

Northwest District Office
312 S. Second
Norton, KS 67654-0350



phone: 785-877-3315
fax: 785-877-2531
www.ksdot.org

Barbara Rankin, Acting Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

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News Contact: Kristen Brands (785) 877-3315 cell (785) 871-2137

kristenb@ksdot.org

I-70 road work alters traffic pattern In Sherman and Thomas Counties

Significant changes in the normal traffic pattern of I-70 will start taking place today March 21, as one construction project continues; and a second project gets underway along the corridor in Sherman and Thomas Counties.

The first project begins at the Colorado/Kansas state line and extends east to the Caruso Interchange (Exit 12). The second project starts at Edson (Exit 27) and extends eight miles east to the Sherman/Thomas County line.

Starting at the Colorado/Kansas state line and extending east to the Caruso Interchange (Exit 12), workers will close the eastbound passing lane today and start the prep work required to switch traffic to a head-to-head configuration on or around April 2.

“The pavement markings along this stretch will significantly change in order to eventually place the east and westbound traffic in the eastbound lanes,” said KDOT Area Engineer Eric Oelschlager.

The contractors’ schedule calls for the westbound lanes to close on April 2. At that time, workers will begin removing the existing pavement before paving the 12 miles of driving lanes with 11.5 inches of new concrete material. The shoulders will be comprised of eight inches of new concrete material.

Along with the westbound lane closures, the westbound safety rest area will be closed from approximately April 2 to October 15. The westbound Ruleton interchange (Exit 9) will also be closed. The Caruso interchange (Exit 12), Kanorado (Exit 1), port of entry weigh station, and the eastbound safety rest area will all remain open and accessible to the traveling public.

County Roads 5, 8 and 10 will also be closed for up to a maximum of 90 calendar days to repair the deck of the concrete boxes that carries local traffic under I-70 near mile markers 5, 8, and 10. Road closure signs will be placed south of the structure and at Old U.S. 24 Highway to alert local travelers of these closures. The closures are necessary for the shoring and formwork needed to support the box while patching is underway.

Koss Construction Co., Inc., of Topeka, was awarded the \$46,508,069 job.

Today, workers will also close the eastbound driving lanes at three bridge locations along the second I-70 project spanning from Edson (Exit 27) east eight miles to the Sherman/Thomas County line. The bridge locations are at mile markers: 28, 30, and 31.

At the same time, workers will close the I-70 eastbound passing lane and westbound passing lane between mile markers 34 and 36 in order to construct crossovers which will eventually be used at a later phase in the construction schedule.

Starting around April 9, County Road 36 will close as workers perform a deck repair of the reinforced concrete box located one mile west of the Sherman/Thomas County line. Workers will also be extending the boxes along this section of I-70.

In May, I-70 traffic will be placed in a head to head configuration in the westbound lanes from milepost 34 to 36 so that crews can reconstruct the curve at the county line. The curve is being reconstructed to current standards; and at the same time contractors will lower the road to increase the clearance under the bridge at the county line.

Between May and August, this section of I-70 will be milled two inches and then receive a two-inch base lift of asphalt followed by 1.5 inch surface life of the roadway. The on/off ramps at Edson will also receive a two-inch mill and overlay

KDOT awarded this construction contract - totaling \$7,080,225 - to APAC, Kansas Inc. of Hays.

The project is funded by T-WORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature in May of 2010.

For questions concerning this project, please contact Eric Oelschlager at 626-3258 or erico@ksdot.org in Atwood; or Kristen Brands, Northwest Kansas Public Affairs Manager, at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org in Norton. For more information about T-WORKS visit the website, www.ksdot.org/tworks.

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