

# Route 67 News



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## Funding Approved For Route 67 Improvements South Of Poplar Bluff

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the next five year construction plan during its July meeting, allocating \$28 million for improvements to Route 67 south of Poplar Bluff.

"This is really good news," says Project Manager Eric Krapf. "We are happy the community showed support during the public comment review period and eager to get started on improvements."

That eagerness won't be rewarded overnight. Krapf says while work will immediately start on the project, it will be sometime before residents see the fruits of the labor.

"Obviously, we can't go out tomorrow and start turning dirt. We have to start mapping the area, so we can find the right corridor. Our designers have to determine locations for any improvements. We have to take the plan to the public and gather input, and all of these things are required of us by law," says Krapf.

That law could also determine just how quickly work moves forward. Krapf explains that work along the Route 67 corridor is governed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, a term residents will hear often over the course of improvements). NEPA is a federal law requiring transportation agencies to look at the impacts projects have on the environment to prevent or eliminate damage.

Environment in this case includes standards such as wetlands, streams and endangered species but also includes human factors such as people and neighborhoods. While Route 67 underwent a long location study already,

MoDOT may have to repeat the NEPA process because of relocation or changes to the improvements determined from the original study.

"Just how quickly we are able to move forward will depend largely upon the community," says Krapf. "If we show the Federal Highway Administration that the community supports these improvements and there is little opposition, we could get started on design sooner without repeating much of the same process already completed. The community has been excellent to work with and I'm confident that we have the right team in place to make some real and meaningful improvements to Route 67 south of Poplar Bluff."

MoDOT will have some ideas to share with residents at a public hearing on Monday, July 28, at Hillview Elementary School. Once that input is gathered, MoDOT can go to FHWA to determine what level of analysis must be required before design work can begin.

### MoDOT Works With Residents

Residents sponsored a community meeting at Hillview Elementary School in June to discuss possible short-term improvements to the Route 67/160/158 intersection. MoDOT was on hand to listen to suggestions, answer questions and give an update on future improvements.

MoDOT investigated each of the suggestions and responded with what action would be taken.

One of the suggestions was to restrict access at the gas station on Route 158 to help delineate where vehicles can turn onto and off of the roadway. MoDOT met with the property

owner at this location and is working with him to implement this suggestion.

Also following the meeting, new stop signs equipped with flashing lights in each of the eight corners were installed to improve visibility. MoDOT had previously reduced the speed limit at the intersection this spring and installed signs with radar to inform drivers how fast they are traveling.

One of the recurring themes during the meeting were traffic violations such as running the stop signs, cutting through parking lots to avoid the intersection and drunk driving. MoDOT offered to work with the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety to pay for additional hours to patrol the intersection should law enforcement choose to participate.

MoDOT also agreed to perform a traffic count for County Road 488 for Butler County.

For a complete listing of suggestions and action, visit [www.modot.org/southeast](http://www.modot.org/southeast).



## Final Route 67 Contract

The final project to add additional lanes to Route 67 in Butler, Wayne and Madison Counties is now under contract. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission awarded the contract for \$31,589,940 to Dave Kolb Grading, Inc., St. Charles, Mo., in late May.

The project involves grading, paving, and bridges from north of the Route EE intersection at Coldwater to south of Route 34 near Silva. In this portion of the upgrade, sections of the additional lanes for Route 67 will be constructed on the west side of the existing route and some sections will be constructed on the east side.

"When we cross the existing lanes, we will have crossovers or bypasses for traffic," says Resident Engineer Steve Bubanovich. "These crossovers are at several different locations along the route."

The project also includes an interchange at Silva. Bubanovich says construction of the interchange will be handled in several stages.

"Traffic will be shifted from the existing lanes to the new ramps and then to the new Route 67. We urge drivers to use caution in the work zone, and we'll alert motorists prior to any change in traffic," says Bubanovich.

Work should started this summer. An event to celebrate this milestone in the improvements is being planned. We'll let you know once the details are finalized.

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Deck pour on new Wappapello Lake Bridge



# Route 67 Construction Update

The Route 67 project from Madison to Butler County is divided into five sections with several projects ongoing and many contractors working at once. Here's a brief look at what's happening along the corridor.

## Section A

The contractor is pouring the approach pavement for the Black River and Union Pacific Railroad Bridges.

## Section B

PCI and its sub-contractors have grading work underway as well as some of the culverts set. Robertson Inc. has poured the Widow's Creek bridge deck and is now waiting to install safety barrier curb. They are also resuming work on the Otter Creek Bridge.

## Section C

R.L. Persons is finishing clearing trees for the project. Flynn Contractors and its sub-contractors are grading to cut down some hills and working on two of the concrete box culverts.

Robertson Contractors began pouring a portion of the bridge deck for the St. Francis River Bridge.

## Section D

MoDOT is preparing to have a pre-construction conference with Kolb Grading from St. Louis, the contractor awarded the final contract for additional lanes.

## Section E

Excavation and construction of embankment is in progress from the Wayne/Madison Co. Line to Route N. Pipe and box culvert construction continues northward from Route N to Route JJ.

## All Sections

Chester Bross Construction has paved portions of the existing lanes in Madison County and is paving the shoulders. A subcontractor is installing guardrail in Wayne County.

## St. Francois County

Work is underway on the Route 67/Old Orchard Road interchange near Bonne Terre.

Old Orchard Interchange Groundbreaking



Excavation and construction of embankment is in progress to the west of Route 67. Grading is taking place for the west outer roads that connect up with Raider Road. Grading is also in progress for the roundabout and portion of Orchard Road to the west of Route 67. Grading is just starting to the east of Route 67 on the ramps. Rock base and concrete paving started mid-June for the portion of the Outer Road between the Bonne Terre Maintenance Building and the Hospital.

# What's A Wick Drain?

Before work can get underway on new lanes of Route 67 in the Goldbeck Hollow/Box Springs area, contractors are busy putting wicks in the ground.

These wicks aren't designed to burn anything; however, they're going to keep roads and bridges from settling.

Softer soils or soils below the water table usually see settlement once any pressure is placed on them. So, when building new roadway lanes and bridges for Route 67, getting the most stable foundation for those structures is key. One method being used on Route 67 is the installation of wick drains.

Wick drains are a geosynthetic "rope" that acts as conduit for water to flow out of the soil and to the surface. Using the wick drains can rapidly increase the settlement of the soil needed in this area for the Route 67 improvements. This means the contractor doesn't have to wait for the soil to settle naturally, which lengthens construction, before paving can begin. It also means the ground has been compressed before anything is built, preventing damage to roads and structures when settlement occurs.

"Using the wick drains and a two-foot drainable sand layer, we can control where the water is leaving the embankment which will reduce the chances for any future failures," says Assistant Resident Engineer Dave Wyman.

A large machine inserts the wicks into the ground on a four-foot grid pattern, and about 1200 of the wicks were installed.

"Robertson, Inc. was the prime contractor to install the wicks and bring the roadway up to grade. They have pretty well finished this portion of their contract. PCI, the prime on the next project, will then assume control of the area and monitor the settlement. When the settlement has ceased, they will be allowed to finish the area to grade once more and pave," says Wyman.

Right now, it looks as though the wicks are doing their job. Since May 2, the area has already settled about 3.8 inches.

Installing Wick Drains

