

Top of Mind Questions

This time-frame goes far into the future. Why is KDOT studying something so many years out?

Recognizing improvement budgets are limited, this study identifies how smaller improvements can incrementally be constructed over time to create larger, cost effective solutions. The strategies offered here build on each other and identify short-term, mid-term and long-term solutions. To be most efficient, long-term planning is needed to wring every bit of improvement out of every penny.

How will KDOT decide when to build these improvements?

A set of performance triggers, which will be reviewed on an on-going basis, will be established for the I-35 corridor. When a trigger is exceeded, that's an indication that it's time to implement certain strategies. Triggers include traffic flow, safety, customer satisfaction, roadway condition and goods movement. It's possible that the triggers could change over time.

Why would KDOT allow vehicles to use the shoulders on I-35?

Shoulder running addresses the peak congestion problems without having to build additional lanes. This is important along portions of the I-35 corridor, because of cost and right-of-way (space) restrictions. Experience in Virginia, Massachusetts, and Minneapolis shows there is no significant difference in crash exposure when the shoulders are open and used for traffic and when they are closed to traffic. Technology enhancements, such as lane control, can be used to let motorists know when the shoulder is open for use, and geometric improvements, such as emergency refuge areas or pull-outs beyond the shoulder, would be incorporated for better incident management.



Why would KDOT build a tolled express lane rather than build a new general-purpose lane like they have in the past?

Tolled express lanes have become a success story for metropolitan areas, providing a wide range of transportation benefits. Developing an express lane that drivers can use for either a user fee or for free if there are two or more occupants in the vehicle allows KDOT to manage the level of traffic in the lane, thus providing a reliable travel time with good travel conditions at all times of the day. Toll rates could vary by time of day based on the demand in the corridor, which is referred to as congestion pricing. Carpoolers and transit riders could use the express lane for free which encourages ride sharing and greater use of transit.



Because some of these improvements are so far from 'business as usual,' how do I get more information?

KDOT project team members are available to meet with groups to discuss the I-35 corridor and plans to keep travelers moving smoothly and safely today and in the future. Contact David Schwartz, KDOT Project Manager, Davids@ksdot.org or Ron Achelpohl, rona@marc.org.

Advisory Group

The I-35 Moving Forward Advisory Group provided input throughout the study. Specifically, members provided important feedback on the problems I-35 faces today and in the future and on the practicality, benefits and concerns regarding improvement strategies to address those problems. Members included representatives of:

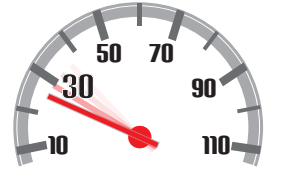
- Wyandotte and Johnson Counties
- The Cities of Gardner, Kansas City, Kansas, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, and Shawnee
- Chambers of commerce and economic development agencies
- Private businesses
- The Federal Highway Administration
- Johnson County Transit
- KC Scout
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Mid-America Regional Council
- Interested Citizens



KEEP I-35 MOVING: TODAY AND TOMORROW

Today's problems get worse tomorrow

The I-35 corridor is a critical transportation corridor in the Kansas City region. The traditional approach of adding lanes to I-35 in Johnson and Wyandotte County is prohibitively expensive in the foreseeable future. Additionally, new strategies for managing traffic and offering greater travel reliability are emerging across the country. With this in mind, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) initiated a study to examine options to keep I-35 traffic moving safely and efficiently today – and in the future.



Today, during rush hour, travel speeds often drop below 30 MPH

Key challenges in the I-35 corridor include: peak hour congestion, especially at key bottlenecks such as lane drops; merge points and curves; congestion caused by accidents and construction; truck traffic, which will increase when the intermodal facility opens in southern Johnson County in late 2013; and the need to improve transportation options like transit and access for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross I-35.



Truck traffic could be **3X** higher by 2040 south of I-435

32% Congested today



61% Expected congestion in the future with no improvements



Mike King
Secretary, KDOT

Secretary King's Message

At KDOT, we know I-35 is vital to the Kansas City economy, as well as the region and beyond our state borders. We need to keep travelers and freight moving as smoothly and safely as possible today and into the future. KDOT is strategically examining what improvements can and should be made. And we're listening to area leaders. For example, the advisory group said:

- I-35 is vital for commuters and economic development.
- It's not that bad, yet . . . but we're worried about the future.
- Don't just look at the I-35 mainline; think about the frontage and connecting roads and transit options.
- Managed or "express" lanes are a good idea that could work, but only if a new lane is added.
- Funding will be a challenge.

