



Express toll lanes would manage U.S. 69 congestion long-term

GUEST COLUMN

U.S. 69 is the busiest four-lane highway in Kansas and the economic backbone of Overland Park's growth and quality of life. It has provided safe, easy access to affordable housing, community amenities and well-paying jobs in the metro's job-creation center.

The heavy congestion on the roadway during morning and evening rush hours, however, will only grow. That's why the U.S. 69 Modernization and Expansion Project is reviewing congestion-management alternatives to prevent future problems. It's looking at transit, technologies, adding more general-purpose lanes and other strategies, including whether a new express toll lane (ETL) in each direction between 103rd and 151st Streets could

better manage congestion and improve travel time reliability.

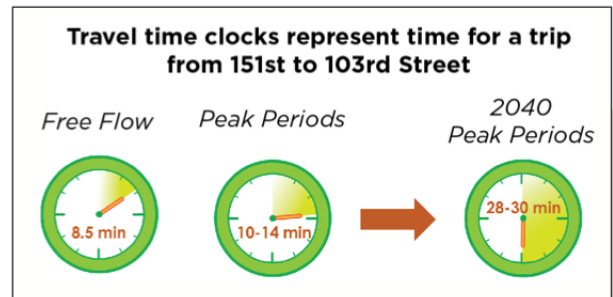
As a Project Advisory Group member, I've been asked why KDOT doesn't just add more untolled lanes. We've learned from other cities that more "free" capacity only briefly reduces congestion before traffic jams return. With more free lanes only, as Overland Park grows and expands, traffic would exceed previous levels, generating new demand for even more lanes.

ETLs are proven to manage congestion long term, significantly delaying – or eliminating – the need for more lanes. People willing to pay a small fee for a shorter commute can travel in the tolled lanes, better balancing traffic across all lanes and helping the whole corridor flow more smoothly. To repeat, ETLs are a choice – one people will choose when they want or need it.

Overland Park's success is built in part on how well and efficiently we move people and products throughout the region. ETLs give us a new tool in our toolkit to reduce congestion and make it easier to get to and from high-quality jobs, homes and amenities. That will help Overland Park continue to be a place where people and businesses come – and stay – to thrive.



John Skubal
Former Chair, Kansas Senate Transportation Subcommittee
Former Overland Park City Councilmember



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