



**DRAFT**

US 69 EXPANSION PROJECT

# Purpose and Need Statement

January 2021



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# U.S. 69 Modernization and Expansion Environmental Assessment Preliminary Purpose and Need Statement

A Purpose and Need Statement describes the transportation problems that a proposed project is to address. This statement provides a description of the purpose of the U.S. 69 Modernization and Expansion Project, and a demonstration of the need for improvements the proposed project is to address within the study area.

## ***I. Project Overview and Background***

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing to modernize and expand a section of the U.S. 69 Corridor, located within the southern limits of the City of Overland Park, in Johnson County, Kansas. The City of Overland Park and the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA) are serving as transportation partners for the project.

### **Project Limits and Termini**

**Figure 1** shows the study area for the project. The study area boundaries represent the logical limits for the infrastructure improvements and environmental review. The overall study limits begin just south of W 179th Street and extend north to just north of 103rd Street. The overall length is approximately 10 miles. Major cross streets with service interchange access to U.S. 69 included within the study area are W 103rd Street, College Boulevard, W 119th Street, Blue Valley Parkway (partial access), W 135th Street, W 151st Street, W 167th Street and W 179th Street. Additionally, I-435 at the interchange with U.S. 69 is included.

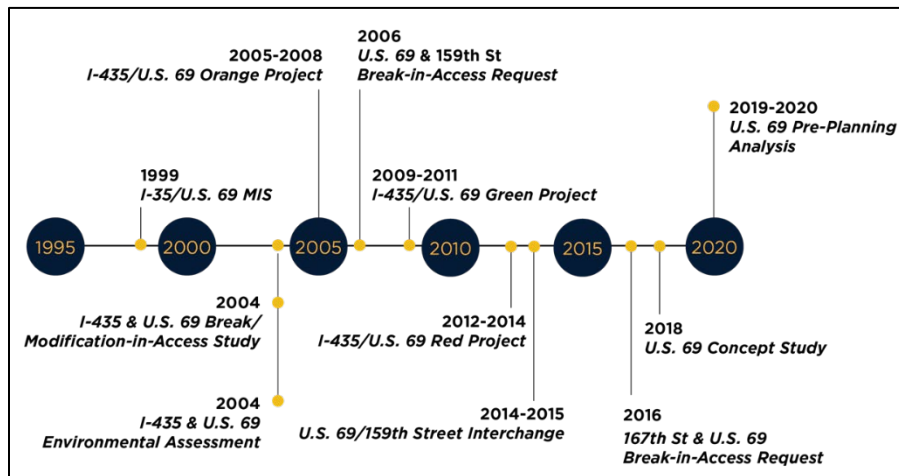
**Figure 1: U.S. 69 Modernization and Expansion Project NEPA Study Area**



## Project Background

The U.S. 69 Corridor has been evaluated for improvement by a range of previous studies and projects, initiated with the I-35/U.S. 69 Major Investment Study (MIS) prepared in 1999. The MIS developed a long-term vision for improving the corridor, which has led to a series of improvement projects over the past 10-15 years, as shown on **Figure 2**.

**Figure 2: U.S. 69 Corridor Previous Studies and Projects**



Of direct relevance to the U.S. 69 study area, a previous I-435 & U.S. 69 Environmental Assessment (EA) with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was prepared in 2004 for the northern portion of the U.S. 69 Corridor study area from just north of 95th Street to the south to just east of Antioch Road. The proposed action included adding additional lane capacity, reconfiguring interchanges and constructing a new interchange at I-435 and Antioch Road. The purpose and need as it pertains to U.S. 69 was to relieve congestion and traffic levels of service, improve roadway deficiencies, improve safety and provide enhanced access to major employment centers. As an outcome of the approved 2004 EA/FONSI, U.S. 69 was widened and reconstructed from I-435 north; the U.S. 69 interchanges with 95<sup>th</sup> Street, 103rd Street, College Boulevard, 119th Street and I-435 were modified and reconfigured; and a collector-distributor road network was constructed along southbound U.S. 69 between I-435 and 119th Street.

The 2018 U.S. 69 Corridor Concept Study, prepared by the City of Overland Park, investigated the current and future safety and operational needs in the U.S. 69 Corridor from 179th Street to 103rd Street. This study considered alternatives for the future widening and upgrade of the corridor. In 2020, a U.S. 69 Pre-Planning Study was conducted by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), the City of Overland Park and the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA) to evaluate the potential for tolling in the corridor using an express toll lanes concept. This sketch-



level planning study concluded that an express toll lane concept is technically feasible, and that toll revenue collected could be used to offset the cost to design, construct and maintain the new lanes on U.S. 69. However, the study does not authorize toll lanes or their construction and more extensive analysis on the feasibility of the proposed express toll lanes and their environmental clearance is required prior to moving forward into design and construction. Preparation of this EA will build upon the previous work performed for the I-435 & U.S. 69 EA/FONSI, the U.S. 69 Concept Study and the U.S. 69 Pre-Planning Study, as applicable.

## **Proposed Action**

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the FHWA to assess the environmental effects of projects that include federal funding or require a federal action. The NEPA process allows transportation officials to make project decisions that balance engineering and transportation needs with social, economic and natural environmental factors. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the U.S. 69 project and will determine whether or not the proposed action has the potential to cause significant environmental effects to the natural or man-made environment. Within the EA, FHWA and KDOT will evaluate a 'No Action' alternative and modernization and expansion alternatives that include a toll-free and an express toll lane alternative for the U.S. 69 study area as the proposed action to satisfy the purpose and need for the project. The toll component of the study will determine if adding express toll lanes for north and southbound traffic could offer a more reliable and flexible transportation alternative. Roadway and interchange configurations will be evaluated throughout the corridor.

