The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Leningradka-MKAD Junction Ready By New Year

By Roland Oliphant

May 13, 2012



This intersection on Leningradskoye Shosse will be replaced before the end of the year, if the mayor has his way. **Valery Volkov**

The first part of a new intersection at the notorious bottleneck where Leningradskoye Shosse and the Moscow Ring Road meet should be open by the end of this year.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin ordered contractors to step up the pace of work "without compromising on quality" after a tour of the site Friday.

Workers began building two new two-lane overpasses to replace the current cloverleaf junction in December. The project, which also includes upgrades to existing roads and a traffic control system, is estimated to cost 5 billion rubles ($166 million).

The access ramps on the southwest side of the MKAD, in the direction of Rublyovskoye Shosse, should be complete by the end of 2012, while those on the northeast side (toward

Dmitrovskoye Shosse) should open in April 2013, the Mayor's press service said.

Reconstruction work on Leningradskoye Shosse itself from the junction as far as Sheremetyevo Airport should be complete by the end of 2013. The plan includes widening the road on either side by adding bus lanes.

The junction, where Leningradskoye Shosse crosses the ring road from Moscow into the town of Khimki, is notorious for delays and causing painful bottlenecks on the way to Sheremetyevo Airport.

Planning experts have blamed the congestion on a 1970s-built cloverleaf design that is unsuited for present-day volumes of traffic.

It is the first of a series of intersections on the city's outer beltway that have been earmarked for reconstruction. Other junctions to be reworked in coming years include those with Profsoyuznaya Ulitsa, Varshavskoye Shosse and Kashirskoye Shosse.

The new junction is also part of the Big Leningradka road development, a plan to upgrade the entire road from Tverskaya Ulitsa as far as Sheremetyevo Airport.

Leningradka, as the highway is known to Muscovites, is the main road from Moscow to St. Petersburg, and is often overloaded with freight traffic between the two cities. Until the opening of the Aeroexpress rail link in 2010, it was also the only way to Sheremetyevo Airport, which lies on the road's eastern side just north of Khimki.

Since the opening of the railway line in 2010, passengers trying to get to Sheremetyevo have been able to avoid the multihour traffic jams, but the road remains heavily congested.

The sense of spending a lifetime in Leningradka's traffic jams was memorably summarized by United Russia Duma Deputy Robert Shlegel in commentary he made in 2010 defending the controversial replacement Moscow-St. Petersburg highway that will run through Khimki Forest.

"I made acquaintances, fell in love, quarreled and parted, fought and made friends, died from cold and heat, read poems, wrote poems, studied, worked, slept, ate, drank, hitchhiked and ... even had a birthday once. In a word, I lived and grew up in that traffic jam," he wrote in a blog post at the time.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/05/13/leningradka-mkad-junction-ready-by-new-year-a14702