

I-64 PROJECT ENTERS THE HOME STRETCH

Though much remains to be completed before the east half of the I-64 project can be reopened to traffic, finishing touches are being applied all along the corridor as crews work toward the December 31 deadline.

While the mainline pavement is already in place, paving crews are hard at work filling in the smaller, yet equally important roadway shoulders, barriers, medians and ramps. Along many areas of the highway all that remain are the median gaps on either side of light pole foundations. Though machinery placed and formed most of the project's pavement, each one of those gaps has to be closed by carpenter crews, then filled with concrete, a time consuming, though unavoidable process that has to be repeated at each foundation.

Paving machines are pouring the roadway shoulders and barrier walls along the shoulders of the highway, after which soundwall posts and panels will be installed. Landscaping crews are busy with final grading and seeding or sodding of slopes, which should help eliminate some of the erosion problems that occurred on the first half of the project.

Highway signs are being installed in many locations and permanent highway striping is also well underway. Gateway Constructors hopes to have most of the permanent striping complete by the time the highway opens, eliminating the

need to close lanes in 2010 to replace temporary stripes. Achieving that goal will depend a great deal on the weather, as stripes cannot be applied to pavement that is wet or too cold.

The September 28 removal of the project's concrete plant under the flyover ramps at I-170 was a major milestone that signaled the approaching end of construction. The plant was located right where part of the north connector road linking Hanley Road with Brentwood Boulevard needed to be built. With the plant out of the way, crews were able to start on some utility relocations and the excavation needed before paving of the Hanley to Brentwood connector road could begin.

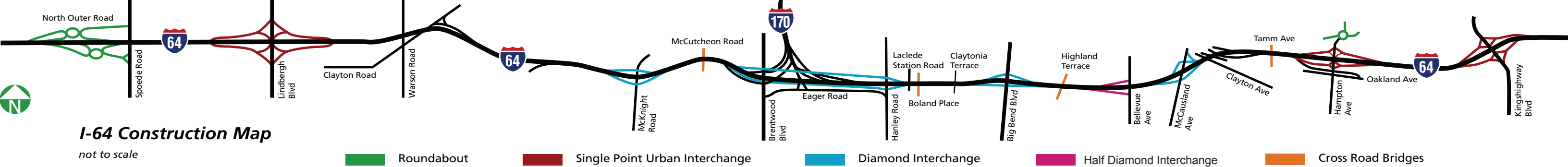
The new Hanley and Eager intersection will open to traffic October 29. This new connection, paid for by St. Louis County, eliminates the signalized intersection and allows drivers to make only right turns to access Eager Road from Hanley. It will greatly improve traffic flow at these two very busy roads. To see a diagram of this new intersection visit the project website at www.thenewi64.org.

The last two bridges on the project are close to completion. At Big Bend Boulevard, fencing has already been installed on the bridge, and utility relocations are complete. Crews are constructing and paving the approaches to the bridge over I-64. With some decent weather, Big Bend should reopen to traffic in mid November, although it was originally scheduled to reopen November 30. At Clayton Road crews are completing the demolition of the old street pavement so they can begin to tie it in with the new bridge. That crossing should reopen sometime in late November.

The construction is on schedule to open I-64 from I-170 to Kingshighway no later than December 31, but Gateway Constructors is working hard to get I-64 open as soon as possible. But with the weather this time of year it is difficult to accurately predict an exact date yet.



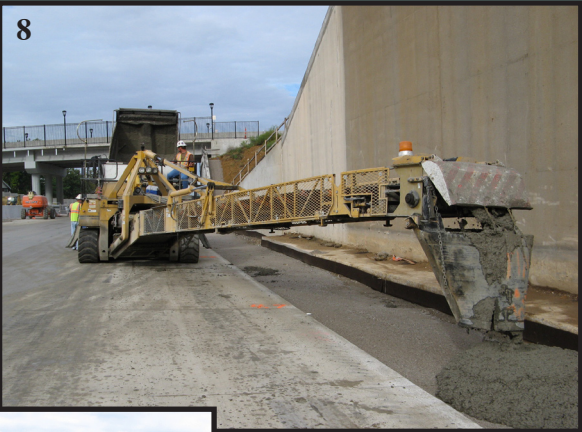
ABOVE: Looking west at the Clayton and Oakland bridges

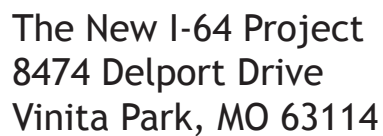


Visit www.thenewi64.org for East Half Opening Celebration Details

PHOTO CAPTIONS

- 1 & 2) A concrete pump delivers concrete to the bridge deck at Clayton Avenue. The final structure to be rebuilt on the project, the Clayton crossing should reopen to traffic by the end of November.
- 3 & 4) A crane lowers part of the concrete batch plant to the ground near I-170. With that out of the way work could begin on excavation for the final piece of the north connector road that will link Hanley Road with Brentwood Boulevard.
- 5) A barrier paving operation along the westbound I-64 exit ramp to McCausland Avenue.
- 6) Though the mainline pavement is all in place, crews still have to fill in medians and barriers between the two directions of the highway.
- 7) Beneath the south to east flyover ramp at I-170 and I-64 paving crews construct a median barrier.
- 8 & 9) Paving the shoulder of the highway by the Bellevue Avenue bridge.
- 10) Landscaping crews roll out sod across from Forest Park. Installing sod will help reduce erosion and the costs of having to regrade slopes after a heavy rain.
- 11) Highway signs have to be installed before I-64 can be reopened to traffic.
- 12) The “jug handle” loop that will carry northbound Hanley Road traffic to westbound Eager Road, and eastbound Eager to northbound Hanley. The new connection is scheduled to open by October 29th.





INFOLINE:
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WEBSITE:
www.thenewi64.org

TRAVEL INFORMATION:

