

kcConnections



A publication of MoDOT Kansas City District

Nov. 14-18 2011

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Federal Highway Administrator Visits MoDOT Kansas City's Final Recovery Act Project

Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez came to Kansas City November 9 just in time to see the final touches made to a project that will eliminate the tightest traffic bottleneck in the metropolitan area.

MoDOT is only days away from opening the third lane of I-70 beneath I-435, the key improvement of a \$39.3 million project to make the interchange safer and faster. Mendez was joined at the news conference by Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Stephen Miller, MoDOT Director Kevin Keith and MoDOT's Kansas City District Engineer Dan Niec. The event was at the south end of the Stadium Drive bridge overlooking the improvements.

Each transportation official emphasized the need for additional funding and the importance of maintaining our investment in transportation infrastructure. Mendez noted that I-70 projects in the area received \$37 million in funding through the American Recovery and Rein-

vestment Act, and added that President Obama would continue to press Congress to pass further infrastructure bills like the recently proposed American Jobs Act. The \$50 billion transportation project proposal would include \$27 billion to "put people back to work rebuilding America's roads and Bridges," Mendez said.

Director Kevin Keith also discussed the condition of I-70 between Kansas City and St. Louis, and the need for additional funding to rebuild and expand the nearly 50-year-old interstate. He answered media questions regarding a proposal to consider changing I-70 to a toll road between St. Louis and Kansas City, and the need for a new federal transportation bill.

District Engineer Niec announced that the third lane of I-70 in each direction would open by Thanksgiving, more than a week ahead of the December 1 target date. The interchange handles about 200,000 vehicles per day.



(Pictured left to right) Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Stephen Miller, MoDOT's Kansas City District Engineer Dan Niec, Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez, MoDOT Director Kevin Keith and Federal Highway Division Administrator Kevin Ward.

Bolder 5-Year Direction Timeline

2011

- **October 2011-January 2012:** SG 11-16 positions (professionals) filled competitively.
- **November 22:** Appointments to SG 11-16 announced.
- **November 29:** Remaining SG 11-16 positions posted.
- **November 30:** deadline for SG 17-20s to separate from the Department and be compensated for annual leave and comp time at their current rate of pay.
- **December 1:** salary changes take effect for SG 17-20s.
- **December 6:** deadline to apply for remaining SG 11-16 positions.
- **December 31:** deadline for Supervisor SG 12-16s and SG 10-11s to separate from the Department and be compensated for annual leave and comp time at their current rate of pay if being demoted.

2012

- **January-March 2012:** SG 6-10 positions (technicians and support) filled competitively.
- **January 1:** salary changes take effect for demoted Supervisor SG 12-16s and SG 10-11s.
- **January 25:** video conference for SG 6-10.
- **January 31:** announcement of SG 11-16 positions.
- **April-May 2012:** SG 1-5 positions (support) filled competitively.
- **December 31:** all facility, equipment and operational changes complete.

2013

- **March 31:** all employee reassignments, staff reductions complete.

Bolder 5-Year Direction Questions?

- Visit: wwwi/intranet/hr/
- E-mail: SalaryGrade11-16@modot.mo.gov
- E-mail: SalaryGrade6-10@modot.mo.gov
- E-mail: SalaryGrade1-5@modot.mo.gov
- Contact your KC District HR representative

A Partnership Worth Celebrating

Approximately 20 people gathered on a brisk fall afternoon on Wednesday, Nov. 9 to celebrate completed safety improvements at several Route 50 intersections. The blue ribbon marked the finished project and celebrated an outstanding partnership between MoDOT and the University of Missouri, Kansas City (UMKC).

The idea began as a conversation in early 2010 between the district and UMKC. The senior design class was eager to put knowledge to work and MoDOT was able to put learning into a real world experience. Teaming up with the School of Computing and Engineering at UMKC not only offered the students a hands-on opportunity, but also let MoDOT engineers teach and expand the students' experiences. The result is several safer, more efficient intersections on Route 50.

