



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – July 3, 2019

EAST-WEST GATEWAY BOARD VOTES IN FAVOR OF SEVERAL MAJOR ST. CHARLES COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – Infrastructure is vitally important in a growing and aging county and remains a top priority for St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann. A member of the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWGCOG) Board of Directors, Ehlmann recently voted in favor of several major St. Charles County projects in the EWGCOG Long-Range Plan (LRP), and for the projects to be funded in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). At a board meeting last week, the LRP for the region, called *Connected2045*, was approved, and the TIP was recommended for public comment prior to final approval.

Included in the LRP is a project at **I-70 and the Norfolk Southern Railroad**. The plan calls for additional lanes to be added to I-70 under the railroad bridge in Wentzville. A daily bottleneck on the interstate, due to the curve of the highway and limited number of lanes between Route Z and Wentzville Parkway, causes delays for those trying to get home as well as freight trucks traveling through the region.

“I am encouraged and pleased that this stretch of I-70 is now in East-West Gateway’s 20-year plan,” says County Executive Ehlmann. “I have been pushing this effort – along with Sen. Bill Eigel, Sen. Bob Onder and the mayors of St. Charles, St. Peters, O’Fallon, Lake Saint Louis and Wentzville – to get additional lanes added. The Norfolk Southern Railroad overpass is rated high in three areas of an annual congestion report – severity of congestion, total impact to the traveling public and congestion variability. This is a detriment to quality of life, as well as economic growth.”

Key St. Charles County TIP projects awaiting final approval include:

- **I-70 from Convention Center Boulevard to Zumbahl Road:** This nearly \$36 million project would reconfigure the I-70 interchange at Zumbahl Road to allow for better utilization of outer roads, reduced congestion, and improved safety along this heavily traveled segment of the highway.
- **I-70 Blanchette Bridge:** The plan calls for the full length of the eastbound bridge to undergo rehabilitation at a cost of more than \$46 million. In 2013, reconstruction of the westbound bridge, which was built in 1958, was completed; the eastbound span was built in 1978. In preparation for the construction, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has funded restriping of westbound MO 364 from the Missouri River to Jungs Station to add an additional traffic lane and help alleviate congestion during the bridge work.
- **Muegge Road to Highway 94/MO 364:** This \$16 million project will provide direct access from Muegge Road to Highway 94 in St. Charles.
- **Gateway Green Light:** Signal optimization; \$150,000
- **I-70 at MO 94 (First Capitol Drive):** Conversion of interchange to diverging diamond; \$2.6 million

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- **Interstate Drive from Prospect Road to Quail Ridge Park Entrance:** Reconstruction of shoulder and sidewalk; \$4 million
- **Central School Road at St. Peters Howell Road:** Intersection improvements; \$1.82 million
- **MO 370 at Salt River Road:** New eastbound to southbound ramp; \$3.3 million
- **Smart Parking Management System, City of St. Charles:** Installation of parking lot sensors, cameras and phone app; \$1 million
- **MO Route 67:** A portion of southbound Highway 67 between the Clark Bridge over the Mississippi River and Highway 94 will be elevated to avoid flooding-related closures; \$3 million

County Executive Ehlmann also urged approval of a project at **MO 141 and MO 364** in Creve Coeur which would ease congestion for drivers entering St. Charles County. Ehlmann lobbied that lengthening the right turn lanes to the eastbound and westbound ramps on to MO 364 will greatly increase traffic flow. This proposed project is included in the TIP.

And, while not part of the LRP or the TIP, the board approved consultant selection for **Frenchtown Great Streets** in St. Charles. In 2006, EWGCOG launched the Great Streets Initiative to challenge communities to envision streets not only as spaces for automotive travel, but as integrated conduits for moving people, improving connectivity, enhancing local economies, and creating attractive, interesting places. This is a separate grant program through EWGCOG that designates \$500,000 for a study to help revitalize the Second Street corridor from Clark to Tecumseh streets. This segment is currently maintained by MoDOT but will become city owned in the near future. Consultants will look at land use, street scape, multimodal transportation needs, connectivity, wayfinding, and stormwater management, and will include an extensive public involvement element. St. Charles County and the City of St. Charles each contributed a \$50,000 match.

“As the population of St. Charles County nears 400,000, these projects are crucial for us,” Ehlmann says. “I am grateful to all who work diligently to keep pushing for improvements, for those who agree with us that we need to plan ahead, and for those who ultimately make the decisions to allow this funding. We could not get this done without forming partnerships and working together.”

EWGCOG is hosting five TIP open houses in July, including one in St. Charles County. The public is invited to attend that session from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 30 at Wentzville City Hall, 1001 Schroeder Creek Boulevard, Wentzville. Questions and recommendations will be taken at that time. For more information or to submit comments on line, visit ewgateway.org.

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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.