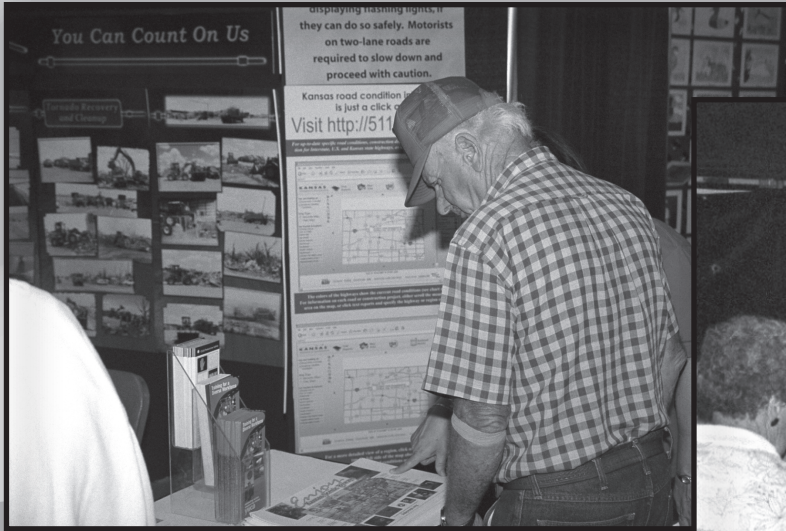


# Public Involvement



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# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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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/burTrans-Plan/pdf/SharingtheFuture.pdf>

KDOT in past years has updated the plan to reflect activities such as the statewide Kansas Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). KDOT is currently updating the LRTP previously adopted in 2007/8, which may provide recommended changes to improve the public involvement process. Improvements implemented from the new LRTP will be described in this section when in place.

## **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 by our Communications Director and team including Headquarters staff and District Public Affairs Managers . 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.

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## **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 KDOT's priorities is the need to continue building relationships with local governments and improving processes for incorporating stakeholder input into the project selection process. Of note, the importance of involving local officials early and often in planning, project programming, and project development. Through its Local Consultation process, KDOT consults with a wide range of stakeholders, to get input on project priorities in each of the state's six regions. The priorities that come out of the Local Consultation meetings are used, in conjunction with engineering data and economic benefit analysis, to select expansion and modernization projects for funding consideration.

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A pool of priority projects was generated from the round of local consult meetings that completed in the fall of 2019. Forty of these priority projects are now in the development pipeline of the recently passed state transportation plan, the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Plan, (ELTP). The next round of meetings will be held in the fall of 2021 in conjunction with the LRTP update. As with the TWORKS program, there will be an ELTP project site where the progress of the ELTP is tracked. This new site is currently under development. However, when completed a link will be provided.

For questions about local consult and KDOT's Public Involvement Policy contact:

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