

## MoDOT News Release

January 14, 2005

### **\$800 Million in Amendment 3 Projects Approved**

JEFFERSON CITY – Today the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission gave the go-ahead to nearly \$800 million in projects that will bring Missouri's busiest highways up to good condition and speed up completion of some of the state's highest-priority road and bridge construction projects. The improvements, known as the Smoother, Safer, Sooner program, are made possible by voter passage of Amendment 3 two months ago.

"In November the voters trusted us with additional resources to get their roads fixed," said Pete Rahn, director of the Missouri Department of Transportation. "Since then we've worked extremely hard to identify needs and get projects ready to go. Today we're saying to Missourians that MoDOT is ready to deliver, and the improvements will be noticeable and quick."

About \$360 million will fund 177 projects in the Smooth Roads Initiative – the first element of the Smoother, Safer, Sooner program. This initiative will provide 2,200 miles of smoother pavement, brighter road markings and other safety improvements on the state's most heavily traveled highways in three years.

The highway miles included in the Smooth Roads Initiative account for 60 percent of all traffic on the state system. Selected roads include interstates, major highways in the metropolitan areas, and highway corridors connecting smaller towns throughout the state. About 86 percent of Missouri's population lives within 10 miles of one of the selected roads.

Improvements will include better pavement for a smoother drive, as well as brighter stripes and signs, reflective pavement markers separating lanes, improved shoulders with rumble strips, and safer guardrails. A portion of these projects was initially approved at last month's commission meeting.

Amendment 3 bond financing will also accelerate more than \$430 million in high-priority construction projects statewide. These 55 projects, which comprise the second element of the Smoother, Safer, Sooner program, were already scheduled to begin in the next five years, but work can now begin much sooner – several years sooner, in many cases. "These projects are very important to Missouri's safety and economic well-being, and speeding them up will make a huge positive impact," Rahn said.

A few examples of major projects to be accelerated:

- Rehabilitation of the Route 67 bridge crossing the Missouri River in St. Louis
- Major congestion relief work on the Triangle in Kansas City
- Completion of Route 61 four laning in northeast Missouri
- Completion of the four-lane Route 71 corridor south of Joplin

A third component of MoDOT's Amendment 3 plans will be unveiled later this spring, when \$1.3 to \$1.5 billion in additional bond-financed projects will be announced. "While we're pleased to take on so much new work so quickly, we've still got more to do," Rahn added. "The biggest part of our Smoother, Safer, Sooner program is still ahead of us. I'm eager to get started."

More details on MoDOT's Smoother, Safer, Sooner program, including project lists, a statewide project map and additional Amendment 3 details, are available on the department's web site – [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org). You may also call MoDOT's customer service center at 1-888-ASK MODOT.