

MEDIA ADVISORY

Kansas Department of Transportation Media Advisory

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The City of Olathe and KDOT host open-house meeting about proposed K-7 Corridor in Olathe

OLATHE – The City of Olathe and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) will hold an open-house public meeting from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 25, at the Ball Conference Center, 21350 W. 153rd St. (Lone Elm and 153rd St.), in Olathe. The meeting is for anyone interested in learning more about the proposed improvements to the K-7 Corridor between 183rd Street and 119th Street, as shown in the 2006 K-7 Corridor Management Study.

Presentations are scheduled for 5:20 and 6:20 p.m., but the City of Olathe and KDOT invite the public to drop in any time between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. to talk with the project team and look at exhibits about:

- The K-7 Corridor Management study recommendations for Olathe,
- Proposed access changes from those recommendations, and
- Next steps in the design process.

The K-7 Corridor Management Study was initiated in 2004 by KDOT and local communities to study the K-7 corridor from 223rd Street in Miami County to K-5/Muncie Road in Leavenworth. The study was needed to address technical elements, local concerns and necessary improvements for the total future transportation system, including the local street networks, and is the basis for current and future improvements on K-7 in the metropolitan area.

After meeting with the public, conducting technical analysis and looking at development plans for the corridor, the highway type was recommended to be a freeway. In collaboration with the City of Olathe, the study recommended that K-7 should be a freeway through Olathe and be realigned along

Lone Elm Road from near 183rd Street to Old Highway 56. The study also recommended overpasses at 167th Street and 151st Street and an interchange at 159th Street.

Since completing the K-7 Corridor Management Study in 2006, the City of Olathe and KDOT have been building on that original study to plan for the future and address development occurring in the area. Comments from the community asking for interchanges at 167th Street, 159th Street and 151st Street prompted KDOT and the City of Olathe to review those access points. Now the Preliminary K-7 Freeway Design Study from 183rd Street to Old Highway 56 is looking at adding interchanges at 167th Street and 151st Street and an overpass at 159th Street. These proposed access changes will be presented at the public meeting.

At the conclusion of this design study in the next few months, preliminary right-of-way limits for the study area will have been defined. These limits will not represent exactly where future right-of-way will be, but will aid the City of Olathe with its planning and development activities.

The City of Olathe and KDOT plan to complete the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the entire K-7 corridor through Olathe (183rd Street to 119th Street). The NEPA process, signed into law in 1970, must be conducted where federal funds will be used for highway improvements. There is no funding currently available for the NEPA process, but should funding become available, the process would be started. Once the NEPA process begins, it would take 18 to 24 months to complete.

The transition of Lone Elm Road to a future K-7 freeway could be 10 to 30 years in the future, depending on future development, traffic needs and funding availability. Timing for these changes will depend on the travel needs of the area, but currently, funds are not available for the transition of Lone Elm Road to a future K-7 freeway.

Construction is planned to start on the I-35 and Lone Elm Road interchange in April 2008 with project completion scheduled for June 2010. This new interchange will serve the community until Lone Elm Road becomes the K-7 freeway from near 183rd Street to Old Highway 56, which may be 10 to 30 years in the future. The City of Olathe began designing the interchange at I-35 and Lone Elm Road in 2002 to provide direct access from Lone Elm Road to I-35. For more information about this project, visit www.olatheks.org/PublicWorks/Construction/LoneElmInterchange.

Materials from the public meeting will be available on the project web site at www.ksdot.org/projects.

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