

Kansas DOT Completes Its Largest-Ever Highway Project in Heavily Used Area

Kansas and federal officials held a ceremonial ribbon-cutting Nov. 29 to mark substantial completion of the largest highway project in the history of the state Department of Transportation – a complex three-year, [\\$288 million construction program](#) called phase two of the Johnson County Gateway project.



In what was actually a series of renovation projects, the Gateway program in the busy Kansas City suburbs has added scores of highway miles, built or renovated dozens of bridges and made other improvements in one of the most heavily congested areas of Kansas – at the convergence of Interstates 35 and 435 and K-10.

A descriptive video from 2015 (below) illustrates the improvements the project was designed to bring.

Already, more than 230,000 passenger cars and heavy trucks use the corridor daily, KDOT said, a number that is forecast to grow sharply in coming decades. The project affects the suburbs of Lenexa, Olathe and Overland Park and their connections with the broader Kansas City area that sprawls across the Kansas-Missouri border.

Among those joining the ribbon-cutting at an area hotel were Gov. Sam Brownback, Acting KDOT Secretary Richard Carlson and FHWA Deputy Administrator David Kim.

"The Gateway project will be a means of improved travel for tens of thousands of commuters," Brownback said. "With the addition of 56 new highway lane miles and more than 27 new and rehabbed bridges, the project provides a conduit for increased economic development, safe travel and the movement of freight."

Carlson said: "With the number of vehicles expected to grow to 380,000 by 2040, drivers will now experience commutes with improved efficiency, decreased travel delays and safer travel through the I-435/I-35/K-10 interchange."

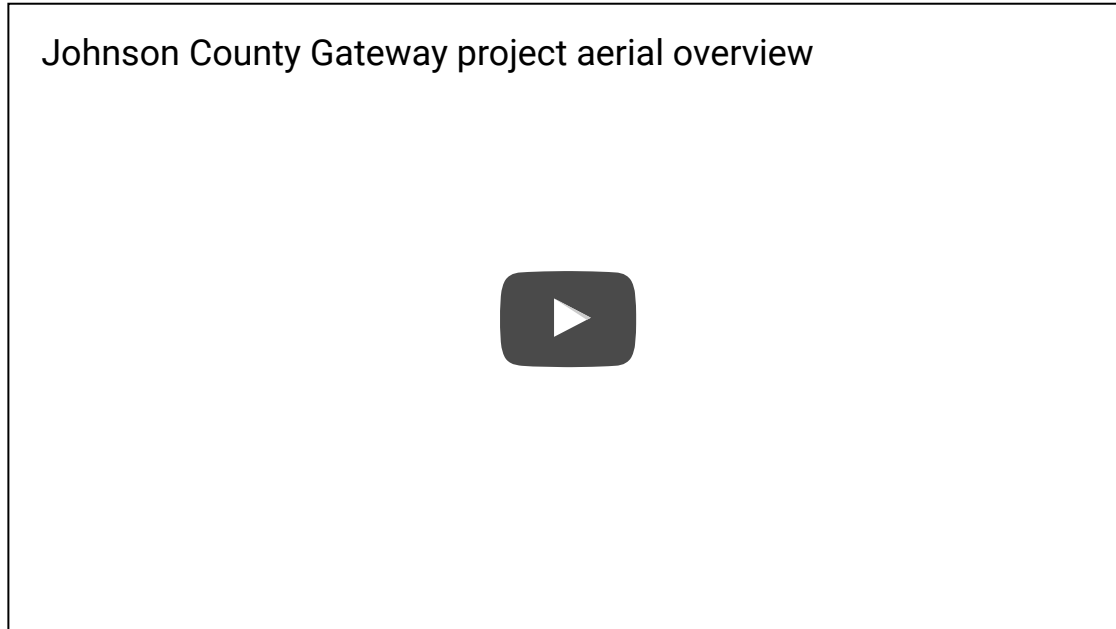
It was also the state's first major design-build project, which designates a design-build team to work under a single contract with the project owner to provide both design and construction services. This differs from the traditional design-bid-build method.

"The design-build contracting approach allows states to deliver projects more quickly and more cost-effectively," said the FHWA's Kim. He added that the federal agency through its "Every Day Counts" initiative encourages such innovations that save time and money for taxpayers.

[The FHWA said](#) the first of three project phases was completed in 2013 and expanded the number of lanes on I-35. The second phase, which officials just celebrated, is the largest and includes the expansion of I-435 from 95th Street to I-35. So far it has received \$266 million in federal funding, the FHWA said.

It added that a third and final phase, which is still to be funded, will expand the number of lanes on K-10 and I-435 and improve two local interchanges.

Here is that project video.



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