seguin which will aide in its growth over the next few years. A major one being the SEDC, Seguin Economic Development Corporation, whose sole job is to bring new business and growth to the community. Another is that, on a per capita basis, Seguin has more residents working in a manufacturing position that any other city in Texas.

State Highway 130's effects are already being seen, from rising commercial prices to speculative land buyers snatching up smaller commercial land. With the addition of State Highway 130, traffic counts on IH 10 West to Seguin are expected to at minimum, double if not more. It is also being predicted that 80 to 90 percent of the traffic coming off of State Highway 130 will take a right towards San Antonio and not head out to Houston. That is still to be seen since the only other options are Hwy 71 and 290, both of which go through many small towns and stop lights, increasing drive time. Many might opt to keep it moving and take 130 to 10.

The growth that will be seen in Seguin, I believe, will be mostly north of 90 and south of Cordova road. This is due to the fact that there are still many large land plays for single family development and retail/industrial/manufacturing developments. The sewer and water has already been extended to include the new subdivision on Highway 46 by Perry Homes, Little Mill Creek. That alone should eventually entice large home builders out along Hwy 46 along with its accessibility to New Braunfels and IH 35.

Combining State Highway 130 with the insight that the leaders of Seguin have had for the future, the city of Seguin looks very bright. As we come closer to the completion of State Highway 130, growth, land prices, and speculators will all begin to increase at a much more rapid pace than we are seeing now. Now is the time to buy Seguin and wait for the huge rewards that will come in the future.

- Ben Wallace