

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are improvements to Interstate 70 needed?

MoDOT has made keeping I-70's driving surface in good condition a priority. Resurfacing treatments, though, don't last long because of the damage that exists beneath the surface. The original pavement – some of which dates back to sections of old U.S. Route 40 that were built in the 1920s – has been pounded to bits by years of mounting traffic.

I-70 was designed to the standards of a different day. For example, the median is 40 feet wide instead of the 60 feet it would be if built today. All of the mainline and crossroad bridges are approaching the need to be replaced. Nine were re-decked as part of the Safe & Sound program within the last three years.

I-70 was designed and constructed from 1956-65. Its oldest sections are 55 years old (*in fact, the first piece of the nation's interstate highway system was built on I-70 in St. Charles County in 1956*) and its youngest are 46.

How much traffic does I-70 carry?

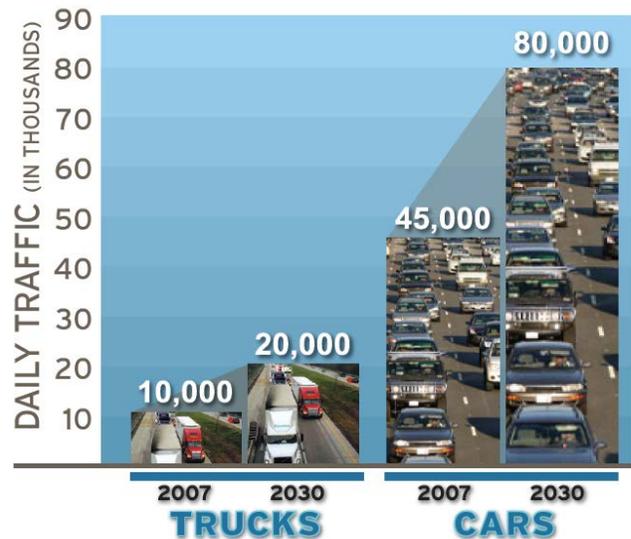
I-70 was intended to carry 12,000-18,000 vehicles per day. Today, it carries an average of 31,000 vehicles per day in the corridor's most rural sections, with 10,000-13,000 trucks. At the Kansas City end near I-470, Interstate 70 is carrying more than 98,000 vehicles per day with 25,000 trucks. Where I-64 connects with I-70 near Wentzville, daily traffic is nearly 45,000 vehicles per day with 15,000 trucks.

