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KDOT Kicks Off K-68 Expansion in Miami County

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) is preparing long-term plans to expand eight miles of existing K-68 in Miami County between US-169 on the west and US-69 on the east to a four-lane expressway. Some improvements, such as changes needed for key intersections, development of frontage and/or reverse frontage roads, and more are scheduled to be constructed between March 2018 and September 2019. The project is funded for \$10 million dollars of construction. However, the funding is not enough to expand all eight miles of the road. KDOT will work with local stakeholders to determine where to construct improvements on K-68 between US-169 and US-69.

The project is included among several Southeast Kansas highway expansion projects that will be funded through T-WORKS, Kansas' 10-year, \$8 billion transportation program designed to create jobs, preserve highway infrastructure, and provide multimodal economic development opportunities across the state. KDOT worked with communities including Ottawa, Paola, Louisburg, and Franklin and Miami Counties to develop and select the projects for the program. KDOT will use T-WORKS funds to build improvements for K-68 in Miami County.

The project is currently in Phase 1 (Discovery) of KDOT's four-phase project development process. During Phase 1 the design team will examine existing conditions, opportunities, and constraints that impact proposed improvements and associated

costs. Phase 2 (Field Check) is anticipated to begin in 2013 and involves developing preliminary plans for both the more immediate improvements and the long-term, four-lane expressway of K-68 between US-169 and US-69. Final design plans will be developed in Phase 3 and the more immediate improvements will be built in Phase 4.

KDOT will use a variety of methods to engage and inform the community about the Miami County K-68 expansion as the project develops. It will continue to coordinate with the K-68 Corridor Management Committee, which consists of representatives from both counties and all three cities. It will also conduct individual and/or small group meetings with identified stakeholders to learn more about the impacts of potential improvements. At dates and times yet to be determined, public officials will be briefed about the project's progress and the general public will be invited to attend open houses during which they can review detailed project displays.

Improving K-68 with a series of improvements at key locations plus a long-term goal of widening the road overall are recommended in the ***K-68 Corridor Management Plan***. The plan describes the vision for K-68 in Miami and Franklin Counties and in the Cities of Ottawa, Paola, and Louisburg. It was adopted by the two counties and three cities in 2009 with input from the community. The local jurisdictions have since signed interlocal cooperation agreements whereby they have committed to implementing the plans' recommendations.

For more information about the Miami County K-68 expansion project, visit the T-WORKS web page at www.ksdot.org/t-works. You can also contact KDOT Area Engineer Hugh Bogle at hugh@ksdot.org and (785) 448-5446.

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