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Future I-70

Staying ahead of the Curve

Future I-70 Kansas City Metro

www.modot.org/kansascity/metroi70

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086



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MoDOT Stays Ahead of the Curve with I-70 Environmental Study in KC Metro

KANSAS CITY, MO. – The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) is beginning an environmental study of I-70 in Jackson County. The study is a First Tier Environmental Impact Statement (FTEIS) for the future I-70 Kansas City Metro project. The study will end in 2010. It spans 18 miles of I-70 from the last ramp termini east of the Missouri – Kansas state line to just east of I-470 and includes all of the Downtown Kansas City Central Business District Freeway Loop.

Through the I-70 FTEIS process, MoDOT will identify the social, economic and environmental effects of transportation proposals related to the future I-70 Kansas City Metro corridor. The Department will also respond to broad issues such as transportation choice and area-wide environmental and land use effects of transportation improvements.

MoDOT completed the **I-70 Major Investment Study (MIS) in 2004**. The major difference between the MIS and FTEIS is the FTEIS begins to narrow potential solutions by identifying and evaluating the social, economic, and environmental effects of the complex transportation strategies proposed in the MIS. Through the FTEIS process impractical solutions are eliminated so that more viable strategies can move forward.

The FTEIS will focus on issues such as transportation mode (automobile, transit, bike and/or pedestrian) choice, general location and area-wide environmental and land use implications of the proposed transportation strategies. It will build on the efforts of the I-70 MIS and other transportation planning studies that have been or are being completed in the project area. The FTEIS will include identification and prioritization of the I-70 corridor for further study and design of specific improvements.

MoDOT recognizes that I-70 is one of the Kansas City region's key commercial and commuter thoroughfares carrying tens of thousands of travelers and tons of goods daily to destinations all-around and through the Kansas City region. MoDOT is committed to making the drive along the I-70 corridor as smooth, safe, and efficient as possible. Doing so requires a comprehensive transportation planning process of which the First Tier Environmental Impact Statement (FTEIS) is a key component.

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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why are improvements needed along I-70 in Jackson County?

A. Improvements are needed to:

- **Improve Safety:** Reduce crash rates and crash severity on I-70.
- **Reduce Congestion:** Remove key bottlenecks, improve freeway ramp operations, and improve multi-modal travel times in coordination with plans put forward by local and regional agencies.
- **Restore and Maintain Existing Infrastructure:** Improve bridge and pavement conditions on I-70.
- **Improve Accessibility:** Increase safe access across I-70 for non-motorized travel.
- **Improve Goods Movement:** Improve the efficiency of freight movement on I-70.

Q. What are the boundaries of the future I-70 Kansas City Metro project?

A. The project extends from the last ramp termini east of the Missouri – Kansas state line to east of the I-470 interchange, including the entire Kansas City, Missouri Downtown Central Business District Freeway Loop. This portion of I-70 spans approximately 18 miles (20 miles including all segments of the Loop).

Q. What is the purpose of the project?

A. The First Tier Environmental Impact Statement (FTEIS) for the future I-70 Kansas City Metro project will:

- Examine the transportation problems that should be addressed along I-70.
- Focus on broad issues, such as choice in transportation (automobile, transit, bike and pedestrian).
- Evaluate the initial improvement concepts developed during the **I-70 Major Investment Study (MIS)**.
- Build from other studies that have been or are being completed in the project area.
- Explore the environmental and land use implications associated with the concepts.
- Narrow the list of concepts and create more specific improvement strategies based on them.
- Use a set of criteria to evaluate the strategies.
- Recommend a single preferred strategy.
- Identify and prioritize sections of independent utility in the I-70 corridor for further study in detailed second tier studies.



Q. What is the I-70 Major Investment Study (MIS)?

A. The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) started the I-70 MIS process in 2000 and completed this study in 2004.

The study area spanned approximately 28 miles from Kansas City's Central Business District on the west to the intersection of State Routes F/H in Oak Grove, Missouri on the east. Cities within the study area included Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit, Raytown, Blue Springs, Grain Valley and Oak Grove.