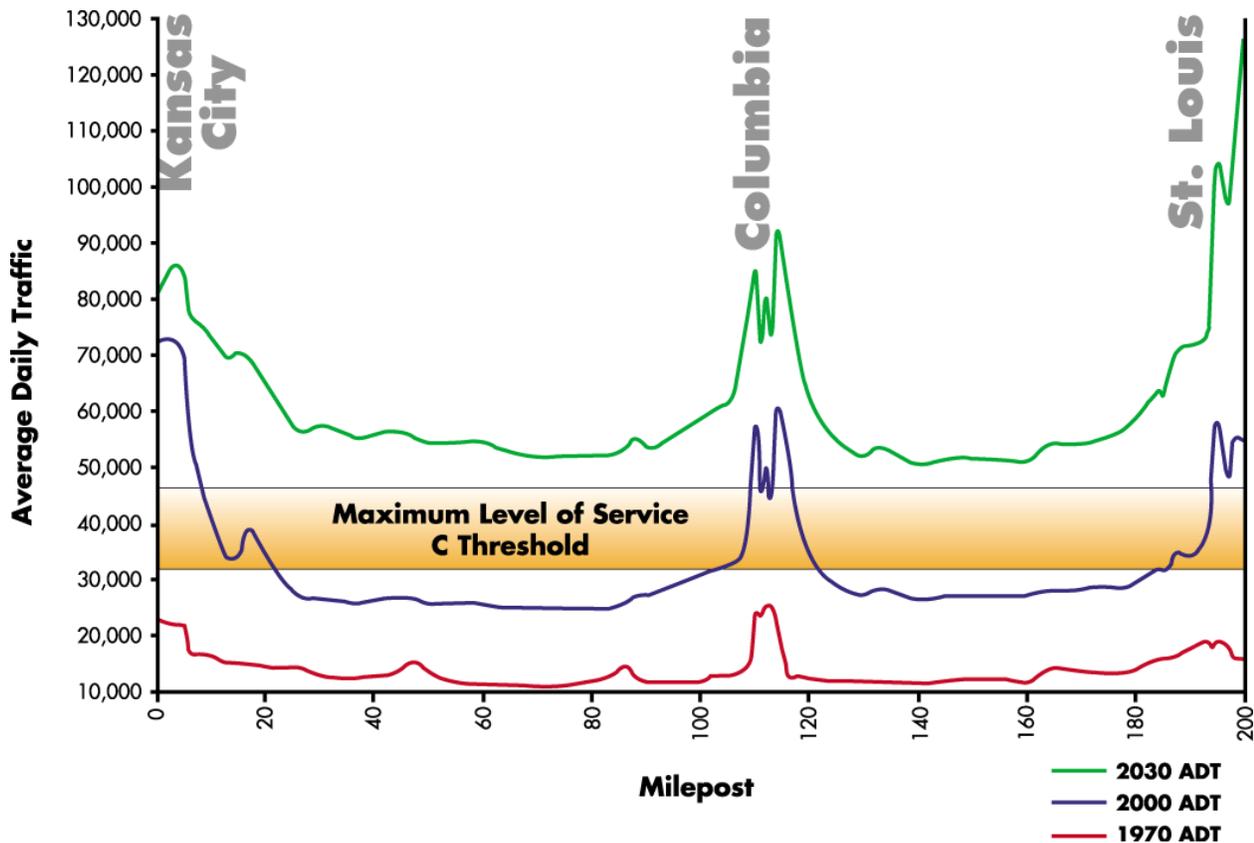
Almost 70 percent of those trucks travel the entire length of the 200-mile corridor.

And because Interstate 70 is such a critical east-west link, spanning 10 states from Maryland to Utah, I-70 in Missouri is the choice of a hefty number of out-of-state drivers. Take a look at the map. Interstate highways funnel into Missouri in both Kansas City and St. Louis, and then are carried across the state by I-70.

Closing a lane for any reason on I-70 between Kansas City and St. Louis results in immediate backups that stretch for miles. And it will get worse. Traffic projections show that by 2030, the entire corridor from Kansas City to St. Louis will operate in a stop-and-go condition.

I-70 Traffic Projections





How much would the project cost? Aren't there other options to pay for it besides a toll?

The fix for I-70 comes at a high price; just adding a lane in each direction would cost \$2 billion. Rebuilding with dedicated truck lanes could cost as much as \$4 billion. MoDOT doesn't have those kinds of resources. To fund an I-70 rebuild through conventional methods could mean a double-digit increase in the state's gas tax. Or, it could mean incremental yearly improvements that even at \$100 million per year would take 20-40 years to complete. Or, it could mean a new revenue source like a statewide dedicated sales tax.

Tolling I-70 is a viable way to pay for this project and a public-private partnership is a viable way to get it quickly underway. Tolling is a way to generate additional revenues that can be invested in I-70 while not affecting the rest of Missouri's transportation system, and the timing may never be better at this time of historically low interest rates and historically low construction costs.

Pay-As-You-Go 10-Year Funding Options	
Diesel Tax Rate (70% state)	Average
\$2 billion project	29 cents
\$3 billion project	44 cents
\$4 billion project	59 cents
<i>1 cent = \$7 million per year</i>	
All Fuel Tax Rate (70% state)	
\$2 billion project	7 cents
\$3 billion project	11 cents
\$4 billion project	14 cents
<i>1 cent = \$28 million per year</i>	
General Sales Tax	
\$2 billion project	0.3 cent
\$3 billion project	0.5 cent
\$4 billion project	0.6 cent
<i>1 cent = \$657 million per year</i>	
NOTE: Current state fuel tax is 17 cents per gallon. Figures listed above would be in addition to that. MoDOT receives 70 percent and cities/counties receive 30 percent.	