I'm especially pleased that local leaders support KDOT's view that we can't afford business as usual. It's time to begin laying the groundwork for more innovative approaches to managing traffic on our busiest routes. And while improvements will take time to develop and we'll need to work together to find funding solutions over the long run, we're excited for the future of I-35 – and hope you are as well.

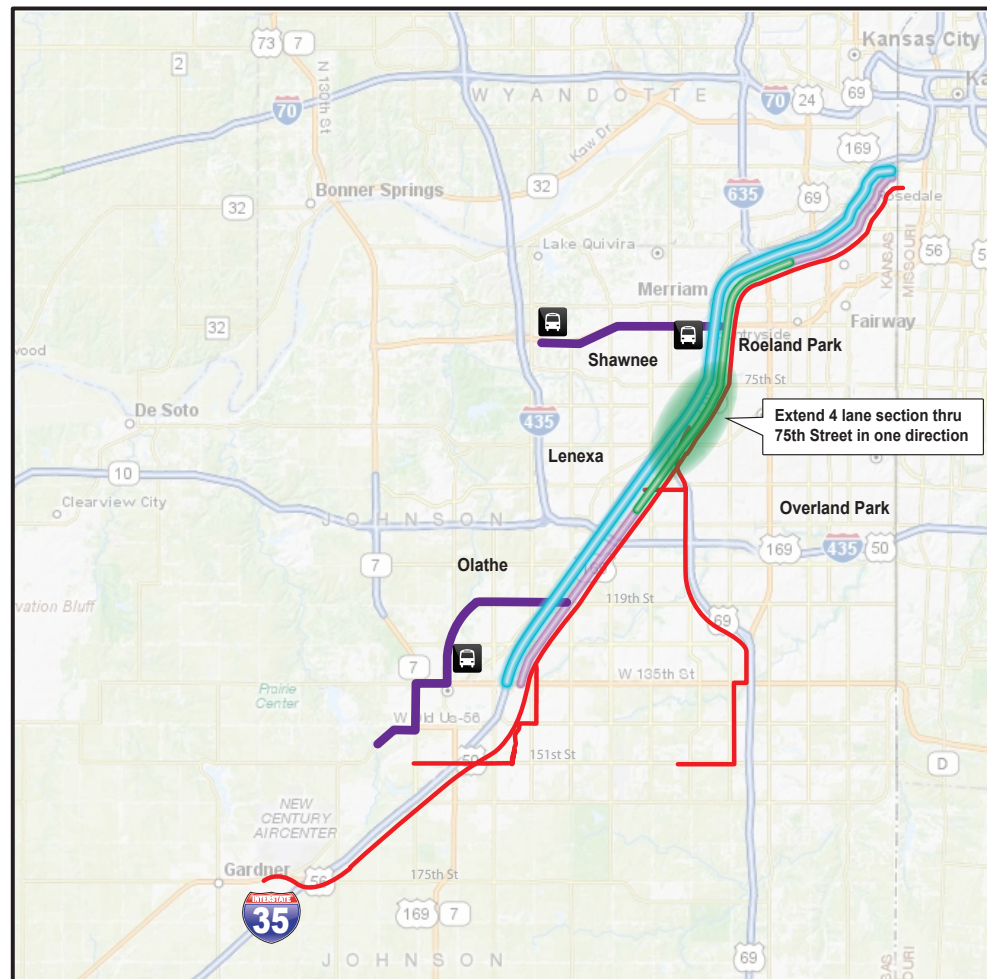
Highlights of short-term recommendations (2013 - 2020)

First, target low hanging fruit

To address congestion in the near-term, the focus would be on improving traffic flow and safety through enhanced KC Scout solutions such as ramp metering, fixing a key bottleneck at 75th Street and expanding existing bus on shoulder operations along the corridor. The goal of these interim actions is to improve I-35 conditions as much as possible in the short term.

It should be noted that no funds to construct these improvements are currently available.

