

Kansas Department of Transportation

Bureau of Public Involvement
700 SW Harrison
Topeka, KS 66603-3754



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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South Lawrence Trafficway Open House

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will host an open house concerning its Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation of the South Lawrence Trafficway (SLT):

Thursday, December 14, 2006

10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Kansas Army National Guard Armory

200 Iowa Street, Lawrence

Additional parking will be available on the west side of the Holiday Inn parking lot located at 200 McDonald Drive.

On November 14, the FHWA made the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation of the SLT available for public review and comment until January 5, 2007. The FHWA wants to offer the public the opportunity to learn about the Section 4(f) Evaluation and the potential impacts of two alternate alignments for the eastern leg of the SLT – 32nd Street Alignment B and 42nd Street Alignment A – on historic properties. Two properties are addressed in the Evaluation and will be the focus of the open house – the Haskell Agricultural Farm Property, which includes the Baker Wetlands, and the William Meairs Farmstead south of the Wakarusa River.

Visitors to the open house can view maps, learn about measures to mitigate possible impacts on the properties, talk with FHWA and KDOT staff, and leave comments in an informal setting. Comment forms will be provided or visitors may bring their written comments with them. A court reporter will be available for those who prefer to leave verbal comments. Visitors can attend anytime during the open house; no presentations will be made.

FHWA Role in the Project

The FHWA became involved with the SLT in November 2005 because of a \$1.5 million federal appropriation to resume development of the project, which is estimated to cost more than \$120 million to build. The funds will not be sufficient to start construction of the project. No other federal or state funding has been identified, so no construction is scheduled.

Another federal agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, released its approved Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the SLT in January 2003. In its Record of Decision in December 2003, the Corps selected 32nd Street Alignment B. In April 2006, the FHWA announced its intent to adopt the Corps' approved FEIS and also announced it would prepare and coordinate the distribution of a Draft and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation for the project. After considering comments, the FHWA will complete the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation in Spring 2007. Also, the FHWA will publish its own Record of Decision in Spring/Summer 2007.

BACKGROUND

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (as amended) applies specifically to projects involving federal funding for transportation improvements. It is intended to protect publicly-owned land of a publicly-owned park; recreation area; wildlife and/or waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance; or land of a historic site of national, state, or local significance from conversion to transportation use unless two provisions are met:

1. There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land from the property; and
2. The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.

The SLT project consists of building a new section of K-10 Highway beginning at the K-10/ US-59 Highway interchange in southwest Lawrence extending approximately six miles north and east to the existing K-10 near the eastern edge of the city of Lawrence. The No-Action

alternative and five roadway corridors with a total of twelve reasonable-build alternative alignments were evaluated and discussed in the Draft and Final EIS. The preferred and selected alternative in the Corps' approved FEIS would build a limited access freeway along the southern edge of the city on an alignment identified as 32nd Street Alignment B.

The open house location is ADA accessible. Persons in need of a sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device, large print or Braille material, or other accommodation to attend the open house should notify KDOT as soon as possible. Requests can be addressed to the Kansas Department of Transportation, Bureau of Public Involvement, Eisenhower State Office Bldg., 700 SW Harrison, 2nd Fl. West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754; by calling 785-296-3585 (voice or TTY); or by calling toll-free 1-877-550 KDOT (5368).

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This information can be made available in alternative accessible formats upon request. For information about obtaining an alternative format, contact the Bureau of Transportation Information, 700 SW Harrison St., 2nd Fl West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754 or phone 785-296-3585 (Voice) (TTY).