Why do we want to sell a multi-billion dollar asset to a private company?

In applying a public-private partnership to Interstate 70, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission would retain ownership of the infrastructure asset. The Commission would not sell the facility, but rather would enter into a long-term lease with the private-sector partner to construct and operate a new I-70.

What types of approvals are necessary to put this plan into action?

To develop alternatives for I-70 improvements, MoDOT has completed a tiered Environmental Impact Statement (with Records of Decision received in 2001/2006) and a Supplemental EIS (2009). I-70 was given “conditional provisional” status as a pilot toll project on an existing interstate by FHWA in 2005 – a status that is coveted by other states. Virginia is the only other state with a similar ability and is now developing a toll project for I-95.

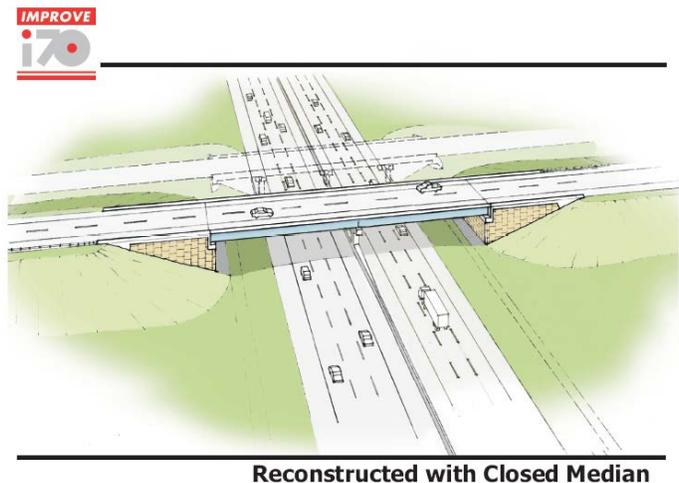
In order to enter into a public-private partnership, MoDOT needs authorization by the General Assembly, as it was given for the new Mississippi River Bridge in 2006 and for other modes of transportation – but not highways – in 2009. MoDOT believes that exploring this option is good public policy, but as with other projects, MoDOT would thoroughly engage its customers in the design and implementation of the project. And bottom line – MoDOT will follow whatever course is determined by the Legislature as it takes action on this important issue.

Why are we just talking about the 200 miles from Independence to Wentzville, and not border to border?

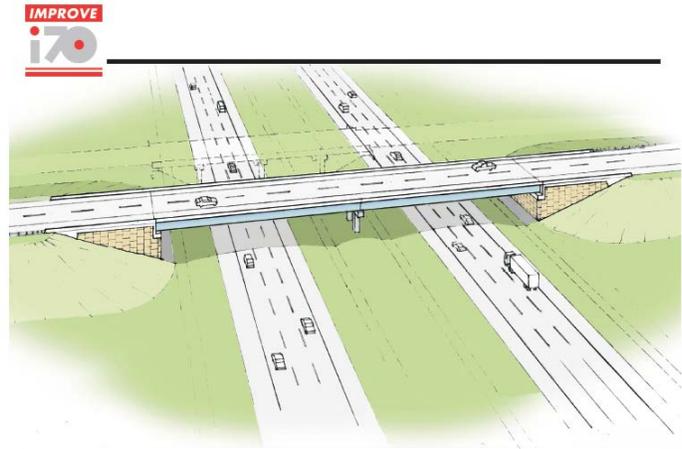
Those were the limits of MoDOT’s I-70 environmental studies that were conducted over the last decade. They were chosen, and approved by the Federal Highway Administration, because those were the break points between a six-lane I-70 and a four-lane I-70. Extending this project into the urban cores of Kansas City and St. Louis would require further study and approvals.