The district had been working on a design to improve safety for the Harris Road, Buckner Tarsney Road, Hutt Road, Route F, Sam Moore Road, Route Z and W, Route 131 and County Road 1601

intersections. When MoDOT asked the class to help with the design, the students were ready to take on the challenge. These future engineers used innovative design techniques to find viable solutions to improve these intersections.

Through close interaction with MoDOT engineers, the students created a design, which MoDOT incorporated into the final design. This endeavor provided the students an opportunity to develop their skills through unique, hands-on experience, while allowing MoDOT engineers the chance to provide valuable knowledge while serving as mentors.

Those attending the ribbon cutting applauded MoDOT for expanding on the students' learning experience. The students were pleased to see the plans they had helped design actually used and constructed.

These students are the future of engineering work force and MoDOT is proud to have helped develop the skills required to be successful in future endeavors.



MoDOT staff, UMKC educators and students gathered Wednesday, Nov. 9 to celebrate an innovative partnership that resulted in safety improvements at several Route 50 intersections.

MoDOT Launches Effort To Reduce Pedestrian Fatalities

Missouri transportation officials are concerned. After just nine months in 2011, the number of pedestrian traffic deaths is nearly equal to those experienced in 2010. In fact, during the first quarter of 2011, pedestrian deaths were up 133 percent, compared to the same period in 2010.

Fatal incidents occurred in urban and rural areas, on highways and city streets, during the night and in broad daylight. Those killed included people crossing the road or walking along the side and those who had been ejected from a vehicle in an earlier crash and struck by other traffic.

By the end of September, 54 pedestrians died as a result of a traffic crash. In all of 2010, there were 57 similar fatalities. The Missouri Department of Transportation launched a safety campaign, "Be Safe. Be Seen" to remind pedestrians and motorists to look out for each other. Part of the problem, safety advocates think, has to do with people already experiencing a bad day by having a flat tire or mechanical problem.

"If I say 'pedestrian', you tend to think of someone out for exercise or kids walking to school," said Leanna Depue, MoDOT Highway Safety director. "But a pedestrian is any person near or on a roadway who is not in a vehicle or on a motorcycle. For example, someone changing a tire on the side of the road is a pedestrian."

"Stay alert to the traffic around you and don't expect that vehicles will yield," said Depue. "Make yourself visible – especially if your car is disabled. Turn on the headlights and hazard lights."

The Missouri State Highway Patrol also recommends that once drivers pull as far off the road as possible, all occupants remain in the vehicle with seat belts fastened.

"If you have pulled off the roadway onto the shoulder for any kind of emergency or vehicle malfunction and need assistance, call *55 or display a Send Police sign," said Captain Tim Hull, Missouri State Highway Patrol. "The trooper will

provide assistance and request the assistance of additional emergency services should they be needed."

MoDOT recommends that when walking near a highway or street, move in the opposite direction of traffic, so you can see oncoming vehicles.

"I tell people use their senses," said Depue. "Look at the drivers' faces. Are they looking at you? If not, move away from the road. Listen for unusual noises. Using earbuds, headphones or a phone can keep you from hearing a vehicle approach."

It's also important to note that drivers are more likely to expect to see pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections. Even at those locations, pedestrians should keep close watch and prepare to yield to vehicles.

To find more pedestrian safety information, please visit www.saveMOlives.com.



Director Kevin Keith held a series of employee meetings Nov. 10, 2011. Keith answered questions and asked employees to focus on four key areas:

1. Keep Missouri roads and bridges in good condition as long as we can with the resources we have.
2. Keep our citizens and ourselves safe.
3. Provide outstanding customer service.
4. Look for opportunities to do the next great thing.

