

Public Participation Approach for the US-56 Corridor Management Plan

Douglas County
Johnson County
City of Baldwin City
City of Edgerton
City of Gardner
Lawrence/Douglas County Metropolitan Planning
Organization
Mid-America Regional Council
Kansas Department of Transportation



March 2009

Introduction – Creating and Managing Great Expectations

The *US-56 Corridor Management Plan* will be a 15-month study effort between the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and its partners:

- Douglas County,
- Johnson County,
- Cities of Baldwin City, Edgerton, and Gardner,
- Lawrence/Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO),
- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)

The 22-mile US-56 corridor begins just 10 miles south of Lawrence, at the US-59 intersection, heads east through Baldwin City, Edgerton and Gardner, ending at I-35 at approximately West 175th Street.



This complex corridor includes long stretches of rural and agricultural uses, major parks and natural areas. The population is centered in small cities that offer a full range of services both commercial and institutional. Because the eastern section of the corridor is well-served by highways, interstates, rail and air, it includes existing and proposed major industrial uses. The challenge of the US- 56 Corridor Management Plan is to:

- Build the relationship between community character, land use and transportation
- Identify an appropriate roadway network
- Zero in on implications for roadway design
- Identify short, interim and long range solutions

Community concerns about the US 56 corridor are likely to varied given the varied character of the corridor.

The consultant team for the *US-56 Corridor Management Plan* lead by TranSystems, with Patti Banks Associates, the Peridian Group and Stinson Morrison Hecker, LLP, will work with KDOT and Partners on a three-part study that includes

:

- **Foundation of Facts:** Assemble today's facts, issues and concerns regarding land use, transportation, and development factors.
- **Forecast the Future:** Analyze and report on land use and development, natural resources, local road and highway network, traffic volumes and patterns, and simulation modeling.

- **Formulate a Fit:** Integrate land use, transportation, access management, community character considerations and all modes of transportation into a preferred alternative and appropriate implementation tools.

The public involvement approach for the *US-56 Corridor Management Plan* will focus on:

- **Learning from and Informing the Public:** Determine issues and attitudes of the general public through a statistically valid community survey; keep the public updated and informed via a project web site, news releases, and public meetings.
- **Involving Project Partners, Community Leaders and Stakeholders** throughout the process to incorporate a wide range of viewpoints that reflect both the interests of a particular segment and the corridor as a whole in forging the direction of the Corridor Management Plan.

The Plan includes a statement of its goals and intent, an initial list of stakeholders, and an overview of the public involvement process, tools, and timing.

Goals and Intent

The goals for the *US-56 Corridor Management Plan* public participation process include:

- **Community Representation:** Design the process to reflect a wide range of community interests and leadership.
- **Community Input:** Design the process so that input from all sources, Advisory Committee, Stakeholders, Public Officials and the Public is timely, useful, used.
- **Community Trust:** Create trust that the information received is complete, timely and honest.
- **Community Advocacy:** Ensure that at the end of the process there will be support for the Corridor Management Plan.
- **Community Understanding:** Promote clear understanding of planning process and products through meetings, workshops and use of the project web site.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals and groups who are affected by or have an interest in a particular project or action. Stakeholders representative of different interests and geographic areas are key to the US-56 public participation process. They will be involved throughout the process in an advisory and interactive approach through the Advisory Committee, group interviews, and workshops. Corridor stakeholders include government, civic, and institutional representatives, interest

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groups, community leadership, representatives of business groups and the development community, and interested citizens. *(See the attached draft list of U- 56 stakeholders by area and organization).*

Process

Public participation will be integrated throughout the three phases of the planning process. Below is a summary of the phases and input to be gathered with each:

- **Phase 1: Foundation of Facts:** Part of the facts to be assembled in this phase will come from the Community Survey as a baseline measure of community concerns, and also from a day-long series of stakeholder interviews and the first Advisory Committee meeting. This phase will include the launching of the web site informing the public through media venues. This phase will culminate with Workshop #1: Community Issues (see below for detail)
- **Phase 2: Forecast the Future:** This phase will work through land use and transportation alternative scenarios to the selection of a preferred alternative with input from the second Advisory Committee Meeting, a public officials briefing and feedback, and Workshop # 2: Public Policy (see below for detail). This phase includes web site updates and distributing a press release covering the workshop from Phase 1.
- **Phase 3: Formulate a Fit:** This phase will integrate land use, transportation, access management, community character considerations and all modes of transportation into a preferred alternative and appropriate implementation tools. Since the success of implementation will depend on community support, there will be crucial input incorporated from the third advisory committee, the second public official's briefing and the third interactive workshop: Community Character Assessment (see below for detail). A fourth Advisory Committee meeting will be held to review results from the third workshop, the draft Corridor Management Plan, and to prepare for the Public Open House meetings (see below for detail). This phase includes web site updates and maintenance of the web site for 4 months after corridor plan deliverance. There will be a press release to highlight the corridor management plan and the public meeting.



Stakeholders work through alternative scenarios

Each meeting involving the community and stakeholders will begin with an orientation as to where the particular meeting falls in the scope of planning process, what the role of the participants is, and what decisions can and cannot be made. General project information will be included in presentations and/or boards. KDOT staff will be “the face” of the project and the consultant team will support them.



