

Column from Sen. Matt Bartle for

Week of Oct. 24, 2005

### **Amendment 3 Update: What the Smooth Roads Initiative is doing to Make Your Daily Drive Easier**

In less than a year since Missourians voted to improve Missouri roads without tax increases, Amendment 3 has thus far proven to be a success. With more money available to the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) for our roads and highways, we have already seen improvements in the Kansas City metropolitan area, and there is more to come.

MoDOT's Smoother, Safer, Sooner campaign, financed with approximately \$1.7 billion from Amendment 3 revenues, has made significant headway in its first phase, the Smooth Roads Initiative. This first step will ultimately result in 2,200 miles of better-quality pavement and shoulders and safer guard rails and lane dividers on Missouri's busiest roads.

Phase One is expected to be finished by December 2007, but the Kansas City area has already seen significant progress. Workers have laid more than 300,000 tons of asphalt to repair more than 36,000 square yards of pavement. New center stripes crown 75 miles of upgraded roads. Under the Smooth Roads Initiative, the Kansas City area will have 490 miles of road in good condition, and several projects have been completed already, including one major initiative on Interstate 70.

On a related note, the I-70 Pavement Replacement Project was recently completed, and all lanes were reopened this week. The project, which began in fall 2003, included total pavement replacement of east- and westbound lanes, construction of 12-foot shoulders designed to accommodate future expansion, refurbished bridges over Little Blue River and Kansas City Southern Railways, and the incorporation of Kansas City Scout's traffic-management system.

Many other projects yet to be finished will provide further improvements to area traffic. The Grandview Triangle of I-435, I-470 and Highway 71 will be less congested thanks to more lanes, wider bridges, and better shoulders and ramps. Overall, the "Untangle the Triangle" project will provide 70 miles of new lane pavement and 22 new bridges for the more than 250,000 drivers who use the interchange each day. Redevelopment projects on Highways 50 and 350 also continue in 2005, and several resurfacing projects on routes 7, 24, 40, 78, 291 and I-70 will be completed in 2006.

This sampling of programs is just the beginning of major road improvements in the Kansas City area. The Smoother, Safer, Sooner campaign will continue with two more phases over the next several years. These projects will improve the lives of Missourians by providing better transportation options.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at [matt\\_bartle@senate.state.mo.us](mailto:matt_bartle@senate.state.mo.us) or by phone at (888) 711-9278.

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