The objective of the I-70 MIS was to identify a multi-modal investment strategy to address transportation needs in a manner consistent with regional policy goals. The I-70 MIS analyzed the transportation problems and looked at all possible options for addressing them including multiple roadway, transit and pedestrian options. That study, which involved extensive public input, identified a package of recommendations that are now moving into the more detailed environmental analysis phase of study, which is called a First Tier Environmental Impact Statement, or FTEIS.

Q. What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

A. An EIS details the process through which solutions to transportation problems are developed and provides an evaluation of the environmental affects of those potential solutions. Consideration of a range of reasonable improvement strategies, analysis of the potential impacts resulting from the strategies, and compliance with other applicable environmental laws and executive orders are part of the process. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to prepare environmental impact statements for major Federal actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment or natural environment.

Q. What is a tiered Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

A. The I-70 FTEIS will follow a tiered environmental documentation process. First Tier documents address overall transportation corridor strategies and issues in an initial, higher level environmental process. More specific proposals and impacts are analyzed in subsequent second tier studies.

One way to imagine the tiered process is as an umbrella. In the I-70 FTEIS, the umbrella extends approximately 18 miles from the Missouri-Kansas state line to just east of the I-470 interchange and includes the Kansas City, Missouri Downtown Central Business District Freeway Loop. An overall improvement strategy for this corridor will be developed and a broad, general (high level) evaluation will be conducted. The corridor umbrella covers and identifies future detailed second tier project level studies of shorter sections, which may take the form of environmental impact statements (EISs), environmental assessments (EAs), or categorical exclusions (CEs). The second tier studies will analyze shorter sections of I-70 but in greater detail.

Q. What is the difference between the I-70 Major Investment Study (MIS) and the First Tier Environmental Impact Study (FTEIS)?

A. The major difference between the MIS and FTEIS is that the FTEIS begins to narrow potential solutions by identifying and evaluating the social, economic, and environmental effects of complex transportation proposals such as improving I-70 through Jackson County. Through the FTEIS process impractical solutions are eliminated so that more viable strategies can move forward. The FTEIS will focus on issues such as transportation mode (automobile, transit bike and/or pedestrian) choice, general location and area-wide environmental and land use implications of the proposed transportation strategies. The FTEIS will build on the efforts of the I-70 MIS as well as other transportation planning studies that have been or are being completed in the project area.

Q. What is meant by strategies?

A. Strategies are general, high level transportation improvement opportunities to address the transportation issues along I-70. Strategies may include a series of specific transportation improvements such as adding lanes, fixing existing pavement and bridges, improving interchange ramps, and/or transit projects.

Q. What is the I-70 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Truck-Only Lane) project?

A. I-70 has been the topic of a series of environmental studies, each going into further detail on possible solutions and their impacts. Most recently, the Improve I-70 studies looked at a range of improvements to I-70 and ultimately recommended the construction of six lanes across the state, including new bridges, interchanges and continuous frontage roads. The studies and evaluations completed in that process were used as the starting place for the I-70 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). A SEIS reviews the findings in an existing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It also considers new or additional environmental impacts, based on the introduction of new improvement options and/or major changes in the natural environment or communities. The I-70 SEIS will evaluate if –and how – truck-only lanes alter the impacts and recommendations previously identified through the Improve I-70 EIS process. For more information about the I-70 SEIS visit www.improvei70.org.

Q. How will the FTEIS for future I-70 impact property owners?

A. The I-70 FTEIS outlines a broad strategy for addressing issues and opportunities in the corridor. When the study is over, MoDOT will have a general understanding of which properties will be impacted. The exact amounts of right of way and the exact properties affected will not be known until the formal design phase of the project, which is not currently funded.