The public making choices

Tools

Advisory committee meetings, public officials' briefings, stakeholder meetings, workshops, public meetings, internet, and the media will be used to share information about and gather feedback for the master planning process. The tools are described below:

- **Community Survey:** A community survey will be developed and conducted early in the planning process to help identify corridor issues and to reflect in a statistically valid way the opinions of the whole corridor and individual communities. The survey will be mail-in with follow-up phone calls to assure statistical validity at a corridor level of plus or minus 4% and for each of the 3 cities at a level of plus or minus 7%.
- **Advisory Committee Meetings:** The committee will supplement the KDOT and Partners group, which consists of KDOT and consultant staff and two representatives of each of the partner counties, communities, and organizations. The Advisory Committee will be a representative group of government, civic, development, and interest group leaders from the two counties and three cities in the corridor. The Advisory Committee as representative of a wide range of community interests will help forge a corridor wide solution for US-56 that respects local concerns.

- **Stakeholder Meetings:** Early in the Foundation of Facts phase of the project, a one-day series of small group round table discussions with selected stakeholders will be held at a centralized location in the corridor. Follow-up phone interviews will be scheduled to fill in any geographic or subject gaps in the group interviews.
- **Public Officials Briefings:** There will be two rounds of briefings for public officials at two different times in the process. The purpose is to keep elected officials and local leaders informed on project progress and to get their responses before key workshops. The first round, at two different locations in the corridor, will be before the Public Policy Workshop. The second round, also at two different corridor locations will be before the Community Character Assessment Workshop and Public Open Houses.
- **Workshops:** There will be a workshop during each of the three phases of the project, Foundation of Facts, Forecast the Future, and Formulate a Fit. The workshops are as follows:
 - **Workshop # 1 - Community Issues:** The results of the Community Survey, stakeholder interviews, data collection and analysis and Advisory and Partners Committee review would be presented for discussion. The product of the workshop would be a refined list of issues organized in categories, to be addressed in the planning process.
 - **Workshop # 2 – Public Policy:** The results of project team, Partners and Advisory Committees review of existing policy direction, land capacity demand, sensitive resources assessment, traffic data and access management options would be presented. The invitees, including KDOT and Partners, Advisory Committee, public officials and stakeholders, would review and prioritize alternative policy options for the corridor in terms of land use and transportation with the result being informed consent on preferred solutions.
 - **Workshop #3 – Community Character Assessment:** New results of development codes gap analysis, review of existing community character, the selected development scenario and committees' reviews would be presented to workshop participants. The result should be informed consent on roadway design concepts; roadway elements needed to support the selected development scenario; key character elements to be preserved and enhanced; recommendations of potential public policy support and development code changes to support transportation, land use and design decisions.
- **Public Meetings:** The Public Open House meeting, held at two different locations in the corridor, will be at the culmination of the planning process to present the draft corridor management plan. The open house format will encourage circulation among a series of exhibits

Interactive stakeholder workshops will take discussions to a higher level to refine recommendations.

staffed by the project team. There will be a fact sheet to provide details specific to corridor segments. E-mail, website and media releases will encourage attendance by the project contact list and the general public.

- **Internet:** A project website will be developed and updated most months to include project materials, meeting results, project progress and an invitation to the Public Open House Meetings. The public will be directed to the website through the KC Metro page available at www.ksdot.org.
- **Media:** Distribution of Press Release will coincide with the launching of the project website. Two additional press releases will be issued, the first to cover the results of the Issues Workshop and to encourage use of the project web site, and the second to highlight the draft Corridor Management plan and encourage attendance at the public open houses at two locations in the corridor.

Timing

Steering committee meetings will be held throughout the US-56 Corridor planning process. Meetings with public officials, targeted stakeholders, and the general public will happen at key points. See attached schedule.

Meetings dates/task dates for the US-56 Corridor Master Plan								
	Foundation of Facts				Forecast the Future			
	2009							
	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Advisory Committee Meetings				Wed May 6 @ 1:30pm		Wed Jul 15 @ 1:30pm		
Workshop				Wed May 20 @ 5:00 – 7:00pm				Wed Sep 16 @ 5:00 – 7:00pm
Public Officials Briefings						Tues Jul 28; Wed Jul 29		
Stakeholder Interviews			Thurs Ap.23@ 8:30 – 5:00					
Community Survey		Q's Complete 3/16	Report Complete 4-20					
Public Open Houses								
Website			Web Launch Mon Ap 27		Thurs Jun 11	Thurs July 23	Thurs Aug 20	Tues Sep 29
Media Release (MR)			Mon Ap 27		Thurs Jun 11			
KDOT Partners		Wed Mar 11@ 1:30pm	Wed Ap 29 @ 1:30 pm		Wed Jun 24 @ 1:30pm			Wed Sep 30 @ 1:30pm
Internal Staff	Thurs Feb 19			Wed May 27			Wed Aug 26	

Meetings dates for the US-56 Corridor Master Plan								
	Formulate a Fit							
					2010			
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May
Advisory Committee Meetings	Wed Oct 14 @ 1:30pm		Wed Dec 16 @ 1:30pm					
Workshop		Wed Nov 18 @ 5:00 – 7:00pm						
Public Officials Briefings	Tues Oct 27; Wed Oct 28							
Public Open Houses - one each in Douglas & Johnson Counties, most probably from 5:00pm – 7:00pm				Tues Jan 19- JoCo; Thurs Jan 21- DougCo				
Website	Thurs Oct 15	Mon Nov 30	Wed Dec 16		Tues Feb 2		Wed April 28	
Media Release (MR)				Tues Jan 5				
KDOT Partners			Wed Dec 2 @ 1:30pm		Wed Feb 10 @ 1:30pm		Wed April 7 @ 1:30pm	
Internal Staff				Wed Jan 6				