## ***II. Purpose and Need***

### **Need for Proposed Project**

The proposed project is needed to modernize and expand U.S. 69 between 103<sup>rd</sup> Street and 179<sup>th</sup> Street in Overland Park, Kansas. The corridor has become insufficient to meet current and future mobility needs, resulting in worsening safety, reliability and congestion. There is also a need to address the corridor's issues with transportation improvements that offer long-term sustainability and flexibility for all users.

The proposed project is needed to:

- **Improve safety** to address crash frequency and congestion related crashes within the corridor;
- **Reduce congestion** and improve traffic operations to meet existing and future travel demands;
- **Promote sustainability** by addressing infrastructure condition and ongoing operations and maintenance needs, supporting environmental stewardship, as well as improving long-term traveler reliability;



- **Provide flexible choices** by promoting a transportation system that accommodates the needs for all users and modes; and
- **Support local and regional growth** through coordinated transportation improvements consistent with planned and proposed community land use.

## Purpose of the Proposed Project

The purpose of the U.S. 69 Modernization and Expansion project is to provide the traveling public with an efficient and cost-effective transportation facility for users of U.S. 69 and the connected state highway system in the Kansas City metropolitan area that improves safety, reduces congestion, promotes sustainability, provides flexible choices and supports local and regional growth.

The proposed project is consistent with the identified needs and goals of KDOT's Kansas Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Mid America Regional Council's (MARC) metropolitan transportation plan, *Connected KC 2050*. MARC's goals for the region include the following:

- Access to opportunity — Support a connected system that enables access to all activities, allowing people to succeed by removing transportation barriers.
- Public health and safety — Foster healthy communities and individuals by providing safe and secure places to live, walk, bike, ride the bus and drive with clean air to breathe.
- Healthy environment — Prioritize and support investments that reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and preserve and restore ecosystem health.
- Transportation choices — Provide a range of transportation choices for communities across the region to allow for ease of travel as well as public health and environmental benefits.
- Economic vitality — Maintain a multimodal transportation system that supports the efficient movement of people and goods and promotes economic development.

## Improve Safety

Addressing crash frequency and severity throughout the corridor is a primary component of the purpose and need. Crashes are a cost to users in a variety of ways. They may result in property damage, severe injury or even loss of life. Traffic crashes also cause congestion, resulting in increased fuel consumption and lost time. Improvements along the study corridor are intended to help reduce crash frequency and severity.

### *Historical Safety Conditions*

The safety of the U.S. 69 Corridor has been studied across several efforts over the last 10-15 years, most recently in the *U.S. 69 Corridor Study* and the *U.S. 69 Pre-Planning Study* in 2018 and 2020, respectively. These studies identified a high prevalence of rear-end crashes throughout the corridor, accounting for 44 percent of all crashes. Over 80 percent of all crashes were found to be property damage only (PDO). These two statistics often indicate high





congestion and sudden changes in speed related causes. Three areas of the corridor were identified as having higher crash frequency:

- Southbound U.S. 69, between Blue Valley Pkwy. and 135th St. – Due to the left-hand entrance and weave condition. The crash rate in this segment is 53 percent higher than the statewide average for U.S. highways in Kansas;
- Northbound U.S. 69, 151st St. to 135th St. – Where drivers are approaching the back of the vehicle queue at the bottleneck between 135th St. and Blue Valley Pkwy; and
- Northbound U.S. 69, between Blue Valley Pkwy and 119th St. – Where vehicles are emerging from the bottleneck south of Blue Valley Pkwy.

These areas not only experienced the highest crash frequency but were also within areas identified in the previous studies as having the worst traffic operational performance.

*Existing Safety Conditions*

The previous studies were completed with crash data available prior to 2016. As crash patterns can change over time, an updated safety analysis was conducted as part of this project. Crash data was obtained for the most recent years available from KDOT for the years 2015 through 2019. This data was utilized to determine segment crash rates, as well as total crashes based on crash severity and crash type.

**Crash Rates – at this time crash rates are not available as existing traffic volumes are still being calculated. This information will be provided as the data becomes available by end of January 2021.**

**Table 1: U.S. 69 Crash Frequency**

Crash frequency for the most recent 5-year period was the highest between I-435 and W 135<sup>th</sup> St. Three of the four analysis segments between I-435 and W 135<sup>th</sup> Street experienced crash frequency of over 50 crashes per year per mile. These high crash frequency areas correlate to the findings of the previous studies and aligns with the results of the current traffic operational analysis.

**Table 1** shows crash frequencies in crashes per year per mile for the U.S. 69 freeway.

U.S. 69 Segment	Crashes/Year/Mile
W 95th St to W 103rd St	17.6
W 103rd St to I-435	31.2
I-435 to College Blvd	84.8
College Blvd to W 119th St	51.9
W 119th St to Blue Valley Pkwy	25.1
Blue Valley Pkwy to W 135th St	53.5
W 135th St to W 151st St	23.7
W 151st St to W 159th St	12.1
W 159th St to W 167th St	7.8
W 167th St to W 179th St	11.4

Source: KDOT Crash Data – 2015 to 2019

Property damage only crashes account for approximately 80 percent of all crashes within the corridor as shown in **Table 2**. Between 2015 and 2019 there were a total of four fatal crashes, with two occurring between W 135<sup>th</sup> St and W 151<sup>st</sup> St. High percentages of PDO crashes often correlates to high levels of congestion within a corridor.

