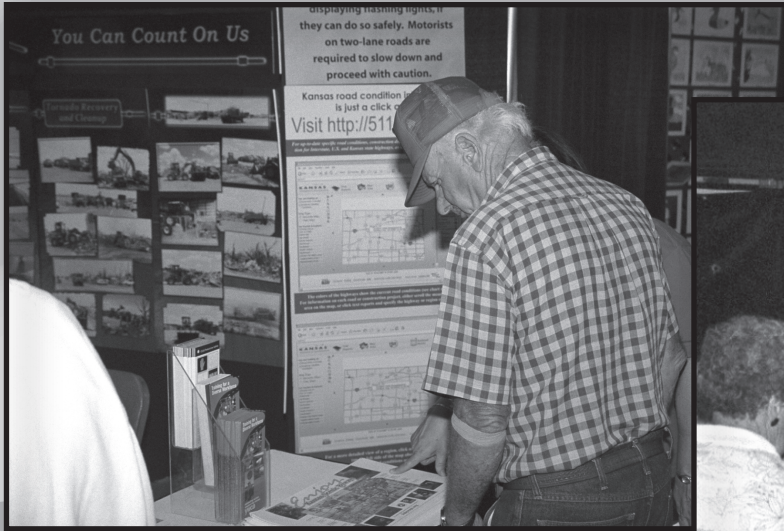# Public Involvement

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

KDOT's Public Involvement Program was formally created in 1997, although KDOT has undertaken public involvement activities for many years. The agency's public involvement plan, "Sharing the Future- Public Involvement in the Kansas Transportation System", was updated in May 2017 and is to be updated again in 2022. It provides policy direction and guidance for integrating public involvement in the agency's decision-making processes at the district and headquarters levels. KDOT's "Sharing the Future- Public Involvement in the Kansas Transportation System" document may be viewed online at: http://www.ksdot.org/Assets/wwwksdotorg/bureaus/burTransPlan/pdf/SharingtheFuture.pdf

KDOT in past years has updated the plan to reflect activities such as the Partnership Project (P2), which was begun in 2003 as a top-to-bottom review of the Department with the goal of finding ways for KDOT to be more responsive to internal and external customers and become a more efficient agency. In addition to P2, both the statewide Kansas Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) developed in 2007/8, and the T-LINK Task Force subsequently created in 2008, recommended changes to improve the public involvement process. Also, included in the recent revision were the public involvement procedures in place for the STIP and STIP amendments.

Public Involvement Mission & Program

The mission of the Public Involvement Program is to foster effective two-way communication, facilitate citizen participation, and help KDOT and its customers work together to provide a statewide transportation system that meets the needs of Kansas. Our public involvement goal at KDOT is accomplished jointly by our District Public Affairs Managers and the Division of Policy. KDOT involves the public throughout the project development process thereby building and sustaining relationships with citizens, businesses, legislators, and governmental entities.

These District Public Affairs Managers focus on local and regional public affairs for construction and maintenance projects, assist with public involvement for design projects and planning studies, work with local news media, and foster relationships with citizens and businesses at local levels. A Community Affairs Manager, located in Chanute serves communities in southeast Kansas, focusing on fostering relationships with local governments, school districts, and economic

development groups.

Public Involvement Purpose

Public involvement helps KDOT staff make informed decisions that address the values, concerns, and issues of people potentially affected by transportation projects. Public involvement can help identify and clarify important issues, help identify environmental constraints and possible mitigation, and help bring out potentially helpful ideas. Incorporating public input with current engineering criteria and a variety of other factors can provide a basis on which to develop or select alternatives. Thus, the public's participation contributes to the larger body of knowledge used to help make planning, programming, design, and construction decisions.

KDOT includes public involvement in its transportation planning and programming processes to provide:

- Early, continuous, and proactive public involvement opportunities throughout the transportation planning and programming process;
- Timely and complete information about transportation issues and processes to any interested citizens and groups affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects;
- In accordance with the Kansas Open Records Act, full public access to key decisions and reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the plan and

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP);

- Adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to action on the plan and STIP;
- A process for demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input during the planning and program development process;
- A process for seeking out and considering the needs of traditionally underserved populations;
- Periodic review of the public involvement process so that the process provides full and open access to all and revision of the process as necessary.

Local Consultation & Project Selection

One of the priorities coming from the P2 project and reiterated by the LRTP and T-Link Task Force, was the need to develop better relationships with local governments and improved processes for incorporating stakeholder input into the project selection process. All noted the importance of involving local officials early and often in planning, project programming, and project development. As a result, KDOT utilized a revamped project selection process when selecting expansion and modernization projects to be funded through T-WORKS, the state's transportation program passed in May 2010 by the Kansas

Legislature. Through its Local Consultation process, KDOT consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, to get input on project priorities in each of the state's six regions. The priorities that came out of the Local Consultation meetings were used, in conjunction with engineering data and economic benefit analysis, to select expansion and modernization projects for construction funding. In fact, the top priorities communicated by stakeholders in each region of the state during the Fall 2010 Local Consultation process were selected for construction funding through T-WORKS. The next round of meetings will be held in the fall of 2018 in conjunction with the Joint Legislative Transportation Task Force. KDOT continues to update the T-WORKS website launched at the start of the program to track transportation projects across the state. The T-WORKS site is at http://kdotapp.ksdot.org/TWorks/ .

Questions about KDOT's Public Involvement Policy may be forwarded to:

Kansas Department of Transportation
Division of Policy
700 Harrison, 2nd Floor West
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3754
(785) 296-3585