

Chill Precedes Fevered Sprint to Finish

Winter Snows Can't Stop Untangling the Triangle

The Triangle project is entering the final lap this season, and even winter storms couldn't keep workers from moving forward. Now known as 3-Trails Crossing Memorial Highway, the last vestiges of the old Triangle interchange will soon be gone.

Collector ramps were completed and Route 71 traffic shifted from the old main-line pavement in December and January so workers could remove old pavement and bridges. Now that the construction season is taking off again, crews are building a new Route 71 between Red Bridge Road and Blue Ridge Boulevard, reconstructing the ramp from eastbound I-435 to northbound Route 71, rehabilitating Route 71 pavement north of Bannister Road, and adding lanes and ramps on northbound and southbound Route 71.

The Route 71 reconstruction and other projects along the highway will challenge motorists throughout 2007. The roadway will be constricted to only one through lane in the 3-Trails Crossing throughout most of the year because of seven merges within the interchange. Interchange reconstruction projects to the south at Route 150 in Grandview and at 163rd Street in Belton

will also reduce lanes and slow traffic. And resurfacing crews will work on Route 71 between Blue Ridge Boulevard at the Kansas City/Grandview city limits and the Cass County line.

Ice, sleet and snowstorms have bedeviled workers on the project since late November. But there's still progress to report: This spring a wider, four-lane Hickman Mills Drive will open from Red Bridge Road to Marion Park Drive. This summer the Jefferies Station Transit Center opens, providing park-and-ride and public transit

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Rollers were poised along Route 71 in mid-February to fire up in the first warm days of the construction season.

Feb. 22-27: A Parade of Public Meetings

Although the flurry of activity doesn't rival the record-setting pace of 2006, when District 4 hosted or had a hand in 24 public meetings, plans for three Kansas City-area projects were exhibited and discussed in less than a week in late February.

A new interchange for Route 71 in northern Cass County began the parade on Feb. 22, when 213 people attended the session in Belton to learn about plans for the new facilities two miles south of Route 58. Cass County and the cities of Raymore and Belton are participating in the project, which should

begin construction in 2008. Comments about connections to the interchange via outer roads dominated the evening's discussions.

Two meetings were scheduled on Feb. 27 – one in Pittsville in northern Johnson County and the other in Grandview.

The Pittsville meeting described detours and construction plans for a Blackwater River bridge replacement project on Route 131. Route 131 will close at the project site for about three months beginning in May; the official detour along state routes is 13 miles long. Twenty-six emergency service repre-

sentatives and interested citizens attended the informational meeting.

The Grandview session was a milepost in the public involvement process to widen Route 150 to four lanes between Route 71 and Route 291. The \$30 million, eight-mile project is expected to begin in 2008 and be complete in 2010. About 150 people attended the session, which displayed the proposed alignment for the Amendment 3 project.



Johnson County residents and emergency-service providers look over project plans and detour routes for a bridge reconstruction project during a February public meeting in Pittsville.

Enhanced Safety Makes Smooth Roads Projects Shine

With so much of the focus on making 2,200 miles of the state's busiest roads smooth -- and completing the work a full year earlier than promised -- an important aspect of the Smooth Roads Initiative could fade into the shadows.

But a second look shows how MoDOT's commitment to safety delivered extra value to the push for smoother driving. Just check out what happened in District 4 alone:

- 454 miles of clear zones
- 17,000 new signs, most that are larger, more visible and easier to read
- 490 miles of wider, brighter striping, both down the centerlines and along the sides of roads
- 490 miles of delineators

There's no doubt that the \$70 million in Amendment 3 money invested in District 4 made road surfaces smoother and safer for the vast majority of Kansas City-area motorists. Many of Kansas City's busiest routes,

from I-470 in the southeast to I-29 to the north, are smoother. Diamond-grinding or asphalt overlays made the way smoother for motorists throughout District 4, and pothole numbers are down, thanks to 50,475 square yards of pavement repair that largely preceded resurfacing operations.

You want to talk resurfacing? How about 1.1 million tons of asphalt spread about two inches thick over hundreds of miles of Kansas City-area state routes? Ultra-thin, bonded asphalt wearing surfaces covered 230,000 square yards, and District 4 diamond-grinding projects made 546,000 square yards of good pavement even smoother.

The first Smooth Roads Initiative project in District 4 started in May 2005. The \$8.3 million milling and resurfacing project on Route 50 in Johnson County stretched from the Jackson County line to Route HH west of Warrensburg. The work included the SRI elements that would soon become familiar to both construction inspectors and drivers -- fog-sealing shoulders, sign replacement, mile-marker changes, rumble strips along the shoulder and the new, wider 6-inch epoxy striping.

All of those Smooth Roads Initiative elements added to the workload of construction and materials inspectors, maintenance crews and designers. Maintenance workers jumped in early to make hundreds of pavement repairs in preparation for resurfacing contracts.

"Maintenance crews under Superintendents Todd Gibson, Pat Calhoun and Tony Bryant particularly found themselves a lot more involved in SRI than they expected,"



Asphalt resurfacing moved quickly on a stretch of Route 71 south of Harrisonville.