**Table 2: U.S. 69 Crash Severity (2015-2019)**

Analysis Segments (U.S. 69)	Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only	Total
W 95th St to W 103rd St	1	42	154	<b>197</b>
W 103rd St to I-435	0	17	86	<b>103</b>
I-435 to College Blvd	0	43	186	<b>229</b>
College Blvd to W 119th St	0	48	232	<b>280</b>
W 119th St to Blue Valley Pkwy	1	48	149	<b>198</b>
Blue Valley Pkwy to W 135th St	0	50	220	<b>270</b>
W 135th St to W 151st St	2	48	189	<b>239</b>
W 151st St to W 159th St	0	17	44	<b>61</b>
W 159th St to W 167th St	0	10	29	<b>39</b>
W 167th St to W 179th St	0	20	76	<b>96</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>1,712</b>

Source: KDOT Crash Data – 2015 to 2019

**Table 3** shows the predominant crash types within the corridor are rear end, single vehicle and sideswipe in the same direction. These account for approximately 94 percent of all crashes within the corridor with rear end accounting for over 50 percent on its own. Rear end, single vehicle and sideswipe crashes in the same direction are all crashes that indicate a high level of congestion within a corridor.

**Table 3: U.S. 69 Crash Types (2015-2019)**

Analysis Segments (U.S. 69)	Head On	Rear End	Angle	Sideswipe Opposite Direction	Sideswipe Same Direction	Backing	Single Vehicle	Other	Unknown	Total
W 95th St to W 103rd St	1	43	23	0	37	0	92	1	0	197
W 103rd St to I-435	0	23	4	0	27	0	48	1	0	103
I-435 to College Blvd	0	114	10	1	22	0	79	2	1	229
College Blvd to W 119th St	2	158	11	0	37	1	70	0	1	280
W 119th St to Blue Valley Pkwy	1	122	9	1	18	0	46	1	0	198
Blue Valley Pkwy to W 135th St	0	194	10	0	22	2	41	1	0	270
W 135th St to W 151st St	1	150	9	0	25	0	51	3	0	239
W 151st St to W 159th St	0	33	6	0	8	0	14	0	0	61
W 159th St to W 167th St	0	9	4	0	3	0	23	0	0	39
W 167th St to W 179th St	1	23	1	0	8	0	63	0	0	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,712</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>50.8%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: KDOT Crash Data – 2015 to 2019

The existing safety analysis shows crashes that are predominantly low severity congestion related incidents. Areas of concern are primarily between I-435 and W 135<sup>th</sup> St. The findings of the safety analysis align with the traffic operational analysis presented later in this document.

#### *Future Safety Conditions*

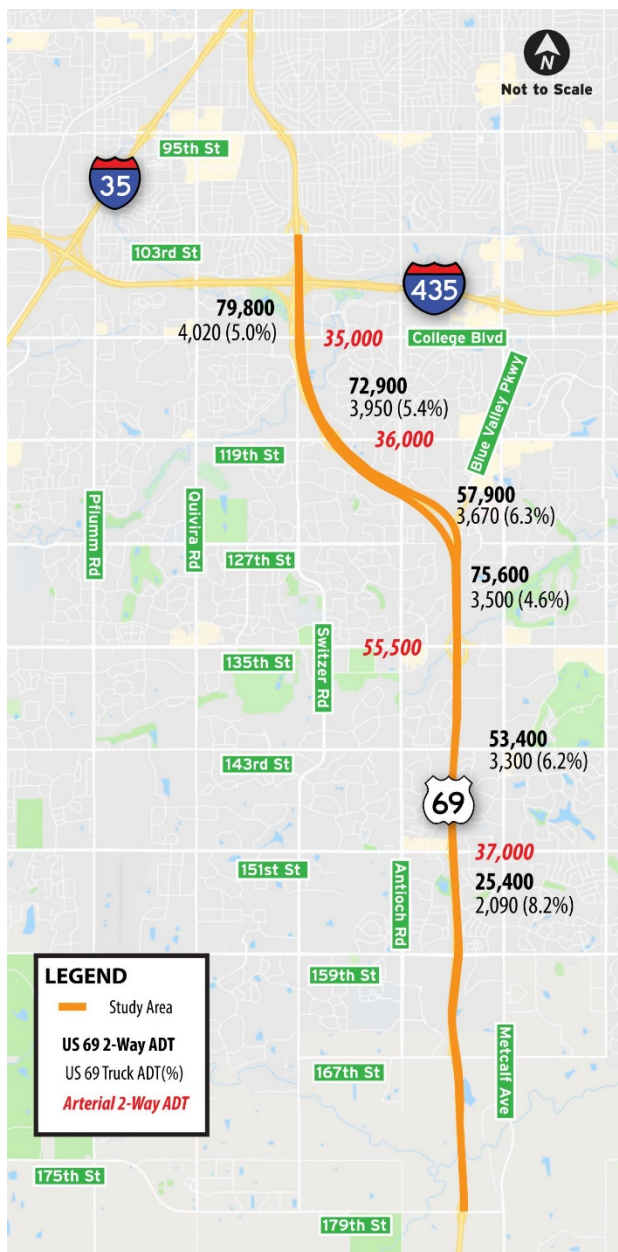
Future traffic volumes are forecasted to increase throughout the U.S. 69 Corridor, as population increases and as new land use and development occurs within the corridor. This increase in traffic could strain already stressed roadway segments in the study area, especially if no improvements are made along the corridor. An increase in traffic volumes is expected to contribute to an increase in crash frequency and severity if no improvements are made.

