

Route 412 CONNECTIONS

Spring 2007



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Staying Connected

The Missouri Department of Transportation welcomes you to **Route 412 Connections**.

You'll receive **Connections** to keep you informed about what's happening on the Route 412 corridor project in Dunklin and Pemiscot Counties as well as give you an idea of the timeline for upcoming events.

If you know of someone who should be receiving this publication or if you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please contact MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636).

Route 412 Completion Approaches

It seems as though Mother Nature wasn't ready for a fully, four-lane Route 412 between Kennett and Hayti, which is a shame because most everyone else has been ready for quite some time.

Rain last fall shut the project down before contractor Illinois Valley Paving could finish concrete work on the last section west of Kennett. And while everyone was ready for the completion of the project, no one was probably more ready



than IVP. The firm had planned to have the work done last fall, one year ahead of the deadline. However, the rain kept progress from occurring and that was followed by winter weather and temperatures that made the decision to close up shop until spring inevitable.

"IVP will not be able to start work again until the weather warms up and the project dries out. This could be as early as

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Eric Krapf

Connecting With Route 412

A Word From The Project Manager

We tried very hard, but we just could not get Mother Nature to work with us on finishing the Route 412

four-lane improvements last fall.

Our original contract specified the completion to be fall 2007. Contractor Illinois Valley Paving set a rigorous goal for themselves to complete the job by fall 2006. They would have easily made that deadline had Dunklin County not seen the amount of rain last year common to Seattle. IVP made an admirable attempt but was challenged every step of the way by the weather, eventually forcing them to stop for the winter.

Of course, if we want to look on the bright side, it will be much more enjoyable to celebrate the grand opening of this important project hopefully this summer.

The Kennett Chamber of Commerce is working together with the cities of Kennett and Hayti on some great ideas to commemorate just what this corridor means to the Bootheel.

We wanted to give you an update on where the work was and just when you could start driving the new four lanes. There's lots going on transportation wise in your region, and we're happy to report some of it here.

Thank you for all your patience through surveying, right-of-way purchasing and construction. When a project of this size comes through communities, it is exciting and inconvenient all at the same time. I've enjoyed working with you. I've appreciated your cooperation. And, I really hope that you will be pleased with the result.

Area Notes with Former Highway Commissioner Mark Preyer

What has changed since planning to upgrade Route 412 to four lanes?

The most obvious change has been the increase in the number of motor vehicles using U.S. 412. With similar projects in northern Arkansas and across western Tennessee, the number of vehicles, both personal and commercial, has steadily increased. As we complete the work, along with the new four lane bridge at Cardwell, I can foresee a dramatic increase in the volume of traffic.

How do you think the construction process has gone?

There have been some unexpected delays, but the work that has been completed and upon which we are traveling is excellent. The quality of the workmanship from the bridges to the concrete pavement has been exemplary.

Do you think the route has realized its potential for the area yet?

No, the benefit to the communities in Pemiscot and Dunklin Counties has only just begun to be realized. The first, and clearly the most important, benefit has been to the safety of the drivers utilizing U.S. 412.

“The quality of the work ... has been exemplary.”

The number of lives saved and injuries prevented over the next thirty years will be immeasurable. Similarly, the secondary benefit of favorable financial and economic impact also is just being noticed. In fact, there will probably not be one large economic change that will be noticed, but the cumulative effect over the expected lifetime of the roadway will be huge. Having a four lane highway connection to a major interstate benefits everyone in both their personal and commercial activities.

What should the future of the corridor in Missouri and beyond hold?

The completion of the corridor as a four lane highway from Kennett to the Arkansas state line is the next phase that must be addressed. As we see the increase of commercial traffic along the corridor from Nashville, Tennessee to Fayetteville Arkansas, the need to “fill in the gap” will become overwhelmingly clear. While I am hopeful that alternative fuels will be

What Does The Future Hold?

Once Route 412 is upgraded to four lanes between Hayti and Kennett will the work be done? We reported in our last issue about Arkansas’ efforts to make improvements from Missouri to Oklahoma. That could beg the question, what’s next for Route 412?

