

# D4 WESTport

September 2005

Welcome to the September edition of **WESTport**, MoDOT District 4's newsletter to Missouri General Assembly members from the west central region.

You will receive monthly updates of District 4 projects and activities throughout the regular General Assembly session, and periodic updates during the rest of the year. We hope you will find the information useful and enlightening.

Our District 4 staff is always available to answer your questions and address constituent concerns. See our list of contacts at the bottom of this newsletter for telephone numbers and other information.

## **Paseo Bridge Reopens Ahead of Schedule**

Kansas City motorists got an early Labor Day surprise on Sept. 1, when a refurbished Paseo Bridge reopened to traffic more than two months ahead of schedule. Crews began removing barrier in the early afternoon, and traffic was flowing across the 50-year-old structure by 1 p.m.

"Our contractor, Clarkson Construction Company, started immediately when the bridge closed on May 17 and worked diligently to earn the incentives for finishing the project early," District Engineer Beth Wright said. "Good weather allowed them to stay well ahead of schedule, and we were very pleased to reopen the bridge before the Labor Day weekend."

The contract for the project included up to \$1.5 million in incentives for early completion, and required that the bridge reopen by November 10. In addition to a fresh coat of blue paint and a new driving surface, the refurbished bridge features new barrier rails, light poles, and bearings. Its cables were wrapped for weather-proofing.

MoDOT also removed some long-range maintenance measures from the project, which reduced its overall cost while maintaining all of its structural and safety-related aspects. Wright said those adjustments were made when it became evident that funding for additional capacity along the I-29/I-35 corridor would be available within the next five years.

"By not painting some non-visible areas on the bridge and by using a less expensive weather-proofing method on the driving surface, we lowered our project cost by about \$2 million," she said. "The bridge should remain in good shape while we complete our environmental study of the corridor, determine how to best add additional lanes across the river, and then construct the recommended facility."

## **New Triangle Lanes Open Early**

New bridges and pavement on eastbound I-470 in the Triangle opened the weekend of August 20-21, providing two new lanes through the most congested segment in the interchange.

"Opening this important piece of the Triangle project weeks ahead of schedule shows once again that MoDOT is fulfilling its mission to delight our customers," said District Engineer Beth Wright.

The work, done by APAC – Kansas, Inc., is the latest in a string of tasks completed ahead of schedule on the Triangle project. Construction will continue on the eastbound I-470 movement through next year, eventually adding a third through lane to untangle the single-lane knot that has slowed evening rush-hour traffic for several years.

New ramps from eastbound I-470 to southbound Route 71 and to Red Bridge Road also are open, setting the stage for construction to move to the Red Bridge interchange and farther south. A new Red Bridge interchange at Route 71 is scheduled to be fully functional early next summer.

## **Signal Alert Signs Planned for Watkins Drive**

Additional traffic safety measures will soon alert drivers approaching the three signalized intersections on Bruce R. Watkins Drive.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission July 8 approved a \$159,765.25 contract to place electronically controlled signs on Route 71 near the at-grade intersections of Gregory Boulevard and 55th Street to alert drivers who approach those crossroads controlled by traffic signals. Custom Lighting Services, LLC of Kansas City is the contractor.

The 36-inch-by-36-inch signs, located several hundred feet before the intersections, will say “RED Signal Ahead;” the “RED” will be illuminated in red prior to the signal light change to tell motorists they will not make it through the intersection on a green light as they approach it. The coordinated sign/signal combination includes signs flanking each side of Route 71 at all six approaches: Northbound at Gregory, 59th and 55th; and southbound at 55th, 59th and Gregory.

The system also will include a changeable electronic message board on northbound Route 71 at 77th Street alerting motorists to signals ahead. A camera traffic detector can also send an alternative message alerting motorists to be prepared to stop if traffic begins to back up.

MoDOT traffic and maintenance crews also will place eight other signs using additional MoDOT funds. The system is scheduled to be installed this fall.

## **Hot In-Place Recycling Project is Missouri’s First**

Motorists slowed and heads turned to get a good look at the “paving train” now being used to resurface Interstate 29 in Platte County.

Missouri’s first hot in-place recycling project began Aug. 29 as MoDOT contractors Superior Bowen Asphalt Company and Cutler Repaving, Inc. started to resurface northbound lanes. When complete, the project will resurface approximately 36 lane miles from Platte City to the Buchanan County line.

District Pavement Specialist Jesse Skinner researched hot in-place recycling last year, and he, Assistant District Engineer Chris Redline and District 10 Engineer Mark Shelton advocated trying it in District 4.

“Hot in-place recycling uses heat (300°F+) to help break up the surface of the existing road. The old asphalt is raked, ground into small particles, mixed with emulsion and then immediately laid back down,” said Skinner.

Within minutes, the same machine adds a 1-3/4” layer of virgin asphalt over the top. The surface is then rolled to increase density.

Skinner says the hot in-place method has several benefits. “Surface irregularities are improved and we’re able to add structure. One of the largest benefits is to the environment. There is no waste, and we’ve already paid for the material,” said Skinner.

Although hot in-place recycling can be somewhat slower than traditional resurfacing methods, one hundred percent of old asphalt millings are used right away instead of being transported, stored, then delivered to other jobs – a time and cost saver.

## **Smother Trips a Reality in Johnson County**

The first Smooth Roads Initiative project in District 4 wrapped up in late July, providing travelers on Route 50 a much nicer trip from Route HH in Warrensburg to the Johnson/Jackson County line.

The Route 50 project milled old pavement and replaced it with 1¾ inches of asphalt; the project included fog-sealing shoulders, sign replacement, mile-marker changes, rumble strips on some shoulders and new, wider 6-inch epoxy striping.

Crews also resurfaced Business Route 13 from Business Route 50 to Cooper Street, and the eastbound and westbound ramps at the Routes 13 and 50 interchange in Warrensburg. Hilty Quarries and subcontractor Chester Bross Co. performed the work.

The \$8.3 million Johnson County improvements were the first Amendment 3 project in the west-central Missouri district. By late July, Bross and Hilty had moved their equipment and operations to southern Cass County, where they tackled a similar job on Route 71 from Route 7 south into Bates County.

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