



## **Landowners Donate Rights Of Way For New Freeway**

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Construction along Interstate 25 in Denver, Colo. (File) SALT LAKE CITY (AP) Three landowners are donating up to 300 acres in land rights of way, making way for a contested freeway project connecting Salt Lake and Utah counties

Kennecott Land Co., Sorenson Development and Development Associates agreed to a deal with the Utah Department of Transportation. The developers have agreed to sell the land to UDOT, then return the proceeds when the Mountain View Corridor freeway is completed.

“We've taken yet one more impediment out of the way,” Senate President John Valentine said at a Capitol news conference Friday.

But there could be plenty more hurdles for the freeway, which would run through West Valley City and connect with Interstate 15 in Utah County.

The state is finishing an environmental study. Environmentalists oppose the project and this week the Granite School Board noted worries that the freeway could increase pollution near several schools.

Because the environmental study hasn't been completed, UDOT can't claim the land for the project by condemnation. Instead, the property must be acquired from a willing seller.

The deal announced Friday covers the southern 10 miles of the 43-mile project. If the road is completed, it would provide another north-south artery and open up the area for more development.

“We obviously believe it's good business,” Kennecott Land president Don Whyte said. “It allows us to follow through with the development as we envisioned.”

UDOT spokesman Nile Easton said the land is especially important to the project because of the growth that will occur in the area over the next few years. Easton said new homes are expected to increase by 223 percent in the next 20 years.

Traffic will increase along with the population.

“We need to do something to address that congestion,” Easton said.