Events Calendar

Cass Route W and O bridges ribbon cutting ceremony
Nov. 14, 2011 at 10 a.m.
At the Route W bridge over Grand River southwest of Freeman

Truman/Eisenhower Sign Unveiling
Nov. 18, 2011 at 10 a.m.
River Club, 8th Street in KCMO

Route 10 Bridges Ribbon Cutting
Nov. 18, 2011 at 1 p.m.
Bridge furthest west from Hardin

Route FF Bridge Ribbon Cutting
Nov. 21, 2011 at 10 a.m.
Northeast of Odessa and two miles east of Route O

Alan Weitkamp Retirement Reception
Dec. 16, 2011 at 6 p.m.
VFW in Lexington, 30th Street

EAEC Corner: Profiles

The KC Employee Advisory Extension Council (EAEC) has been active for more than three years and serves KC District employees. The council's goal is to foster and enhance a positive work environment for all employees by assisting management and employees with cultural diversity, policy review, and communication issues.

Take advantage of this avenue to stay informed about our district. You can contact the various members or submit a concern or question through the intranet or through a paper form that can be located in each work unit. All concerns are anonymous and confidential throughout the process.

The EAEC Corner introduces you to the members of the council.

Name, title and position on the EAEC.
Becky Pratt, senior electrician with the traffic department and member of the EAEC.

What areas of the district do you represent on the council? *I am the representative for general services.*



Why did you volunteer and what do you hope to accomplish while serving on the EAEC? *I thought I could help in some way to get the garage staff's voice heard.*

What's the best part of serving on the team? *You can help more than just your immediate coworkers, this is a big district with a lot of voices that want to be heard. I didn't realize there were still so many questions that couldn't get an answer out of fear of "getting in trouble." A lot of our concerns come in to the EAEC anonymously.*

What is one employee issue you hold near and dear to your heart? *It's good to think we helped this person with their concern to get answers, as well as others that might have the same concern. I can't think of one concern that stands out, I try to look at it as every concern is as important as the next because it is to that person submitting that concern.*

To learn more about the KC District EAEC on the intranet, click on Employee Advisory Council on the left-hand links.

Safety First

Preparedness is the key to getting through a winter storm with minimum danger and discomfort. Here are some things you should be thinking about now, not when the storm hits.

- **Heat** - How would you heat your home if the electricity went out? Only use a heating device designed for indoor use. You can keep your home warmer by closing off the rooms you don't need to use and huddling in the warmest room with all the blankets you can round up.
- **Light** - If you're thinking of candles, think again. Instead, make sure you have battery-operated lights, such as flashlights, and a supply of batteries.
- **Communication** – How do you get news? Keep a battery-operated radio in your home for emergencies. You also need a telephone that can be plugged directly into a telephone jack and that can operate without electricity. So if all you have are phones linked to cordless stations and answering machines, make sure you pick up a no-frills telephone to use in an emergency.
- **Food, Water and Medicine** - Do you have enough food and water? A 3-day supply of drinking water and foods that can be eaten without cooking are important survival supplies in any season. If you have special needs such as medicine, keep enough on hand to get you through a few days of being stuck at home or in a shelter.
- **Neighbors** – Keep an eye on your neighbors, particularly those who are elderly, caring for young children or living alone. Weather extremes are hardest on the old, the young and those in poor health, so help them to stay warm, dry, fed and cared for.
- **Heavy Work** – Are you physically fit and active? Winter storms claim lives when people are trying to work in extraordinary circumstances. Shoveling snow or doing other heavy work in the cold weather can cause heart attacks for those in poor health or unaccustomed to such work. And operating chain saws during disaster cleanup has proved fatal for persons without experience with these dangerous tools.

More safety information is available on the intranet under Risk Management.