“Right now, there’s nothing more in the works,” says Project Manager Eric Krapf. “We did present the idea of doing work from Kennett to Arkansas to a statewide meeting of our planning partners last year.”

The meeting consisted of representatives from each of MoDOT’s 10 districts along with representatives from each of Missouri’s regional planning commissions. The group submitted potential projects from each area of the state and prioritized Missouri’s needs, but with little funding available the process was mainly to get an idea of the direction the state should be working in the future.

So does that mean someday Route 412 could end up a four-lane between Kennett and Arkansas?

“What we presented was the idea of using some two plus one lanes. What that means is the road would still be a two-lane road, but we’d add an extra lane which would alternate as a passing lane. That stretch of 412 has much less traffic than the portion between Kennett and Hayti. A four-lane roadway may not be needed there yet; however, a passing lane would help with traffic getting backed up and provide safer opportunities for vehicles to pass,” says Krapf.

Krapf says MoDOT already owns enough right-of-way for construction of this plan, but whatever happens with Route 412 is in the hands of those who drive it.

“We’ll continue to work with the public and our planning partners,” says Krapf, “and as they share the needs for the future of the corridor with us, we’ll strive to determine the best, most economical solution for improvements.”

Hayti High Wins In Battle of The Belt

The headline may be a little misleading. Hayti High School didn't come in first in the statewide Battle of the Belt, but what other conclusion can you come to when the student body increases its seatbelt use by 45 percent?

Battle of the Belt is a competition for teens across Missouri to have friendly rivalries with neighboring high schools. Not only does the competition increase safety belt awareness, but students also have the opportunity to win cash and prizes.

Here's how it works ... Each participating schools' seatbelt usage was surveyed last fall.

The school educated students on the importance of wearing seatbelts and what can happen if they aren't worn. Another survey was taken a month and a half later to determine how much the school improved. Two \$500 prizes were awarded statewide to the

school with the highest safety belt use and to the school with the most improved safety belt use. Two \$250 prizes were given to the school in each region with the highest safety belt use and the school with the most improved safety belt use. American Family Insurance donated the prize money for the initiative.

Hayti High took home the \$250 prize for the school with the most improved seatbelt use in Southeast Missouri. It missed tying the statewide winner by one percentage point.

"I'm very proud of our Battle of the Belt team. They initiated a lot of activities including a poster contest, cheers and chants at ball games, developing brochures and making daily announcements over the PA system," says Alberta Cooper, coach and BOTB coordinator. "They were also in the homecoming parade and hosted our local DARE officer for an assembly. All of their hard work paid off. Our students increased from four percent at the beginning of the competition to 49 percent six weeks later."



"I'm very proud of our team. All of their hard work paid off."



Completion Cont. p. 1

April or as late as May," says Resident Engineer Brian Holt.

Once the weather is cooperating again, the contractor will finish up on the west-bound lane shoulder construction, median openings at Routes Z, U and County Road 559, and will construct the approaches to seven bridges along the project.

Holt says before the new lanes are opened to traffic, they'll undergo some grinding to ensure smoothness and the roadway slopes will be constructed and seeded.

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developed over the next few years to dramatically lessen our need for petroleum based products, particularly those produced from foreign oil, undoubtedly the motor vehicle will remain as our primary source of transportation, both personal and business. Thus, the need for safe and well-built highways will only increase. The Missouri Department of Transportation can point to U.S. 412 between Kennett and Interstate 55 as an excellent example of a well-designed and well-built highway that can be a model for future projects.

St. Francis River Bridge Dedication

The Arkansas Highways and Transportation Department along with the Paragould Chamber of Commerce held a ribboncutting ceremony to dedicate the new St. Francis River Relief and Big Slough Bridges.

The ceremony was held on Dec. 12, 2006, just west of the St. Francis River Bridge.



Inside Connections:

- 4-Lane Continues Progress
- Hayti High Wins Big
- Where Is 412 Going?

Missouri Department of Transportation
2675 N. Main Street, P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801
(573) 472-5333 FAX (573) 472-5351
www.modot.org/southeast



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