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Triangle

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facilities in the heart of the interchange. By fall, the Hillcrest Road bridge over I-470 will be rehabilitated and reopened.

By the end of 2007, the 3-Trails Crossing will offer travelers three through lanes in all directions, more ramp capacity and better alignment – a safer, smoother, smarter

interchange that can handle up to 400,000 vehicles per day converging from Route 71 and Interstates 435 and 470. Work on Route 71 at the Route 150 and at 163rd Street interchanges will continue into 2008.



Diamond grinding a sound Route 7 ev southeast Cass Co

District 4 Seals Victory in Road Resurfacing Competition

MoDOT's first Chip Seal Performance Challenge netted a victory and a \$5,000 prize to a Kansas City-area road-maintenance team. But the real winners are the 1,600 Clay County motorists who travel along Route C in the county's northern portion on a daily basis.

MoDOT announced the statewide competition in early 2006. Organizers designed the event for districts to demonstrate their best practices in the chip seal process.

"Chip sealing is an important and cost-effective method for maintaining Missouri roads and we wanted teams to demonstrate their skills and innovation in using it," said Scott Stone, maintenance liaison engineer and the event's organizer.

In the end, Stone and his team of judges had a difficult time picking the winners of the statewide competition. In fact,

the quality of the work was so high that award recipients were broadened to include an Honorable Mention Category.

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn said the contest will enhance department operations by identifying the most efficient and effective chip-sealing processes. "These teams have shown outstanding abilities in using their resources and making Missouri roads safe and smooth," he said.

Winners were broken into coarse and fine aggregate categories. The District 4 crew took first place in the fine aggregate category; its 22 members will share the \$5,000 award for their efforts.

"It was tough to pick the winners," Stone said. "The roads we judged were examples of great chip seal projects."



The completed project earns District 4 the number one ranking for the fine aggregate category.



District 4 crew workers safely lay the chip seal before completing the project.



operations made
even smoother in
county



Smooth Roads

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said Assistant District Engineer Chris Redline. "All maintenance crews were performing concrete joint replacement prior to contractors' resurfacing work. Those crews took on an enormous challenge and knocked it down quickly."

And before maintenance or construction crews could begin their labors, the design department had to complete their work on nearly 50 projects. Much of that effort took place from December 2004 through August 2005.

"Then in December 2005, they came to us with a package of six more projects," said Design Engineer Scott Humphrey. District 1 designers stepped in to help, reliev-

ing some of the pressure on the department's workflow and establishing a relationship that continues today.

Oh, and did anyone ask the sign crews whether they might have a spare moment to take care of a non-SRI job? They were busy placing or replacing 162,412 square feet of aluminum – that's about 3.7 acres of new signage in the Kansas City district. Extra help, in the form of assistance from crews from Districts 1, 2 and 5, kept them on schedule.

"Everyone in District 4 proved once again that we are eager to meet a challenge," said District Engineer Beth Wright. "Nearly two years of long days and demanding schedules paid off in safer transportation for millions of motorists. MoDOT team members have good reason to be proud of this extraordinary accomplishment."



Director Pete Rahn presents the District 4 winning team of the Chip Seal Performance Challenge with a check for \$5,000.

District 4 Named Best Striped District in State

MoDOT has taken justifiable pride in the Smooth Roads Initiative.

The program's success is evident when traveling one of the 2,200 miles of resurfaced and improved roadway across Missouri: Smoother roads with brighter pavement markings mean a safer journey for all drivers.

Drivers have noticed the changes. According to the 2007 Tracker Report, the percent of striping that meets customers' expectations in roadway visibility is 95.4 percent across the state. This is the highest percentage in the past two years.

District 4 can take special pride in these numbers: The Kansas City area received a rating of 99.1 out of a possible 100 on its major routes -- the best such rating among all districts. The Kansas City district also received a very high rating on its minor-road striping.

Enhancements Abound Along Scout System

Since its 2004 debut, the Kansas City Scout system has reported and addressed traffic impacts along more than 90 miles of freeways in the bi-state Kansas City metropolitan area. Now, in 2007, Scout is offering new services, an enhanced web site, and system expansion developed to help travelers and commuters reach their destination safer and quicker.

A new “My KC Scout” service can give motorists a heads-up through their computer or text-messaging device about traffic delays or emergencies impacting drive time. Subscribers who sign up for this free service at www.kcscout.net for traffic alerts specific to their travel area decide which routes they want to be alerted about. Scout will do the rest, sending automated messages when there is a problem on the designated route. The service is offered free-of-charge, although normal mobile carrier fees will still apply.

Those who are unable to receive or take advantage of this free service shouldn't be discouraged. Scout also offers information via “Travel Times” posted on the large electronic message boards along several of the Scout's freeways. Sensors calculate the average travel speeds along any given area of the Scout system and determine the amount of time it takes to reach certain destinations.

These times may vary based on any problems up ahead, such as accidents or severe weather. Drivers can read the posted travel times from hundreds of feet away when they are traveling at the posted speed limit, giving them time to choose an alternate route or stay on their current path.

