

NEWS RELEASE

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Riley County highway project to link Kansas’ economic opportunities

Governor Parkinson kicks off project that will create jobs, spur economic growth

OGDEN – The last major Kansas highway project funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 officially got under way today at a ceremony along K-18.

The \$64.9 million project, which will include an interchange, four bridges, a four-lane freeway over a two-mile stretch and more, is needed to support the significant population and economic growth that will occur between Fort Riley and Manhattan. Fort Riley continues to see significant population growth as thousands of soldiers, families and workers locate to the area. Manhattan also is expecting exponential growth due to Kansas State University being chosen as the new home of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). The project also will provide a new connection to Manhattan Regional Airport.

“This is another great day for Kansas as we prepare for our future opportunities with the expansion of Fort Riley and the construction of NBAF,” said Governor Mark Parkinson. “This key infrastructure project not only immediately creates jobs, but allows us to attract new companies to the region, yielding long-term economic benefits for years to come.”

The project includes relocation of about two miles of Union Pacific Railroad track, flood control measures at Ogden and utility relocation. Sema Construction Inc. of Centennial, Colo., submitted the low bid for the project and is the prime contractor.

“This is an important project on a corridor that will experience significant growth in the coming years. It will create jobs now and support economic growth for decades,” said Kansas Transportation Secretary Deb Miller.

“Without Recovery Act funding, we couldn’t have done this project in the foreseeable future.”

This project – Phase I – will cover two-miles of the seven-mile K-18 corridor between Fort Riley and Manhattan. Phases II and III will complete the corridor improvement, but no funds are currently available for the final phases. Estimated cost of all three phases is \$140 million.

In April, about 3,000 workers were employed on Recovery Act projects in Kansas. The payroll for the month was almost \$3.2 million.

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