At this time future safety forecasts are not available as future No-Build traffic volumes are still being calculated. Additional information will be included on future, predicted safety conditions in Spring 2021.

## Reduce Congestion

It is an important goal of the proposed project to help alleviate existing and future congestion levels in Overland Park and Johnson County, and to provide a more efficient U.S. 69 Corridor for the surrounding Kansas City region. Relieving congestion on U.S. 69 has been a primary focus dating back to the I-35/U.S. 69 MIS conducted in 1999. The initial MIS sought to address

**Figure 3: Existing 2016 Daily Traffic Volumes**



congestion on the existing 4-lane highway as well as the service and system interchanges along the corridor. While capacity improvements have been made on segments of the U.S. 69 Corridor since the MIS, traffic volumes have continued to increase and are projected to continue to worsen congestion into the future unless measures are put in place to account for the congestion.

### Existing Traffic Conditions

The existing traffic conditions and operational analysis are currently in the process of being updated based on new study area traffic counts. The study team is also conducting a sensitivity analysis to factor in both pre- and post-COVID-19 impacts to existing traffic conditions. KDOT's continuous counter on U.S. 69 south of 135<sup>th</sup> Street shows a 2019 Average Annual Daily Count (AADT) of 58,210 vehicles. The most recent comprehensive analysis performed on U.S. 69 was the Corridor Study completed in 2018. Since the updated existing conditions data is not yet available, the existing traffic data is based on the 2016 data from the Corridor Study as shown in **Figure 3**. Existing traffic volumes will be updated in the future.

### Existing (2016) Traffic Operations

The 2016 existing traffic operations analysis focused on the AM and PM peak travel periods. The AM peak period is 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM (7:30 to 8:30 AM peak hour), and the PM peak period is 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM (4:45 to 5:45 PM

peak hour). To better understand the operational characteristics of the existing U.S. 69 facility, the corridor is divided into directional conditions.

Existing Northbound Peak Period Traffic Operations

At the southern limits of the corridor, existing volumes are relatively low and traffic moves freely during the peak periods. Continuing northbound, volumes increase through the interchanges at 167th Street and 159th Street and the operations of U.S. 69 begin to degrade. Queues extending as far south as the 151st Street interchange are common during the peak period.

The segment between 135th Street and Blue Valley Parkway is one of the worst bottlenecks in the corridor. During the AM peak period, vehicles that should flow at a 65 mph posted speed are only reaching speeds between 20 to 30 mph. This is a result of:

- The high volume of entering vehicles from both the WB 135th and the EB 135th Street U.S. 69 on-ramps, particularly the traffic from the low-speed eastbound to northbound loop ramp;
- The already congested mainline lanes of northbound U.S. 69; and
- The high volume of weaving vehicles exiting to Blue Valley Parkway.

Between Blue Valley Parkway and College Boulevard, congestion is moderate during the AM peak periods. The bottleneck between 135th Street and Blue Valley Parkway regularly acts as a meter which restricts northbound traffic. The result is that the segment between Blue Valley Parkway and College Boulevard operates better today than it did 10 years ago. Continuing north of I-435, where U.S. 69 has already been improved through the I-435 & U.S. 69 “Green” project, U.S. 69 operates without congestion through the study limits, see **Figure 4**.

**Figure 4: I-435 and U.S. 69 Improvements**



Existing Southbound Peak Period Traffic Operations

Beginning in 2005, improvements were made to southbound U.S. 69 from I-35 to 103rd Street as part of the I-435 and U.S. 69 “Orange”, “Green” and “Red” projects (see **Figure 4**). These improvements helped alleviate congestion as far south as College Boulevard by increasing mainline capacity as well as adding a southbound collector/distributor (C/D) road system. As the southbound C/D road connects to U.S. 69 between College Boulevard and 119th Street, it introduces a concentrated volume of traffic onto the existing two-lane roadway section causing congestion near the 119th Street interchange. The recent improvements are considered an

interim condition, necessitated by available funding limits, that will improve as additional improvements are completed on southbound U.S. 69.

Similar to what is experienced in the northbound AM peak direction, the southbound segment between Blue Valley Parkway and 135th Street is the most significant area of congestion during the PM peak period. This is a result of:

- The high volume of entering vehicles originating from Blue Valley Parkway;
- The left entrance from Blue Valley Parkway and the weave with traffic exiting to 135th Street;
- The high volume of traffic exiting to 135th Street;
- The already congested mainline lanes of U.S. 69; and
- The lane continuity of southbound U.S. 69 where the outside lane drops at 135th Street.

