



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - October 12, 2018

U.S. 61 CONSTRUCTION PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION; SAFETY KEY TO PROJECT
Ribbon Cutting Scheduled for 10 a.m., Monday, Oct. 15

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – St. Charles County, Wentzville and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) officials will gather at 10 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 15, to commemorate the completion of an important part of a project promised to families who have lost loved ones on U.S. 61 in Wentzville. A new bridge over the highway will eliminate the at-grade intersections of Route P and Peine Road with U.S. 61. This new bridge opens next week.

“We know that as traffic has increased on U.S. 61, there have been terrible accidents and deaths on this stretch,” says County Executive Steve Ehlmann. “But we’re proud of the partnership between St. Charles County, Wentzville and MoDOT, and the fact that we have accomplished this much needed roadway improvement despite MoDOT’s severe budgetary restraints.”

District 1 County Councilman Joe Cronin encouraged County and Wentzville officials to find a way to deal with the issues of multiple accidents and fatalities, and in 2012, conversations started regarding safety on that stretch of highway. In August of that year, a section of U.S. 61 was designated as a “travel safe zone.” Speed limits were reduced, fines for speeding were doubled and enforcement by city, county and state agencies was increased. In ongoing efforts to improve safety of the corridor, cable barriers were constructed along U.S. 61 from the county line to I-70.

“We’re excited to see it come to fruition,” Wentzville Mayor Nick Guccione says. “We take a proactive approach to public safety, and while a large project like this takes a long time to complete, we are excited to have partnered with St. Charles County and the Missouri Department of Transportation to make it happen. The safety of our residents and community visitors is paramount and we are thankful to have these new safety enhancements in place.”

County Councilman Joe Cronin, whose district includes the area where the project is being completed, is happy to see these improvements as well.

“In 2012, it was estimated that more than 47,000 vehicles traveled this section of U.S. 61 per day, and that number is projected to increase to 61,000 by 2040,” Councilman Cronin says. “These improvements will not only save lives, but address traffic flow as well as St. Charles County continues to grow with new residents and businesses. On behalf of my district, many thanks to county, city and state officials for pushing to make this project a priority.”

This project is being funded as a cost-share between the County, Wentzville and MoDOT. Work began in 2017; cost is \$15 million.

For details about the project, visit the MoDOT website at modot.org/route-61-safety-improvements.

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Media Contact: Mary Enger, Communications Director, 636-949-1856, or 636-443-1008, menger@sccmo.org

About St. Charles County

Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. It is home to 15 scenic county parks encompassing more than 3,643 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.

With a population of 395,504, St Charles County is home to large employers including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County Government employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit sccmo.org.