Q. When will MoDOT start buying the property it needs?

A. When the design phase of the project is funded and finished, MoDOT will be able to identify the properties it needs to purchase. Funding has not been identified for the design phase or construction of any improvements that result from the I-70 FTEIS process. Only after construction is funded, will the timeframe for property acquisition be known.

Q. What is the project schedule?

A. MoDOT kicked off the FTEIS process for the I-70 Kansas City Metro project this spring. It will last two years ending in 2010.

Q. How will MoDOT keep area property owners, businesses, and residents informed?

A. MoDOT will mail newsletters to stakeholders to communicate key milestones. Fliers with similar information will be provided to key locations within the study area, such as restaurants, grocery stores, places of worship, community centers, multifamily housing complexes and management, and more. Other project materials, meeting invitations, meeting results, and more will be available at www.modot.org/kansascity/metroi70 so that the general public can view and download the information.

Q. How can I get involved?

A. MoDOT will use a series of public open houses to gather information about the project from stakeholders within the I-70 Kansas City Metro community including residents, property owners, businesses, commuters, and others. Meeting invitations will be sent through the mail in advance of each meeting. Press releases will be distributed to media outlets. Opportunity to provide input will not be limited to public meetings, stakeholders can also use this site's "Contact Us" page to e-mail comments to the Project Manager, Allan Zafft, anytime.

Q. Who do I contact for more information?

A. There are a variety of ways to get more information. You can:

- Contact MoDOT Project Manager Allan Zafft, by phone at 816-622-0687 and 1-888 ASK MODOT or by email at allan.zafft@modot.mo.gov
- Visit www.modot.org/kansascity/metroi70
- Write MoDOT at 600 NE Colbern Road, Lee's Summit, MO 64086.

Planning Process

MoDOT and a consultant team, lead by Wilbur Smith Associates with Patti Banks Associates for public involvement will:

- Develop the purpose and need for the I-70 FTEIS and the initial improvement concepts created during the I-70 Major Investment Study (2004).
- Narrow the list of initial concepts and create a descriptive set of first tier strategies.
- Use a set of engineering and environmental impact criteria to evaluate the first tier strategies.
- Recommend a single preferred strategy.

The planning process is anticipated to be completed in 2010 with the Final First Tier Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (ROD).

Stakeholder Involvement

The FTEIS impacts a wide range of stakeholders. MoDOT plans to involve them in the planning process by:

- Distributing newsletters and fliers that communicate key project milestones.
- Holding stakeholder meetings.
- Conducting open houses for the general public.
- Making project information available on MoDOT's website:
www.modot.org/kansascity/metroi70

Questions/Comments

- Contact MoDOT Project Manager, Allan Zafft, at 816-622-0687 or allan.zafft@modot.mo.gov
- Visit www.modot.org/kansascity/metroi70
- Write MoDOT at 600 NE Colbern Road, Lee's Summit, MO 64086

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Planning for the Highway with the Environment in Mind

The MoDOT Study Team will seek the most effective approach to improve the I-70 corridor to meet the current and future transportation needs while minimizing affects on the human and natural environment. The approach includes conducting multiple studies and assessments of environmental resources in the Study Area, resource agency coordination, public involvement, and environmental and engineering analysis. For this Study, MoDOT is completing a First Tier Environmental Impact Statement (FTEIS). In order to ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the FTEIS will investigate existing conditions associated with the human and natural environment as well as environmental resources that may be affected by the transportation improvements within the corridor.

Human or man-made environment issues include potential effects on local neighborhoods, environmental justice (low-income and minority) populations, noise sensitive land uses (parks, schools, and churches), and community resources such as cultural centers, historic properties, and cemeteries. Natural environment issues include potential effects on water features (rivers, floodplains, and wetlands), air quality, potential areas of contamination, sensitive plant and animal species, and energy.

The goal of examining impacts to the human and natural environment and other resources is to identify and demonstrate an understanding of the resources within the I-70 corridor so that impacts can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. MoDOT wishes to achieve the transportation improvements needed in the I-70 corridor with as little impact on the environment as possible.



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