Estimated construction cost: \$30 million (2012 Dollars)



Recommended specific improvements in this timeframe

Transit Improvement

- Existing bus on shoulder
- Expanded bus on shoulder
- Existing Xpress routes with service enhancements
- New Xpress routes
- New park and ride lots

Corridor Improvement

- Enhanced ITS ramp metering
- Expanded motorist assist
- Add traffic info message boards to major city streets
- Transit Priority at interchanges

Local Improvement

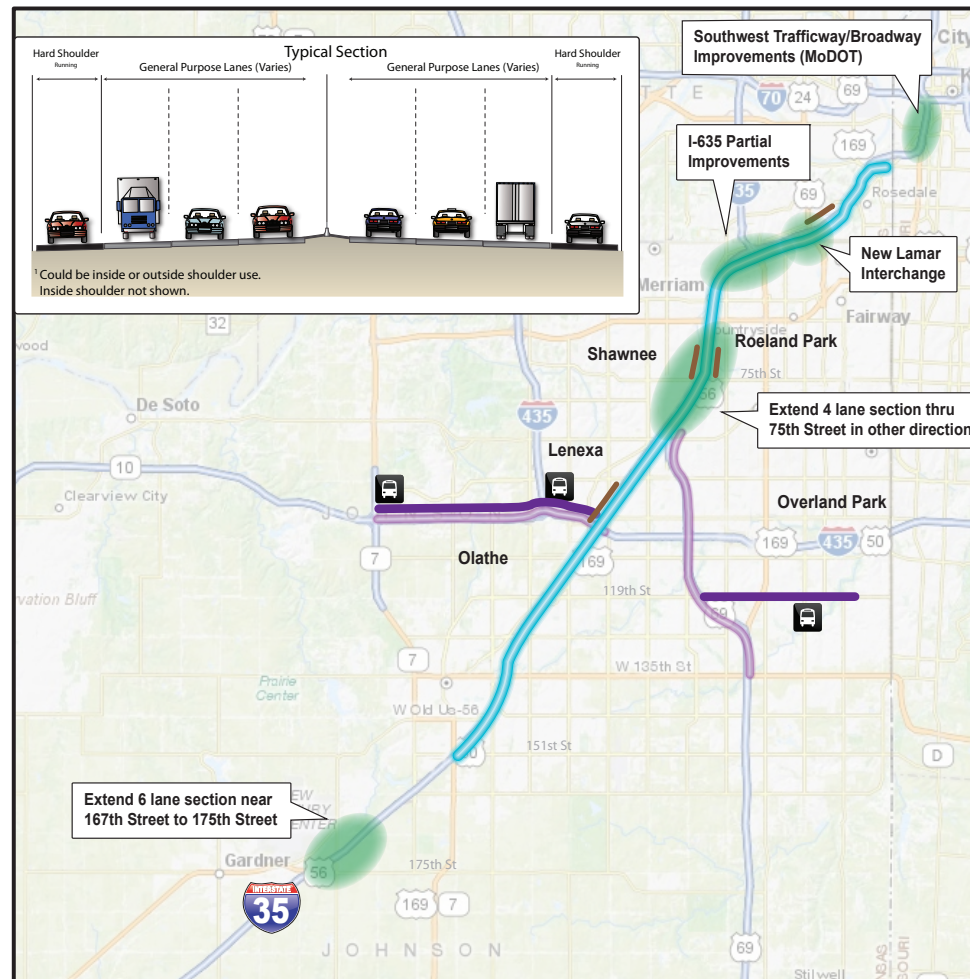
- Bottleneck improvement

Highlights of mid-term recommendations (2020 - 2040)

Then, use every inch of road

As congestion grows in the future, shoulder running would be expanded beyond buses to include a limited user group, such as high occupancy vehicles with two or more occupants and motorists who purchase permits or pay tolls at peak travel times to avoid congestion. Shoulder running is used throughout the United States today - just as buses currently use the shoulder on I-35 in Johnson County. At a fraction of the cost of adding a new lane, some states view shoulder running as a stop-gap measure. The shoulder running can either be deployed on the inside or outside shoulder and would include emergency refuge areas or pull-outs beyond the shoulder for safety. Additionally, other critical enhancements such as key bottleneck improvements, transit improvements and ITS improvements are part of the mid-term recommendations.

