

## NEWS RELEASE

Kansas Department of Transportation News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Work begins on 5-County Regional Transportation Study**

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) plans to involve residents, community leaders and transportation representatives in a study of changing transportation needs in five northeast Kansas counties. The 5-County Regional Transportation Planning Study that began in September has three goals: assess the multi-modal transportation needs, prioritize the needs and develop strategies to address them.

The five counties are Douglas, Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte. Study partners include the counties and cities in the area, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA), Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), and the Lawrence-Douglas County Metro Planning Commission.

Phase 1 of the two-phase study will assess the multi-modal transportation needs. It includes identifying the significant developments in the counties and determining how the developments are affecting the regional transportation system. The first phase also will examine the state and local road systems, traffic projections and the capacity of the system to carry the projected traffic. Freight, which is expected to more than double in the next 20 years, will be included in the study. It will be coordinated with other studies and projects that have been completed or are underway in the region.

Phase 1 will cost \$1 million and will be conducted by the consulting engineering firm of Parsons Brinkerhoff and a team of sub-consultants. Phase 1 is expected to be completed by the end of 2009.

Phase 2 of the study will prioritize the needs and develop strategies to address them. An important part of Phase 2 will be for the study partners to broadly agree on the priorities that should be addressed. This phase could include identifying corridors for future improvement, new corridors and

potential right-of-way needs. It also will project the costs of possible improvements. No funds have been identified for Phase 2 or to build any recommended improvements, however.

“Many significant developments are changing travel patterns within this five-county area, making a study of this size and scope important,” said Thomas Dow, State Transportation Planner for KDOT. “Several smaller corridor studies are already underway in the area. The 5-County Regional Planning Transportation Study will help coordinate the priorities and needs of those projects and help lay the foundation for discussions about future projects,” he added.

Stakeholder and citizen input will be a critical component of this study so it adequately encompasses many perspectives. Opportunities for participation will include a transportation summit, community workshops in each of the five counties and an interactive website. For further information, interested persons can contact Kimberly Qualls, KDOT Northeast District Public Affairs Manager at (785) 640-9340 or toll-free in Kansas at 1-877-550-5368.

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