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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **“Tunnel to Nowhere” Opens to I-35 Traffic in Johnson County**

A signature component to the nearly completed US-69 Reconstruction Project is the actual opening of the well-known “Tunnel to Nowhere” which opened to traffic this past Saturday, May 19 at approximately 2:00 p.m. The “Tunnel to Nowhere” was constructed in 2005 as part of the 87th Street and I-35 interchange project in Lenexa. This tunnel was built to tie-in with a new tunnel planned in the US-69 Reconstruction Project to handle northbound I-35 traffic exiting to 75th Street.

The “Tunnel to Nowhere” has joined the newly constructed “Tunnel to Somewhere”, which was built under existing US-69, to now become the aptly named 75th Street Exit Ramp Tunnel system. These two tunnels are part of the new 75th Street collector-distributor exit ramp lane which now moves exiting 75th Street traffic off northbound I-35 just before the 87th Street interchange. Northbound I-35 traffic wishing to exit to 75th Street, now take the existing 87th Street exit ramp, and then proceed north on the exit ramp lane under 87th Street, through the “tunnels to nowhere and somewhere” along the collector-distributor road that runs parallel to I-35 where they will eventually exit to eastbound or westbound 75th Street. This traffic movement helps to alleviate the congestion issues on I-35 that existed previously as exiting 75th Street now travels on a separate roadway system adjacent to I-35.

Additional signage has been added to direct drivers to the new 75th Street exit ramp tunnel system. If a driver should miss the new northbound I-35 to 75th Street exit ramp, then they must exit at 67th Street turnaround and head back on southbound I-35 to the 75th Street exit.

This pair of tunnels are part of the US-69 Reconstruction Project which is being officially opened via a ribbon cutting event on Wednesday, May 23 at 3:00 p.m., rain or shine, located on the cul-de-sac (behind Perkin's) on the northeast corner of the I-35 & 87th Street interchange in Lenexa, KS. Details for the ribbon cutting event can be found online at:

<http://www.ksdot.org/kcMetro/pdf/US-69%20Reconstruction%20Project%20Ribbon%20Cutting%20Invitation.pdf>.

The \$83.8 million US-69 project began construction in late June 2009 and is scheduled to be completed by early June 2012. The US-69 Reconstruction Project is a cooperative effort, funded in part by the Kansas Department of Transportation, using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funds, and the Cities of Overland Park and Lenexa.

For more information on the US-69 reconstruction project, please contact Kimberly Qualls, Northeast Kansas Public Affairs Manager at (785) 640-9340.

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