

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Jim Pillen, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Pillen, Senator Ballard, Nebraska Department of Transportation, and Hawkins Construction Announce I-80 Expansion Project

April 30, 2024 (Lincoln, Neb.) — Yesterday, Governor Pillen was joined by Senator Beau Ballard, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), Captain Greg Miller from Troup A (Omaha) of the Nebraska State Patrol, and Chris Hawkins of Hawkins Construction to celebrate 2024 construction season in Nebraska and address the state's response to the recent severe weather disasters.

Governor Pillen and Captain Miller urged communities to continue to support each other as the state goes through the recovery process to rebuild after the tornadoes that hit eastern Nebraska on April 26. The construction portion of the event then focused on the much-anticipated expansion of Interstate 80 (I-80) from Lincoln to Pleasant Dale, which begins this spring and will be completed in 2026, bringing improved infrastructure and safety and enhanced connectivity to Nebraska and the Midwest.

I-80 is a vital artery that not only connects Nebraska regionally but is one of the highest-traveled corridors in the country, connecting the east and west coasts. The Lincoln to Pleasant Dale segment will be widened to accommodate the growing motorist needs. This expansion will not only alleviate traffic congestion but also enhance safety for motorists, reducing the risk of accidents and improving travel times.

Nebraska has long recognized the importance of a well-maintained and efficient transportation system for the economic growth and prosperity of the state. With the 2024 highway program, NDOT aims to address the increasing demands of a growing population and ensure the safe and smooth movement of goods and people across the state.

"Nebraskans understand the need for safe and reliable infrastructure to grow our state. I firmly believe that investing in the state's infrastructure is essential to promote economic development, improve the lives of its residents, and bring the next generation of Nebraskans home," Governor Jim Pillen said. "The expansion of I-80 is a crucial step in our efforts to enhance transportation efficiency. With NDOT and our partners, I will continue to ensure we find smart investments to fulfill our promises to the future of the citizens of Nebraska."

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By investing in the expansion of I-80, the state aims to reduce congestion, improve safety, and foster economic prosperity. The improved transportation network will also benefit local communities, making it easier for residents to access essential services, businesses, educational institutions, and recreational areas.

“At the Nebraska Department of Transportation, we are dedicated to creating a transportation network that not only meets the needs of our communities but also improves their quality of life,” said Director Vicki Kramer. “Years of planning and investment have gotten us to today, where we continue our commitment to expanding I-80 west. We believe that by working together with our partners, we can build a better and safer future for all who call Nebraska home.”

In addition to the I-80 expansion, the 2024 construction season includes various other projects to enhance Nebraska's transportation infrastructure including design and construction on all major expressway corridors. These projects encompass road repairs, bridge maintenance, and the implementation of advanced traffic management systems. By prioritizing these initiatives, Nebraska is ensuring the long-term sustainability and resilience of its transportation network.

“Whether it is the response to natural disaster or completing the next major infrastructure project, it takes incredible partnership with many stakeholders to achieve growth that will impact generations of Nebraskans,” said Chris Hawkins, President and CEO of Hawkins Construction. “Hawkins is proud to continue the long history of partnership with NDOT and the State as we continue to build infrastructure that supports Nebraskans.”

“This project, much like the South Beltway and the future East Beltway, promises to improve safety, mobility, and congestion for Southeast Nebraska,” said Senator Beau Ballard. “Commitment to projects such as these supports the growth of our state and improves the lives of Nebraskans for generations to come.”

Nebraska invites residents, businesses, and stakeholders to discover projects planned in your district at dot.nebraska.gov/projects. Regular updates and announcements of current and upcoming projects will be made through official channels, including the [NDOT website](#) and social media platforms.

With the 2024 construction season, Nebraska is making a statement about its commitment to modernizing its transportation infrastructure. The expansion of I-80, starting with the Lincoln to Pleasant Dale segment, will bring significant benefits to the state. Nebraskans are proud to invest in their future and look forward to the positive impact this project will have on the entire region.

[Photos](#) and [videos](#) are available for media use.

#NDOT#

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Note to editors: For more information about the response to the storm damage from April 26, please refer to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) at nema.nebraska.gov.