What would a new I-70 look like?

- **Low End – \$2 billion** – Would replace all of the pavement and add lanes in the existing median. This strategy would mean separating the eastbound and westbound traffic with a concrete barrier wall that would run for 200 miles. Only the interchanges that carry the most traffic and/or have the greatest needs would be reconstructed. This strategy has minimal needs for additional right-of-way because every effort would be made to fit the improvements within the exiting footprint. In a six-lane configuration, trucks would be limited to usage of the right-hand two lanes.



- Selected Alternative from 2006 EIS Record of Decision -- \$3 billion** – MoDOT’s tiered EIS, completed in 2006, would replace all of the pavement, rebuild every interchange, and would add a minimum of one lane in each direction. To more easily facilitate construction while maintaining four lanes of traffic, one set of lanes would be built outside the existing lanes. Traffic would then be shifted to the new lanes while half of the existing lanes were replaced with new lanes. The remaining old lanes would then be removed. The result is a very wide median



Reconstructed with Wide Median

– 80 to 125 feet – that would be reserved for future transportation options. This strategy would require 150 feet of additional right-of-way, on one side of I-70 or the other. The wide median would not extend through urban areas, conserving space by utilizing a concrete barrier to separate traffic. In a six-lane configuration, trucks would be limited to usage of the right-hand two lanes.

- High End – Selected Alternative from 2009 SEIS Record of Decision – \$4 billion** – In 2006, 800 miles of I-70 across Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio was designated a national “Corridor of the Future” that was critical to freight movements across the Midwest. As part of that designation, MoDOT studied an eight-lane reconstructed I-70 with four lanes dedicated to long-haul trucks and four lanes for general purpose vehicles. It fits within the same footprint as the six-lane option with the wide median, and in effect, this strategy utilizes the dedicated truck lanes as the “future transportation option” that was discussed previously. It would enhance safety by dramatically reducing the interaction between trucks and cars. It would facilitate more efficient movement of freight through reduced congestion and could allow for more robust pavement designs in the truck lanes that would accommodate heavier trucks. It would also build truck-car separated interchanges at U.S. Routes 65, 63 and 54. Truck-only lanes also provide for redundancy of the system, allowing traffic to be shifted from one set of lanes to the other to allow traffic to maneuver around incidents, or to facilitate maintenance activities. Truck-only lanes also strengthen connections to other transportation modes and intermodal facilities.

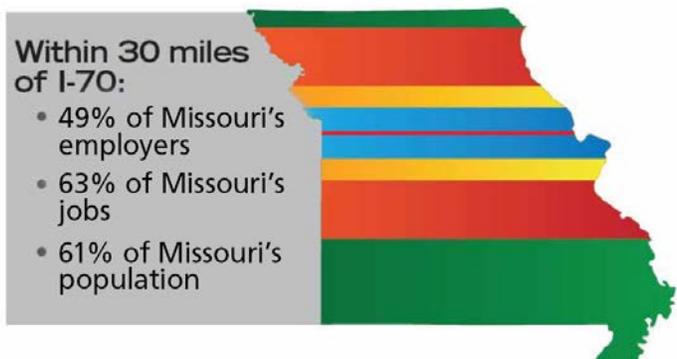


Reconstructed with Truck-Only Lanes

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Are there economic benefits associated with this project?

Missouri’s Department of Economic Development estimates the long-term economic impact from the I-70 project would create 6,070 jobs per year at an average wage of \$34,118. Over the life of the facility (assumed in the model to be 37 years past



construction), the project generates cumulative economic output totaling \$29.5 billion, which provides a return of \$5.24 for every dollar invested.

These numbers are based on a conservative \$2 billion project. A larger project investment would create higher economic benefits.

An increase in employment would occur during the construction years in the form of direct labor on the project, suppliers to the project such as asphalt and concrete, labor industries related to construction such as medical, and labor increases due to increased discretionary income for employed workers.

