

Dallas mayor undecided on demolishing I-345

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By BRANDON FORMBY

Transportation Writer

bformby@dallasnews.com

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Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings remained undecided Tuesday about whether state transportation officials should demolish an elevated downtown highway that some say deters development.

Rawlings met Tuesday with Texas Department of Transportation district engineer Bill Haleon about the future of Interstate 345. The highway connects Interstate 45 and U.S. Highway 75 on the east side of downtown. About 200,000 trips are made on it each weekday.

TxDOT is planning a \$100 million renovation of the aging, 1.4-mile stretch of road. Rawlings said demolition would cost \$1.9 billion.

A group co-founded by urban planner Patrick Kennedy says I-345 chokes Deep Ellum and East Dallas off from downtown. TxDOT is planning a study on how a teardown would affect traffic and neighborhoods. The agency says a study would take 10 years.

Kennedy has called that timeline a stalling tactic. A spokesman for Rawlings said late Tuesday that the mayor needs to know more about the study's scope before commenting on how long it should take.

In a written statement, the mayor praised TxDOT for agreeing to look into the issue.

Rawlings also noted that the city has no authority over TxDOT.

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Wylie H Dallas

3 hours ago

[Rawlings said demolition would cost \$1.9 billion.]

Why is Rawlings making such a ridiculous statement? Is this another one of those situations in which he's going to pretend to study an issue while simultaneously placing his thumb, if not his entire arm, down on one end of the scale in such a manner as to make his conclusion entirely predictable?

What is the true cost of tearing out I-345? Call me crazy, but if the cost of building the 8.7 mile Trinity toll road inside the levees, with multiple complicated interchanges is only \$1.5 billion, I'm guessing that merely knocking down an existing short section of elevated highway isn't anywhere close to \$1.9 billion... lol.....

Also... TxDOT's \$100 million plan to renovate the highway requires the current deck to be removed, anyway. So... how does simply taking out the remaining portions of the structure cost another \$1.8 billion (even assuming that the new deck would be free)? Answer, it doesn't.

Come on, Mayor Rawlings, please don't treat your constituents as total idiots.

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