

Northeast District Office
121 S.W. 21st Street
Topeka, KS 66612-1429



phone: 785-296-3881
fax: 785-296-3720
www.ksdot.org

Deb Miller, Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

Kansas Department of Transportation News Release

October 3, 2011

11-082-01

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News Contact: Kimberly Qualls, (785) 640-9340 or kqualls@ksdot.org

I-35 Shoulder Improvement Project to Begin in Johnson County

On **Wednesday, October 5**, an improvement project will begin along the shoulders of northbound and southbound I-35 from 95th Street to the Johnson/Wyandotte County line to allow for bus on shoulder (BOS) operations in Johnson County. Project work includes adjustments to existing guardrails, new signing, and new pavement markings will be added to the 7.8-mile stretch of shoulders along I-35. Crews will work daily Monday through Friday during daylight hours, with some occasional weekend work.

Advance message boards will alert drivers to any lane or ramp closures that may occur during the project. Drivers should expect only minor delays as most work will primarily take place on the shoulders. The existing pavement along the I-35 shoulders will adequately handle all future bus traffic. Updated daily traffic information for this project can be viewed online at: www.ksdot.org/kcmetro/lane/close.asp.

Johnson County Transit (JCT) and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) have been working together for the past 18 months to safely implement bus on shoulder operations as a way to move people more efficiently through traffic. Bus service currently runs along I-35, but the enhanced bus service will feature BOS operations during the morning and evening rush hours. Initially, there will be about 8-10 buses a day that will potentially use the shoulder.

BOS operations mean that buses can travel on the shoulder when traffic on I-35 has slowed to less than 35 miles per hour, thus bypassing congested areas. Buses cannot travel more than 10 miles faster than the traffic on the highway and must not exceed 35 mph.

Additional BOS operational guidelines include:

- Buses must always yield to vehicles entering, merging or exiting through the shoulder.
- If there is some sort of obstruction on the shoulder - debris, a stalled car, etc, then the bus must re-enter traffic and move around the obstruction.
- Buses aren't required to use the shoulders, the bus drivers can choose to use the shoulder if the situation permits.
- There is signage to indicate where bus on shoulder operation is permitted.

BOS operations are anticipated to begin in January 2012.

Engineered Systems Co., Inc. (Bonner Springs, KS), is the primary contractor on this \$157,418 shoulder improvement project. The entire project is scheduled to be completed by late November 2011.

The Kansas Department of Transportation urges all motorists to be alert, obey the warning signs, and "Give 'Em a Brake!" when approaching and driving through the project work zone. For more information on this I-35 BOS improvement project, please contact Kimberly Qualls, Northeast Kansas Public Affairs Manager, at (785) 640-9340.

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