The increase to new personal income would increase annually by more than \$377 million and Missouri's unemployment rate could be impacted in a positive direction for many years to come.

When would work begin and how long would it take?

Detailed schedules for design and construction of a new I-70 have not yet been developed, but it is anticipated that in concert with a private sector partner the entire process could be completed in six-eight years.

It would likely take up to two years before construction could begin. Tolls would not be charged until the entire facility was complete.

How much would the toll cost?

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission would establish the parameters under which the public-private partnership would collect tolls.

MoDOT does not know precisely what the price of the toll would be. That would be determined by detailed traffic and revenue studies that would be completed as part of the private-sector proposals. But MoDOT's goal is to charge the lowest possible toll rate that would pay for the improvement. The toll rates on other facilities that have been constructed in the United States in the last decade or so have been in the range of 10-15 cents per mile for automobiles and two to three times that for trucks.

How would the costs of construction and maintenance of a new I-70 be paid?

Pursuant to the agreements entered into between the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission and the public-private partnership, a substantial portion (or all) of the tolls would be paid over to the public-private partnership to reimburse it for the costs of construction, maintenance and operation of a new I-70.

How long would the toll last?

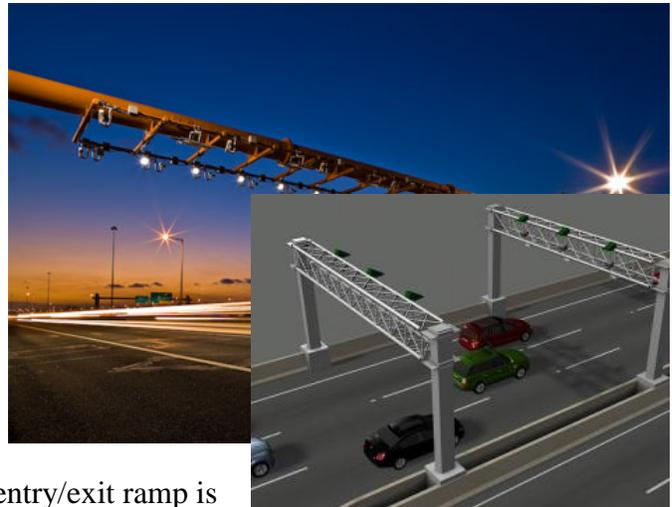
It is unreasonable to think that a toll would be charged only until such time as the initial investment to build the project was repaid. The term of a contract with a private sector partner would likely be in the range of 30-50 years which would coincide with the life-cycle of the facility, meaning that significant improvements to I-70 could be required about the time of the contract's expiration. A toll in perpetuity would facilitate the long-term needs of I-70 so that MoDOT does not face this dilemma again in the future. The mechanism to adjust toll rates in the future, if needed, would be carefully spelled out in the contract and would require involvement of the MHTC.

How does a toll facility work?

Tolling today does not mean stopping to throw quarters in a basket. Instead, a new I-70 would use a technologically advanced electronic system that doesn't require even slowing down. It would not have a booth on every ramp.

The price of a toll, locations of toll stations, and other details would be answered by detailed traffic and revenue analysis that would come as part of private-sector proposals. Those proposals would tell MoDOT how Missourians can get the most bang for their buck, and what level of private investment could deliver what kind of improvement with what return.

Toll roads take one of two forms – open or closed systems. Closed systems, where it is impossible to enter or exit the system without paying the toll, typically have few access points. The Kansas or Oklahoma Turnpikes, where every entry/exit ramp is controlled, is an example.



That would not be practical for the 200 miles of I-70 between Kansas City and St. Louis which has more than 50 interchanges. While some that are of close proximity could be combined, MoDOT has no intention to reduce access to I-70 or its adjacent communities.

