

Contact: Andrew Lawson
Phone: (620) 441-4415
Fax: (620) 441-0869
alawson@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



News Release

U.S. 166 detouring begins Nov. 29; bridge will be closed Dec. 3

Project expected to last about 1 ½ years; boaters urged to avoid bridge area

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (November 28, 2018) — A Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) project to replace a bridge on U.S. 166/West Madison Avenue over the Arkansas River is scheduled to begin Thursday, Nov. 29. The bridge is located about 5 miles east of the Cowley-Sumner county line.

Crews will begin placing official detour signs Thursday. The bridge will be closed beginning Monday, Dec. 3, but motorists should take the next few days to begin familiarizing themselves with detour routes.

The \$6,368,390 project has a schedule of 250 working days and is expected to last for about 1 1/2 years. A.M. Cohron & Son, Inc., of Atlantic, Iowa, which also has an office in Emporia, is the prime contractor for the project, which will involve the demolition and replacement of the existing bridge span.

Kayakers, boaters and canoeists should steer clear of the Arkansas River in the vicinity of the bridge during this project. They can exit the Arkansas River safely at Chestnut Park (National Water Trail Public Access Point No. 22), located at the west end of Chestnut Avenue, just south of the Chestnut bridge.

The official KDOT detour route, which must follow state highways, leaves U.S. 166 west of Ark City at South Haven and proceeds north on U.S. 81 to Wellington, then east on U.S. 160 through Oxford to Winfield, and finally south on U.S. 77 to Arkansas City. Motorists either can proceed east on U.S. 166 at the roundabout or continue south on the U.S. 77 bypass and U.S. 77 to the Kansas-Oklahoma state line.

This route is the one that should be used by trucking traffic and other heavy vehicles, KDOT says.

For local traffic, though, there are two other detour options that do not require as much driving time.

The next traversable bridge north of Madison Avenue is the bridge to Geuda Springs on Cowley 10, located about 10 miles northwest of Arkansas City. Cowley 10, also known as 252nd Road, can be accessed from either 61st Road or directly from U.S. 77, just north of Arkansas City. Continue westbound past the intersection with 15th Road, and the road will curve south to cross the bridge and river.

For immediate release

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Vehicles then can turn south through Geuda Springs on First Road/Geuda Springs Road, which also doubles as the Cowley-Sumner county line, and continue south until rejoining U.S. 166.

Another, shorter local detour also is available southwest of Arkansas City on "Lovers Lane," but it is not recommended for larger vehicles as it has several tight 90-degree turns that require slowing to at least 20 mph. This route also could be more hazardous to drive on during inclement or wintry weather.

Commercial truck traffic is prohibited on the Lovers Lane detour by order of the Cowley County Commission after a vote taken during its regular meeting Nov. 6.

To access this local detour, travel south out of Arkansas City across the South Summit Street bridge over the Arkansas River and then turn right on 306th Road/Lovers Lane. The route proceeds west to 53rd Road, then jogs north to 304th Road, then west to 51st Road, then north again to 302nd Road/Cowley 16, then west again to 4st Road and finally north a short distance to the intersection with U.S. 166.

The Kansas Department of Transportation urges all motorists to be alert, obey the warning signs, and "Give 'Em a Brake!" when approaching and driving through a highway work zone.

Those with questions about this road work or other KDOT projects may call South Central Kansas Public Affairs Manager Deb Gruver at (620) 663-3361 or email her at deb.gruver@ks.gov.

For construction and detour updates throughout this project, please visit www.arkansascityks.gov/bridge-detour/index.php or bit.ly/new166bridge.

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