Estimated construction cost: \$300 million (2012 Dollars)



Recommended specific improvements in this timeframe

Transit Improvement

- Expanded Bus on Shoulder
- New Xpress Routes
- New Park and Ride Lots

Corridor Improvement

- Shoulder Running (includes Bus on Shoulder)
- Crash Investigation Sites Pull Off Areas
- Ramp Metering (extended to 175th)
- Add traffic information message boards to major city streets
- Bike/Pedestrian Enhancements at Interchanges

Local Improvement

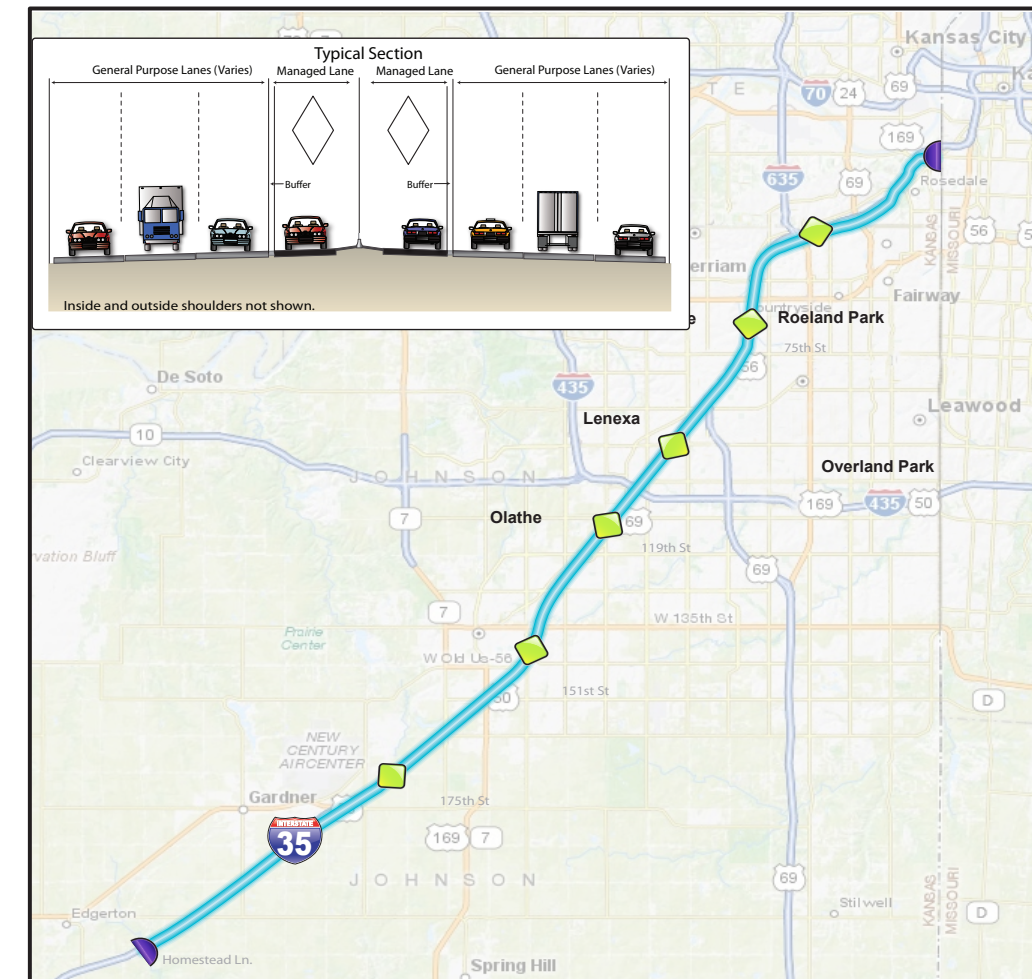
- Bottleneck Improvement
- New Auxiliary Lanes

Highlights of long-term recommendations (2040+)

Eventually, toll a lane to manage trip reliability and provide express service

When congestion gets bad enough, a tolled express lane would be added to replace the shoulder running. An express lane is an exclusive lane which allows transit and vehicles with two or more occupants to travel for free, as well as single-occupant vehicles that choose to pay a toll or user fee to avoid congested conditions in general-purpose lanes. Tolled express lanes are effective at managing traffic flow to provide a reliable travel lane with good level of service in each direction.

Estimated construction cost: \$610 million (2012 Dollars)



Recommend specific improvements in this timeframe

Transit Improvement

- Incorporate future transit improvements as identified by Johnson County Transit.

Corridor Improvement

- Priced Managed Lanes
- ◆ Managed Lane Access Points
- Transition to Managed Lane
- Incorporate future ITS technologies as identified.

Local Improvement

- Incorporate spot improvements as identified in regional planning process.