

Scott Boulevard residents celebrate end of six years of construction

The Columbia Missourian

COLUMBIA — Music played, bikes dotted the streets and children sat on curbs eating Kona Ice, while others bounced down an inflatable slide and chased each other while blowing bubbles. Families played cornhole, waited in line for Just Jeff's burgers and chatted with firefighters while children climbed on a firetruck.

For a few hours on Sunday, the corner of Thornbrook Ridge and Chamois Drive near Scott Boulevard was blocked off from traffic and transformed into a miniature festival.

The party was for neighbors of Scott Boulevard to celebrate the end of over six years of the road's construction.

Brooke McCarty helped organize the party to bring neighbors together and celebrate the new road. She organized the party with the help of Shannon Patterson and Elizabeth McKinney.

"My goal in throwing this was for someone to come and meet a new neighbor," McCarty said. "We get so caught up in our everyday lifestyle and just go, go, go, so I just thought it would be a nice, casual way to meet a new neighbor and get out of your routine of your own friends and just reach out, especially with having the different subdivisions involved."

She invited Thornbrook, Steeplechase, Wyndham Ridge and Deerfield Ridge neighborhoods to the party.

"I didn't think (the construction) was going to alter my life," McCarty said. "I didn't think a few minutes would bother me as much as they did, you know, but then when it was all over I was like, 'If this is the worst thing in my life, then life is pretty good, so let's celebrate today because life is good,'" she said.

McKinney, who organizes events in Wyndham Ridge, wanted to celebrate the safer road and end of unsafe construction.

"My in-laws moved here right before the road closed, and they moved into Thornbrook, so they were right across the street from me, but I couldn't get to them," McKinney said. "So that was really hard because I have four young kids, and it was like, they moved here to help us, but then they were walking across construction in rain and snow to try and help me for nap times or put kids down. We were just so excited when the initial part opened where we could get across to Thornbrook, and now to have the whole thing open is great."

[The Scott Boulevard Improvement Plan](#) was approved by voters in 2005. The plan was meant to reconstruct Scott Boulevard, a two-lane country road, so it could handle increased traffic from population growth and city expansion.

"It makes it safer for us to respond to emergency calls in this area," Ron Fisher, a lieutenant with the Columbia Fire Department, said about the improvements.

The road is also safer for children on bikes and pedestrians trying to access the MKT trail, he said.

The project was broken into three phases. From 2009 to 2016, Scott Boulevard has expanded to four lanes, including a bike lane and added sidewalks. Construction also added a bridge over Hinkson Creek, a roundabout, an MKT Trail underpass and more.

The entire project cost \$31.9 million and was funded by the Capital Improvement Sales Tax, the Transportation Sales Tax, the Boone County Road Tax and development fees.

To residents' relief and excitement, construction ended on Friday.

"We could do this every month if we could get away with it," Fisher said. "It's a great time, nice turnout, too. And the weather cooperated."

Supervising editor is [Natalia Alamdari](#).

See the story online here: http://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/scott-boulevard-residents-celebrate-end-of-six-years-of-construction/article_3981bf30-a45f-11e6-8d3b-1bc283dff3fb.html