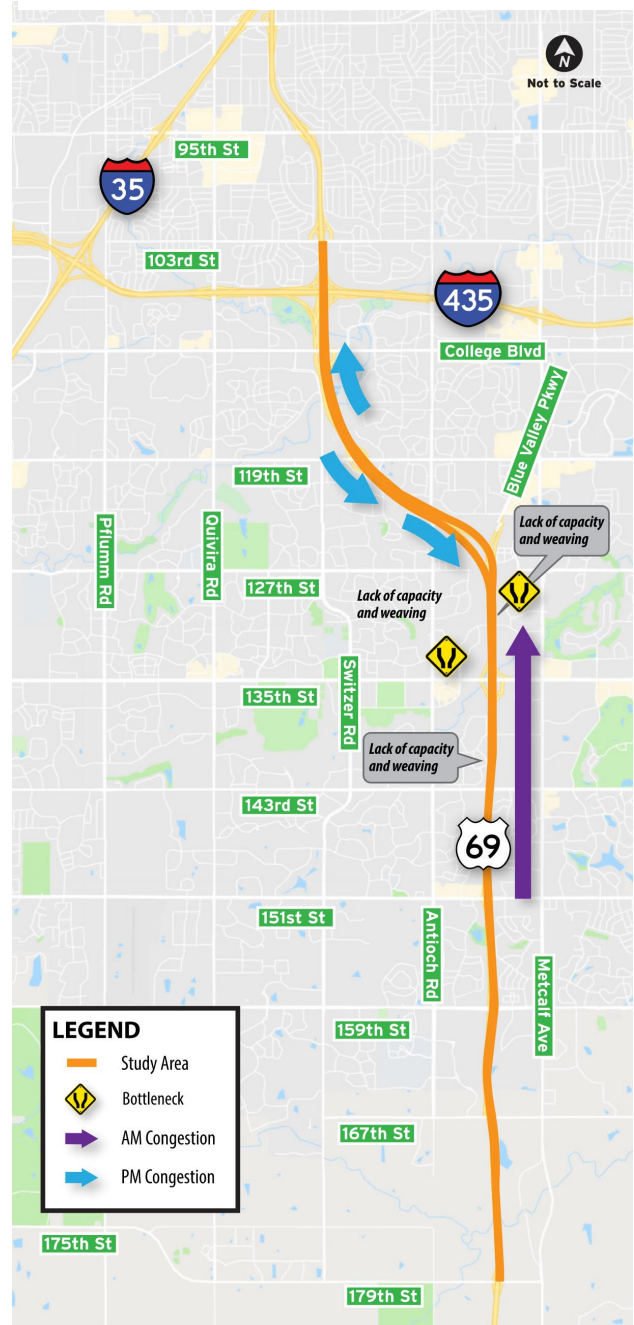
Southbound congestion between Blue Valley Parkway and 135th Street is not as pronounced during the PM peak period as the northbound segment is during the AM peak period, but speed reductions to approximately 40 mph are common. Farther to the south, after emerging from the southbound bottleneck between Blue Valley Parkway and 135th Street, traffic operations improve.

**Figure 5** summarizes the existing 2016 northbound and southbound traffic operations.

Future No-Build Traffic Operations

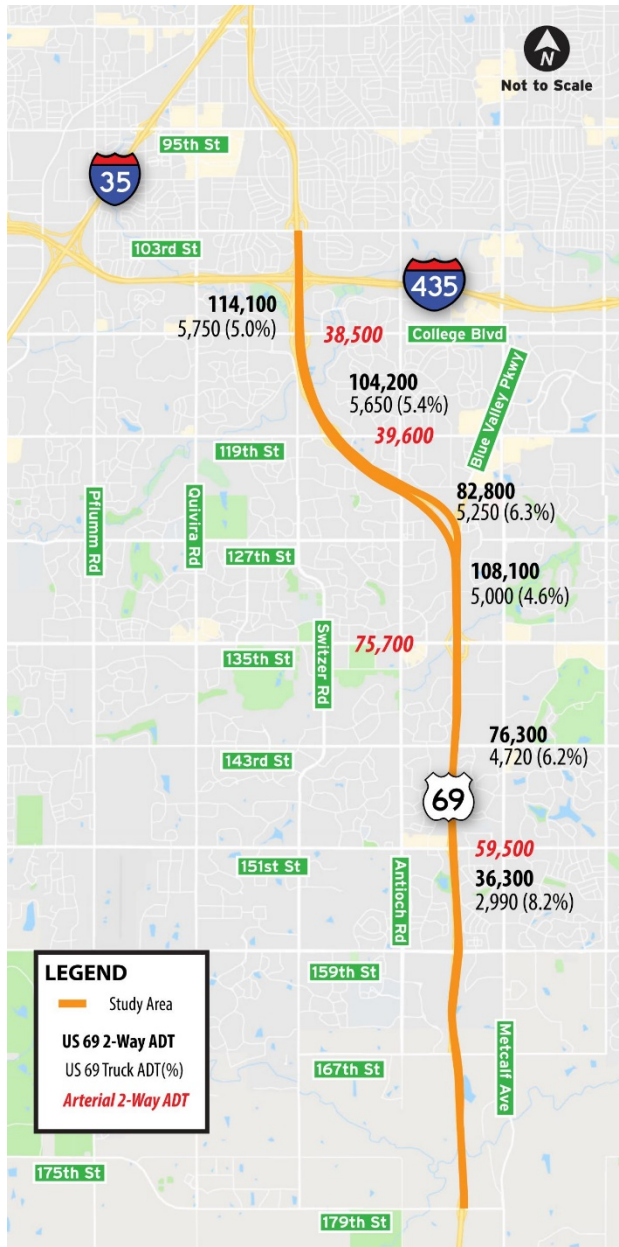
The future No-Build traffic conditions are currently in the process of being updated based on new study area traffic counts. The most recent comprehensive analysis performed on U.S. 69 was the Corridor Study completed in 2018. Until the future No-Build conditions data is available, the

**Figure 5: Existing Traffic Operational Issues**



following traffic volumes are based on the 2040 data from the Corridor Study as shown in **Figure 6**. Future No-Build traffic volumes will be updated when new data is available.