SAFE SOUND



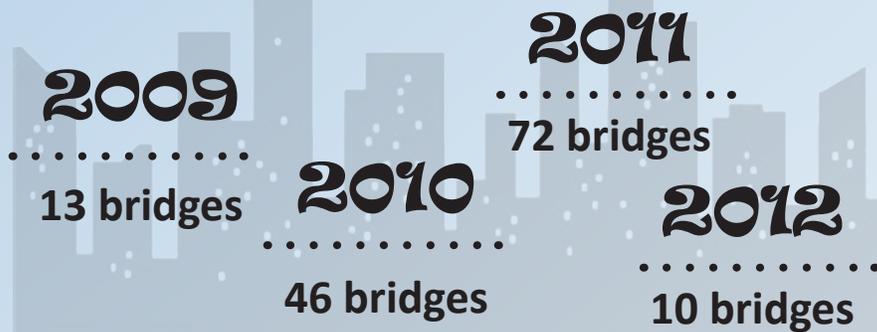
1,093 are in poor
(4) or serious (3) condition

← Safe & Sound will replace
or repair 802 of these
-- 141 in the Kansas City District →



**S A F E &
S O U N D**

No. of Safe & Sound Bridges in Kansas City District



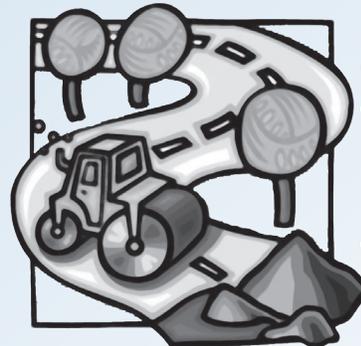
Program supports

5,300
local jobs
across
the state



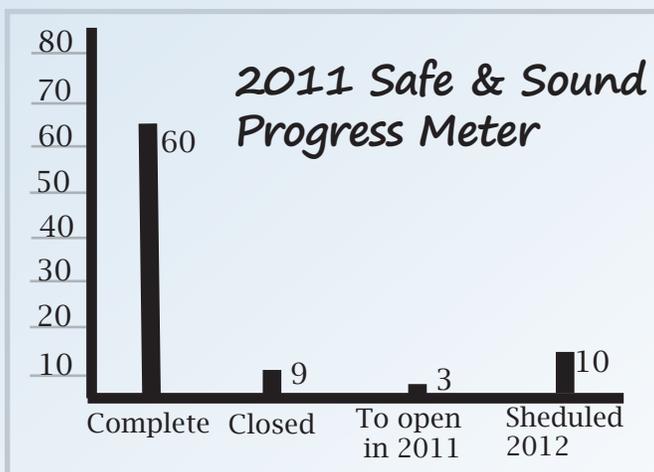
8.7
Average Rating of a
Safe & Sound Bridge,
on a 9-Point Scale

Avg. number
of bridges
Completed
per month



85,300 square
feet of concrete
+ 69,500 square
feet of asphalt

During a 103-day span in summer/fall 2010, 114 bridges were completed --
90 were total replacements



78,300
Vehicles



Cross new
bridges every day

Are you... Creative The Problem Solver *A Fixer of Broken Things*

AN INVENTOR



Show us! The **2011-2012 Innovation Challenge** is for you! We want to share the best innovations in our district. We know you're fixing, improving, creating ways to do our work better, faster and safer. This is your chance to show the rest of the state.

Innovations must emphasize:

- Work zones
- Injury reduction
- Bridge Maintenance
- Pavement Maintenance

They are judged on:

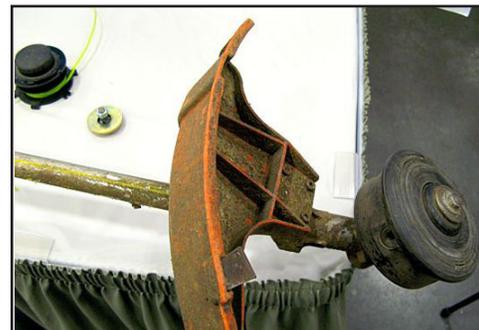
- Cost Savings
- Safety
- Implementation
- Impact on Five-Year Direction
- Convenience/Ease of Use



New processes, as well as physical innovations are welcome.

Why should you participate? In addition to district pride, state-wide winners receive **up to \$500**

Interested? Fill out the form below and return to Chris Redline by Dec. 1. We will take it from there!



Name(s) -- Include everyone on the team who helped with your innovation: _____

Work location: _____

What is your innovation?: _____

How does it save resources or improve safety?: _____