



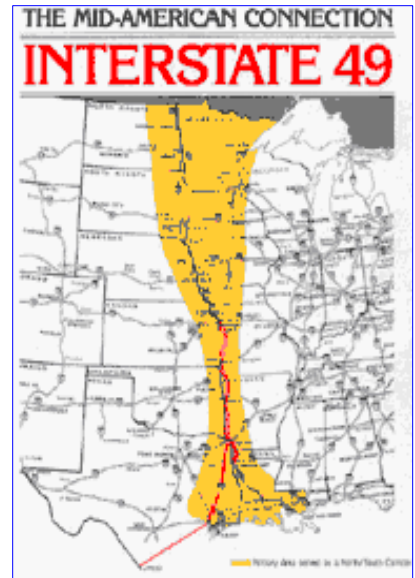
“Palms to the Pines”

The NAFTA connection from New Orleans, Louisiana through Southwest Missouri, to Winnipeg Canada.

Interstate 49 is a quick north/south route in America's heartland. The NAFTA connection in the north reaches from Interstate 29 at Winnipeg Canada and Interstate 35 at Duluth, Minnesota joining to form Interstate 49 at Kansas City, Missouri. This major transportation link lays equal distance between Interstate 55 of Jackson Mississippi in the east and Interstate 35 in Dallas Texas to the west.

I-49 starting in the north from Kansas City intersects 6 interstates: I-70, I-44, I-40, I-30, I-20, and I-10 as it travels to its endpoint of New Orleans. Mexico is a short side trip down US 59 to the border city of Laredo TX.

Right now, I-49 is located entirely within Louisiana. It goes from Lafayette, Louisiana at Interstate 10 to Shreveport, Louisiana at Interstate 20. Plans are underway to extend the interstate at both ends, from New Orleans to Kansas City.



Construction for the extension north is already underway in **Southwest Missouri** and in Arkansas, and "Future I-49" signage is visible along Route 90 in southern Louisiana.

In Missouri, all of US 71 from Anderson to Joplin has already been upgraded to interstate standards and most of the highway from Joplin to I-435 in Kansas City is at interstate standards. The only sections that aren't at interstate standards are already 4-lane divided highways (70 mph) and easily upgradeable. A short bypass of Joplin, Route 249, is being built to continue I-49 north without continuing several miles to the east with US 71. Work on the 12 mile, interstate grade section from Anderson south to the Arkansas line will be completed by the end of 2007.

In Arkansas, Interstate 540 from Alma to Bentonville will become part of the future I-49, and work is underway to build a toll section from Bentonville to the Missouri line. The Bella Vista Bypass will connect 540 from Bentonville to the Missouri line. A section of future Interstate 130 at Texarkana, Arkansas is also to become part of Interstate 49.

In December 2004, a section of Route 549 opened between Texarkana, Arkansas and Fouke, Arkansas that will eventually become a part of I-49. Another section between Fouke and Doddridge, Arkansas opened October 2005.