**Figure 6: Future 2040 No-Build Daily Traffic**

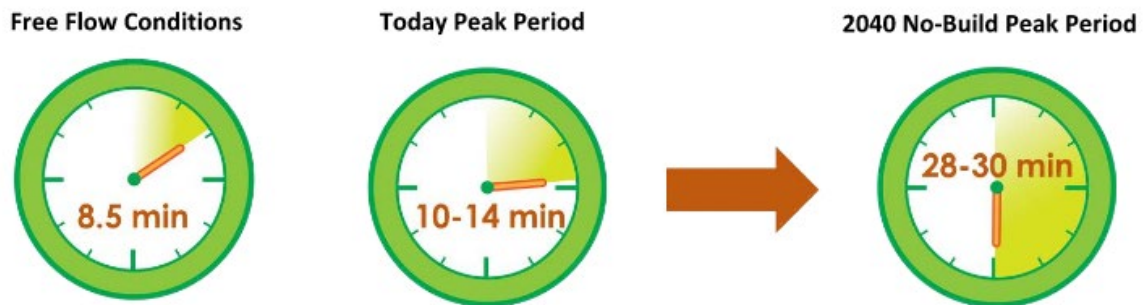


This future operational analysis assumes no U.S. 69 improvements are made through 2040 within the study area. The results from this analysis can be summarized as follows:

- Locations where significant congestion exists today continued to degrade;
- New bottlenecks emerged at the northbound and southbound segments between 119th Street and I-435 and the northbound segment south of Blue Valley Parkway to the end of the study corridor at 179th Street; and
- Operations of ramp terminal intersections and various arterial streets experienced significant delay, specifically the interchanges at 151st Street, 135th Street and College Boulevard.

Future No-Build traffic conditions are expected to provide poor levels of service by 2040 resulting in widespread increases in motorists' delay and travel times. To visualize the Future No-Build conditions, comparative travel times were developed for a northbound trip beginning at 179th Street and ending at College Boulevard during the AM peak period. As illustrated below in **Figure 7**, travel times for this trip grow from approximately 10 to 14 minutes in 2018 to nearly 30 minutes in 2040.

**Figure 7: AM Peak Hour Travel Time Comparison  
(Northbound from 179th St. to College Blvd.)**



Source: Project VISSIM Model

This EA is using a 2050 future planning horizon year, which is the current planning horizon year from the Mid-America Regional Council. As a result of additional increased traffic from 2040 to 2050 with no additional infrastructure improvements, traffic operations are expected to worsen.

### Promote Sustainability

A primary goal of the U.S. 69 project is to promote long-term corridor sustainability by addressing infrastructure condition and ongoing operations and maintenance needs, supporting environmental stewardship, as well as improving traveler reliability. The U.S. 69 Corridor is located in a densely populated and traveled area of the Kansas City region with limited right of way and funding available for continued expansion. As a result, proposed safety, capacity and reliability improvements need to be designed to meet the needs through the design year.

It is also a goal of the project to support environmental stewardship and a healthy environment with investments that help reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

#### *Infrastructure Condition*

##### Pavement

The underlying pavement and base of U.S. 69 within the project study area is the original pavement constructed in the 1960's and 1970's. It has seen a series of overlay actions throughout the years to keep it in a serviceable condition. The pavement will require consistent and frequent rehabilitation to continue its serviceability. **KDOT is currently working on providing the most recent pavement ratings for inclusion. This section will be updated as soon as the pavement ratings are completed.**

##### Bridge Structures





There are 24 mainline bridge structures within the study area, of these 21 were built between 1965 and 1973, two were built in 2008 and one in 2017. Structural evaluations completed in 2018 put seven bridges in satisfactory condition, 14 in good condition and three in very good condition.

KDOT utilizes the Bridge Health Index (BHI) to communicate the overall condition of structures. The BHI is a continuum from 0 to 100 that reflects the overall deterioration of the structure. Of the 24 structures within the project study area along U.S. 69 four are classified as “very poor”, nine are classified as “fair” (70% to 85%), three are classified as “good” (85% to 95%) and eight are classified as “very good” (95%+). The four bridges classified as “very poor” are NB U.S. 69 over 179<sup>th</sup> St, SB U.S. 69 over 167<sup>th</sup> St, NB U.S. 69 over 167<sup>th</sup> St, SB U.S. 69 over 151<sup>st</sup> St.

### Travel Reliability

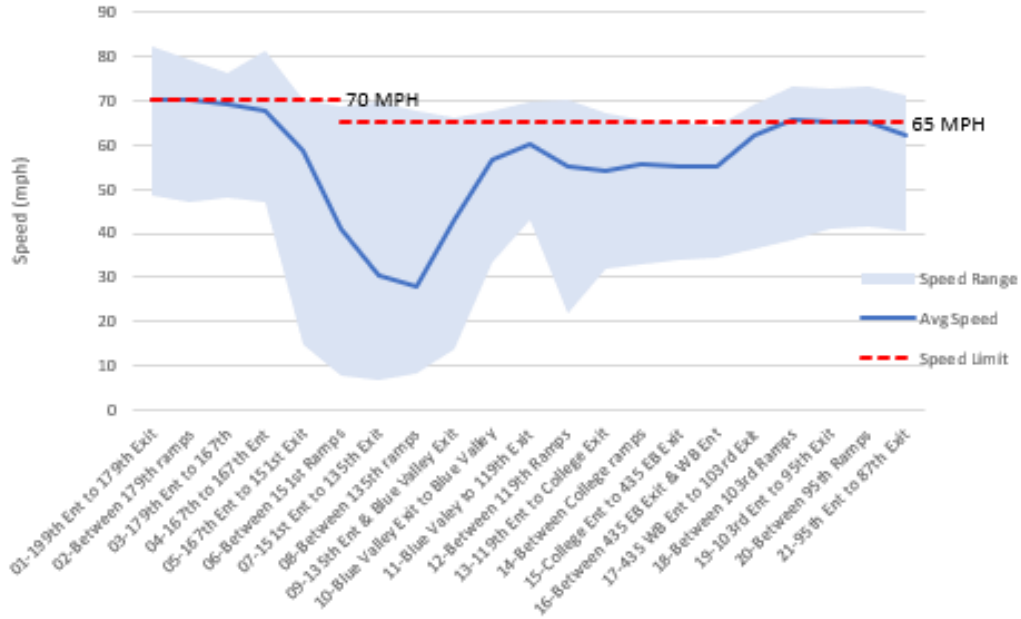
Peak period traffic congestion is a daily reality in most urban areas of the United States. Drivers are used to the everyday congestion and they plan for it. It is the unexpected congestion that troubles travelers the most from crashes or other incidents. When incidents occur, a trip that takes 30 minutes on some days, with little or no warning, can take an hour.