Even more enhancements are available on Scout's web site at www.kcscout.net. The

web site now offers an additional increase in bandwidth to improve its speed and increase the number of users it can serve. In addition, web site visitors can view multiple camera views from the Scout system at one time rather than viewing them one at a time. Scout system maps are also available with a map zoom feature. Many of these improvements are the result of comments received from website visitors.

Beginning early in 2007, travelers can expect to see some system upgrades. Scout expansion projects will add seven new cameras located along I-470 from the Triangle to Woods Chapel Road and two new cameras along Route 71 from Red Bridge Road to Main Street.

Full Scout expansion, which includes cameras, message signs, and traffic detectors, will be located along I-435 from Bannister Road to the Missouri River; I-35 from Parvin Road to Pleasant Valley Road; and I-29 from I-35 to North 64th Street.



Travel time messages tell motorists what to expect during their trips in metropolitan Kansas City.

Interchange Project Begins KC Portion of New Program

Bridge rehabilitation closed the westbound Interstate 70 exit ramp to southbound Interstate 470 and southbound I-470 was reduced to one lane on the bridge over I-70 on March 19.

Additional ramp and lane closures are expected in the next several months at the interchange, which is the Kansas City area's first project in MoDOT's Better Roads, Brighter Future program that will resurface 5,600 miles of Missouri highways over the next five years. The project schedule includes the following phases:

- Closing the eastbound I-70 exit ramp to northbound Route 291 and reducing northbound I-470 on the bridge over I-70 to one lane for 30 days.
- Reducing southbound Route 291/I-470 to one lane from 39th Street to the Little Blue River to rehabilitate the 39th Street, Route 40 and Little Blue River bridges. Shifting southbound lanes of Route 291 onto the existing northbound bridge at 39th Street, restricting I-470/Route 291 to one lane.
- Closing ramps from 39th Street to southbound 291 and from southbound 291 to westbound I-70 for approximately 45 days.
- Once the southbound bridgework is complete, northbound I-470/ Route 291 will

be reduced to one lane from the Little Blue River to 39th Street to rehabilitate the Little Blue River, Route 40 and 39th Street bridges. The northbound lanes of Route 291/I-470 will be shifted onto the newly constructed southbound bridge deck of 39th Street, restricting Route 291/I-470 to one lane.

- Closing ramps from northbound Route 291 to 39th Street and from westbound I-70 to northbound Route 291 for approximately 45 days.
- Repaving on northbound and southbound lanes of Route 291/I-470 will commence once bridge rehabilitation is complete. This will occur during non-peak hours.

Each stage of work includes a reward/ penalty incentive program with the contractor. The contractor will be rewarded for completing stages ahead of schedule and penalized for any work extending beyond the contracted timeframe. The entire project is scheduled for completion in late September.

In addition to resurfacing, the Better Roads, Brighter Future program includes wider stripes, rumble stripes, brighter signs and paved shoulders. The program is expected to save Missouri motorists about \$100 million a year in fuel costs.



Tour of Missouri Debuts Sept. 11 in Kansas City

Kansas City will host the first stage of an inaugural world-class professional cycling race, the Tour of Missouri, on Sept. 11; and Clinton will serve as the starting point for the second stage on Sept. 12.

Patterned after the famous Tour de France, the six-day event will feature point to point racing in six stages. More than 120 world-class cyclists will traverse west to south to east through more than 600 miles of the Show Me State.

The Tuesday through Sunday race breaks down as follows:

Stage 1, Kansas City to Kansas City, road race

Cyclists will race an out-and-back course in Missouri's second largest city.

Stage 2, Clinton to Springfield, road race

After an auto transfer, Stage 2 will start in Clinton. Racers will finish their day in Missouri's third-largest city.

Stage 3, Branson, individual time trial

The caravan heads 40 miles south Thursday for an individual time trial in the hilly resort town of Branson.

Stage 4, Lebanon to Columbia, road race

The caravan transfers north to Lebanon for the start of Stage 4, and continues north to the home of the University of Missouri.

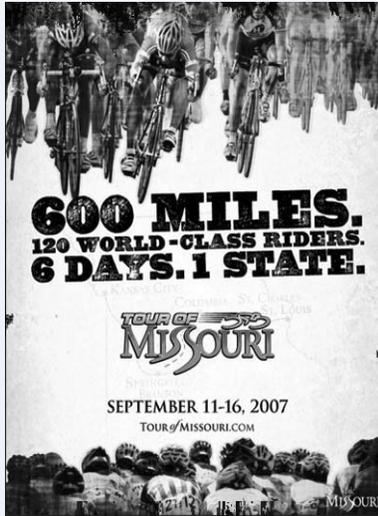
Stage 5, Jefferson City to St. Charles, road race

Stage 5 begins in Missouri's capital and travels through the state's wine region en route to the historic river city of St. Charles.

Stage 6, St. Louis, circuit race

The cross-state journey will finish in Missouri's largest city on Sunday, Sept. 16. The race will have gone through more than 20 counties, 50 towns and cities, and covered about 600 miles.

Exact locations of each start and finish line will be announced this spring. For more information, visit tourofmissouri.com.



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