



BELIZE PRESS OFFICE

• Phone: 822-0094 or 0092

• Fax: 822-2671

• website: www.belize.gov.bz

PRESS RELEASE

Unveiling of the Plaque for the Airport Link Road Project

Belmopan. September 24, 2020.

A brief ceremony was held today, September 24, to unveil a plaque marking the official opening of the newly constructed John Smith Road (Airport Link Road).

The John Smith Road is approximately 8.1km (5 miles). The upgrading includes the construction of a high-level bridge crossing the Belize River near to the existing airport access road. The new road alignment intersects the George Price Highway, meanders through low-lying marshland, crosses the Belize River and finally intersects the airport access road, near Gentrac Belize Ltd. The road project also includes the construction of earthen embankments, crushed gravel pavements, and two 3.65 meters lanes with 1.2 meters shoulders. The bridge structure has a span of 81.7meters (3 spans at 26.7m) and a trafficable width of 12.05 meters. It is designed to AASHTO standards and is of reinforced concrete building. Constituting a part of the civil works is the construction of two roundabouts, a three-leg roundabout at the intersection with the airport access road and a four-leg roundabout at the intersection with the George Price Highway.

Benefits of the project include reduced travel time; vehicle operating cost savings; and increased access to adjacent lands that could be used for agriculture, residential and commercial enterprises. Furthermore, redundancy in Belize's road network is increased with the addition of this new road segment, linking nearby communities of Hattieville, Western Pines, and Ladyville.

Works were completed by CISCO Construction Ltd. in September 2020 under budget at BZ\$33 million. Project coordination was done by the Ministry of Works, and engineering supervision by Nabeel Abdul Raheem Consultants.

The construction of the John Smith Road was funded through a loan from the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), with financial support from the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

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