Most travelers are less tolerant of unexpected delays because such delays have larger consequences than travelers face with everyday congestion. Travelers also tend to remember the few bad days they spent in traffic, rather than an average time for travel throughout the year (Travel Time Reliability, Making it there on time, all the time. U.S.DOT, FHWA).

**Figures 8 and 9** below demonstrate the U.S. 69 congestion and variability of the U.S. 69 Corridor for both the 2019 Northbound AM peak direction and PM peak direction.

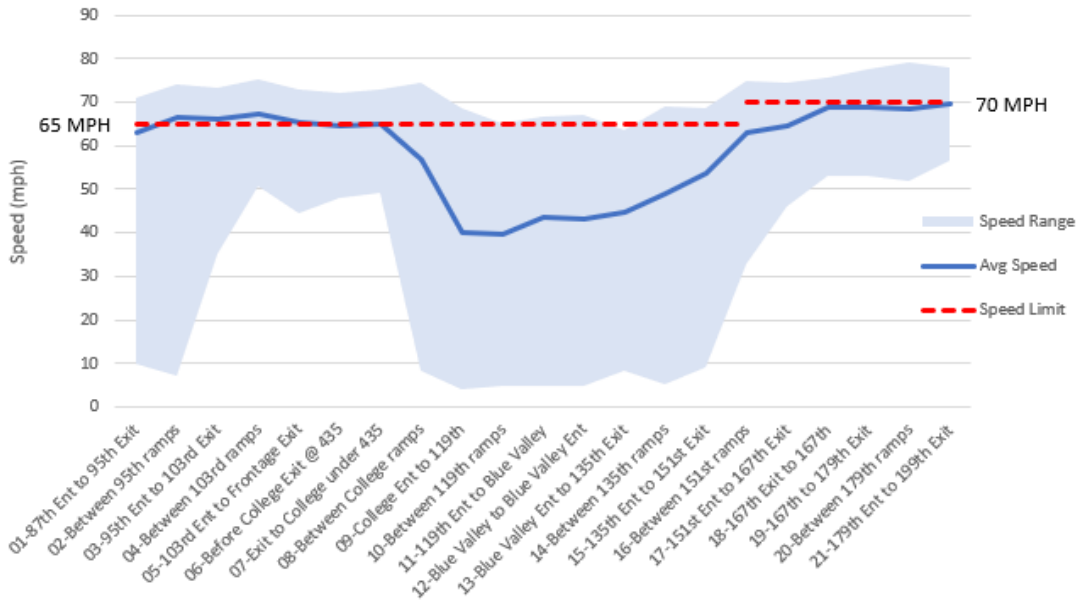
In summary, there is a wide range of variability along U.S. 69 during the AM and PM peak hours as shown by the light blue shading. In the AM peak hour, the segment from 151<sup>st</sup> through Blue Valley Parkway has the most variability in travel speed from the average. In the PM peak hour, the greatest travel speed variability occurs between I-435 and 151<sup>st</sup> Street.

**Figure 8: U.S. 69 NB AM Weekday Travel Speeds (2019)**



Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) between February and April 2019

**Figure 9: U.S. 69 SB PM Weekday Travel Speeds (2019)**



Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) between February and April 2019



## **Provide Flexible Choices**

A flexible transportation system is one that accommodates the needs of all users and modes. Typically, this includes walking, cycling, public transit and commercial trucks in addition to passenger automobiles. The proposed improvements to the U.S. 69 Corridor need to coordinate and be consistent with the planned and proposed multimodal uses in the study area. The following section summarizes the planned and proposed multimodal uses for the study area from local and regional transportation plans.

### *City of Overland Park Comprehensive Plan*

The *City of Overland Park Comprehensive Plan*, adopted December 2019, is the long-range plan for the City of Overland Park. The multifaceted plan covers a wide range of topics ranging from specific land use type goals to broader area and corridor goals. The plan recognizes the importance of a flexible transportation system and using mass transit as a tool to support mixed-use development.

### *South Overland Park Transportation Plan*

The southern portion of the study corridor (between W 159<sup>th</sup> St and W 179<sup>th</sup> St) falls within the boundary of the *South Overland Park Transportation Plan*, which was adopted in February 2015. The plan covers an area centered on U.S. 69 between Lackman Rd and State Line Rd and W 159<sup>th</sup> St and the Johnson County/ Miami County line. The *South Overland Park Transportation Plan* identifies the desire to make a change in the area's transportation system, focusing on a system that encompasses the needs of modes in addition to single occupancy passenger vehicles.