Technology has enabled the creation of open-road tolling – where tolls are collected without the use of toll booths. The major advantage to open-road tolling is that users are able to drive through the toll collection zone beneath a toll-reading gantry at highway speeds without having to stop or even slow down to pay the toll.

Small electronic tags, are placed on the windshield of drivers' cars when drivers open an account with the toll operator. Tolls are collected as the transponder is read at normal highway speeds by electronic scanners suspended above the highway. Motorists can link their transponders to credit card accounts to automatically charge pre-determined amounts when their account is low. Accounts can also be quickly refilled through a phone call, trip to a kiosk or office or by visiting a website.

This method of toll collection has demonstrated improved accuracy and affordability. Electronic collection systems are 33-50 percent less expensive than traditional "manned" tolling operations.

- **Higher performance and safety:** An electronic toll collection system provides uniform, highway-speed travel for the public, without the stop-and-go and the accident potential of traditional toll collection systems.
- **Efficiency:** An all-electronic system provides more efficient toll collection operations by eliminating backups at toll booths, lowering toll collection costs and enhancing customer service.
- **Sustainability:** Open-road tolling saves fuel and reduces vehicle emissions by eliminating waiting times at traditional toll booths. In addition, open-road tolling allows for expanded capacity at toll locations without the need to build additional infrastructure, reducing right-of-way needs and associated impacts.

- **Flexibility:** Variable toll rates can easily be programmed, for instance, to offer reduced rates for long-haul trucks if they travel at night when traffic levels are lower, or to offer discounts for commuters who make relatively short trips on I-70. And, conceivably, drivers who enter and exit I-70 in-between toll collection zones (i.e., not passing under a toll-reading gantry) may pay no toll at all.

The approach to maintenance on a tolled I-70 operated by a private-sector partner also offers options. The provider could opt to maintain the facility themselves to MoDOT standards specified in the contract, or they could contract with MoDOT to provide maintenance services like plowing snow, mowing, litter removal, etc.

What about diversion of traffic? Won't drivers just avoid I-70 and take other routes?

Some diversion of traffic is inevitable; just how much is undetermined at this time. But Missouri does have other four-lane, east-west corridors like U.S. 36 and U.S. 60 that could stand quite a bit more traffic than they carry today.

If this proposal was passed by the Legislature, what would happen next?

MoDOT's first step would be to identify a dedicated I-70 team to establish project goals, develop a Request for Proposal and shepherd the procurement process, re-evaluate the Environmental Impact Statement and evaluate needs for right-of-way and utility relocation.

At a minimum, MoDOT's project goals that would guide the private-partner procurement and the design, construction and operation of the facility would include:

- Reconstruct the entire 200-mile corridor, with a minimum life cycle of 45 years,
- Maintain local access to the corridor, and to adjacent properties,
- Establish the lowest possible user fee that, dedicated to I-70, can provide for its construction and long-term maintenance and operation,
- Complete construction of the facility in the shortest possible time frame,
- Provide a construction approach that manages traffic in the least impactful manner to MoDOT's customers,
- Be sensitive to the environment, recycling as much of the existing pavement and bridges as possible, while delivering the environmental commitments made in the environmental impact statement(s), and
- Develop and execute a comprehensive public communication plan that keeps MoDOT customers informed throughout the design, construction and operation of a new I-70.

MoDOT will keep the General Assembly informed along the way with regular reports to and appearances before the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight. And, MoDOT will initiate a series of public meetings to gather input on design choices and implementation of the toll system.

What if we do nothing to Interstate 70?

In MoDOT's current financial condition, with an annual construction budget that has fallen to about \$600 million, and with no indication that additional revenue is on the way for transportation at either the federal or state levels, it's inconceivable to think that enough money could be carved out to tackle a project of the magnitude of I-70.

Without it, life on I-70 will be business as usual. MoDOT will resurface and maintain it to the best of its ability. Incidents and maintenance operations will continue to cause lengthy backups. And drivers will continue to experience rising traffic levels, increased numbers of trucks and congested conditions.