### *MARC Transportation Plan*

*Connected KC 2050* is the Kansas City metropolitan area transportation plan developed by MARC, the MPO for the Kansas City region. The *Connected KC 2050* plan calls for providing a range of transportation choices for communities. These choices should allow for ease of travel for all as well as provide public health and environmental benefits.

### *Public Transit*

The U.S. 69 corridor serves two public transit agencies, the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) and Johnson County Transit. These agencies jointly operate RideKC transit services across the metro. Seven routes operated by each agency cross or utilize U.S. 69 directly. Currently, the South OP Express is the only route that utilizes U.S. 69 directly between W 103<sup>rd</sup> St and W 135<sup>th</sup> St.



### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities*

*The City of Overland Park Safe Bicycle Use Outreach Project* is the city's bicycle facility plan adopted April 13, 2015 and updated in October 2016. An existing bikeway and shared use path map is included as part of that plan. MARC adopted the *Kansas City Regional Bikeway Plan* in January 2015. This plan established the goal of prioritizing a regional bikeway network across the entire Kansas City metro. Included in this plan is an existing and proposed facilities map.

A review of the existing bikeway and shared use path maps in the City of Overland Park and MARCs plans, aerial photography, and a windshield survey of the study area indicate that bicycle and pedestrian facilities exist at several locations along the study area and are separated into the categories of Shared Use Path or Bike Lane. Although none of these bicycle facilities are integral with the U.S. 69 travel lanes, some run along and cross the freeway's right of way.

### *Commercial Trucks*

Commercial trucks are a component of the traffic stream within the study area. The U.S. 69 Corridor has regional significance in goods movement, connecting southern Johnson County to the Kansas City metro area. According to KDOT's 2017 to 2019 traffic flow maps, a range of three to nine percent of the daily vehicles in the U.S. 69 Corridor are trucks. Higher proportions are concentrated in the southern portion of the study area south of W 151<sup>st</sup> St, where percentages range from 5.6 percent to 9.1 percent. The percentages along the rest of the study area are between 3.4 percent and 5.6 percent. This indicates that while the corridor does not carry a high percentage of truck traffic, there is a higher concentration in the southern portion of the study area that is heavier in agricultural and industrial land uses. As development continues to increase south of W 151<sup>st</sup> St consistent with land use plans, truck percentages will likely continue to grow.

### **Support Local and Regional Growth**

A key purpose of the U.S. 69 project is to support local and regional growth through coordinated transportation improvements consistent with planned and proposed community land use. Regional land use and development patterns provide insight into a community's potential transportation needs. MARC growth trends project between now and 2050 population will grow by 32% and employment by 28% within Johnson County. As the region grows and future land development occurs in the vicinity of the study area in harmony with local and regional land use plans and specific area plans, it is anticipated that local and regional traffic volumes will increase across the U.S. 69 Corridor. The following describes the future area land use and development plans in the U.S. 69 Corridor.

### *MARC Long Range Plan*

*Connected KC 2050* is the Kansas City metropolitan area transportation plan developed by MARC. The U.S. 69 study area falls within the boundaries of MARC's transportation management area for the region. The plan calls for focused investments in transportation that



supports growth along major regional transportation corridors. The plans desired outcomes include: access to opportunity by removing transportation barriers; addressing public health and safety through safe and secure places to live, walk, bike, ride the bus and drive with clean air to breathe; prioritize a healthy environment by supporting investments that reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions; provide a range of transportation choices; and supports economic vitality by maintaining a multimodal transportation system that efficiently moves people and goods while supporting economic development.

#### *City of Overland Park Comprehensive Plan*

The *City of Overland Park Comprehensive Plan*, adopted December 2019, is the long-range plan for the City of Overland Park. The plan identifies a regional land use strategy for the corridor. It shows concentrations of commercial, industrial and office uses at interchanges along U.S. 69 surrounded by lower density residential. Much of the areas adjacent to U.S. 69 between W 103<sup>rd</sup> St and W 135<sup>th</sup> St are developed with little room for further development, opportunities for growth exist within the study area south of W 135<sup>th</sup> St. These growth areas are expected to contribute to future increases in demand along U.S. 69.

Two additional studies the *Blue Valley Study Area Future Land Use Plan and Goals* and the *West Aubry Study Area* were conducted in 2003 and 2009 respectively. These studies cover the southern portions of the U.S. 69 study area from 159<sup>th</sup> Street to 179<sup>th</sup> Street. Both studies land use plans and goals were incorporated into the City of Overland Parks comprehensive plan.

#### *South Overland Park Transportation Plan*

The *South Overland Park Transportation Plan* details the southern portion of the study area from W 159<sup>th</sup> St to W 179<sup>th</sup> St and was adopted in 2015. The plan covers an area centered on U.S. 69 between Lackman Rd and State Line Rd and W 159<sup>th</sup> St and the Johnson County/ Miami County line. The plan identifies the area within the U.S. 69 study area as primarily agricultural in nature with pockets of low density residential and industrial/business park uses. It projects a transition in the future to primarily low or very-low density single family residential throughout the corridor with mixed use and office uses between W 159<sup>th</sup> St and W 179<sup>th</sup> St. This transition from agricultural to low density residential and mixed use or office uses is expected impact U.S. 69 as the primary transportation corridor in this portion of Overland Park.

### **III. Planned and Committed System Improvements**

Several other projects are planned for the City of Overland Park and the Johnson County area that need to be taken into consideration as the proposed improvements for the U.S. 69 Corridor are developed. These projects include:

- U.S. 69 NB Bridge at 179th Street – Replacement; Programmed for 2022.
- U.S. 69 Johnson County – Guardrail End Terminal Updates; Programmed for 2022.