

# KANSAS

69-106 K-7290-01

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DEB MILLER, SECRETARY

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

JIM L. KOWACH, P.E., BUREAU CHIEF

Note: This letter was sent to everyone on  
the attached list.

December 15, 2005

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name»  
«Title»  
«Company\_Name»  
«Address\_Line\_1»  
«Address\_Line\_2»  
«City», «State» «ZIP\_Code»

We were pleased to have so many local officials turn out for our meeting on November 10, 2005. Twenty-six local and legislative officials attended the meeting to talk about the \$3.2 million in federal earmark funds dedicated to resuming work on the US-69 Pittsburg Bypass Study. Copies of the meeting handouts are available if you weren't able to attend.

One of the most important outcomes of the meeting concerned the preferred alignment. Shortly before the study was suspended in April, 2001, KDOT identified a corridor closely following the existing US-69 as its preferred alignment (the Middle Alignment). Subsequently, Crawford County and the cities of Arma, Frontenac, Girard, and Pittsburg passed resolutions endorsing the Western Alignment. We appreciate this commitment made by our local partners. It reflected a significant level of local cooperation and made quite an impression on our staff. At our November 2005 meeting, local officials firmly stated that the resolutions still stand.

Therefore, the purpose of this letter is to acknowledge our local partners' preference and to let you know that we will use the federal earmark funds to focus on the western alignment.

At the meeting, we also discussed the activities that would be needed to continue the study. Now that a revised preferred alignment has been identified and agreed upon by the local partners and KDOT, our goal will be to move forward with the environmental documentation process. Once that is done, we will use any remaining funds to go as far with design activities as we can. We don't know at this time if we'll be able to get to the point when we can precisely identify the right of way needs. It is unlikely that we'll be able to acquire any right of way.

The environmental documentation process is required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). NEPA calls for written statements describing the potential environmental impacts that could be caused by major highway improvements. This project will be handled as a Class III action, which requires an Environmental Assessment (EA). An EA is used when the environmental impacts and appropriate documentation are not clearly established. The outcome of the EA process is either a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A FONSI generally requires no further NEPA documentation (unless something changes); an EIS calls for more extensive investigations and the preparation of another formal document. As you might guess, an EIS would require additional time and money to complete.

The specific activities that may take place during the study include (not necessarily in order):

1. Public involvement activities
2. A more detailed investigation of potential environmental impacts such as those to:
  - a. Threatened and endangered species,
  - b. Wetlands, floodplains, and critical habitats,
  - c. Potential cultural, archeological, and historic sites
3. A land survey to identify landscape characteristics that will be used in the design process. This will involve both aerial and ground activities. These could begin in Fall 2006 and would take about a year. The survey would cost about \$500,000 and we have the staff available in-house to perform the work.
4. Writing the EA using the outcome of the environmental investigations and earlier study results. Combined with the environmental investigations, this would cost about \$1 million.
5. Presentation of the EA for public comment.
6. Road design activities to more precisely identify the locations of the road, interchanges, and over and underpasses; and identify local road access, access to adjacent properties, right of way needs.
7. An investigation of mine mitigation measures which could cost \$1 million.

We believe it will be important to build on the extensive history of public involvement for this study. A good public involvement process will also strengthen the Environmental Assessment. It will begin with a public involvement open house to reintroduce the study to the public, help the public understand the limits of the study, solicit comments, and learn about new concerns or

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issues that may need to be addressed during the design process. We expect to host that meeting in the first half of 2006. Pittsburg officials kindly offered the use of the municipal auditorium, a location we used during the early phases of the study. Some of the officials at our November meeting were concerned that a public open house next year means that we're starting over, which isn't the case. We believe it's important to let people know that the study has resumed and that the preferred alignment has changed. Also, since the study was suspended in March 2001, some things may have changed which we need to learn about.

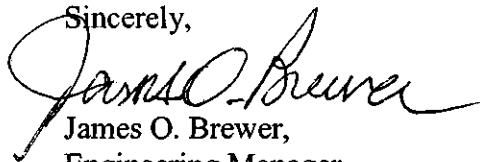
The mine investigation and land survey together would cost about \$1.5 million, leaving about \$1.7 million to prepare the EA and begin design activities. These are preliminary estimates and could change as the study progresses.

We expect to have another public open house after the EA is completed and made available for public review and comment. Other public involvement activities may be needed, which will be determined later.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize how important it is for all of us to continue working as partners in this effort. Governments in Crawford County have already demonstrated a remarkable level of local cooperation and we hope to build on that as this study progresses. While there aren't enough funds to buy right of way using the earmark funds, I hope all officials will be thinking about ways to help preserve the corridor until such time as funding is identified to build the bypass. KDOT doesn't control land use, platting, or zoning, so we look to our local partners to help with such important projects.

If you would like copies of the meeting's handouts, please contact Sue Riley, Community Affairs Manager for the Southeast District. You can call her at 620-431-1000 or toll-free at 1-877-550-5368. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this study. I look forward to working with you as the study progresses.

Sincerely,



James O. Brewer,  
Engineering Manager  
State Road Office

cc: J. Michael Bowen, Federal Highway Administration  
bc: Mike Stringer, District IV Engineer  
Rosie Ingram, Bureau Chief of Program and Project Management  
Ron Kaufman, Public Involvement Administrator  
Jim L. Kowach, Chief, Bureau of Design  
Steve Rockers, Road Design Leader

Title	First Name	Last Name	Company Name	Address Line 1	Address Line 2	City	State	ZIP Code
Representative	Jim	Ryan		The Stillwell Hotel	701 North Broadway	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762
Senator	Pat	Roberts		11900 College Boulevard	Suite 203	Overland Park	Kansas	66210
Senator	Sam	Brownback		1001-C.N. Boardway		Pittsburg	Kansas	66762
Representative	Doug	Gatewood		411 S. Florida		Columbus	Kansas	66725
Representative	Robert	Grant		407 W Magnolia		Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Representative	Julie	Menghini		1207 E Quincy		Pittsburg	Kansas	66762
Senator	Jim	Barone		611 West Leighton		Frontenac	Kansas	66763
Commissioner	Tom	Moody	Crawford County	111 E. Forest	PO Box 249	Girard	Kansas	66743-0249
Commissioner	Bob	Kmiec	Crawford County	111 E. Forest	PO Box 249	Girard	Kansas	66743-0249
Commissioner	Anthony	Pichler	Crawford County	111 E. Forest	PO Box 249	Girard	Kansas	66743-0249
Roads & Bridges	Bob	Davied	Crawford County	111 E. Forest	PO Box 249	Girard	Kansas	66743-0249
Commissioner	Sam	Weaver	Cherokee County	Courthouse	PO Box 14	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Commissioner	Pat	Collins	Cherokee County	Courthouse	PO Box 14	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Commissioner	Dewey	Smith	Cherokee County	Courthouse	PO Box 14	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Roads & Bridges	Leonard	Vanetta	Cherokee County	Courthouse	PO Box 14	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Mayor	Dale	Thompson	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Council Member	Lynn	Grant	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Council Member	Chester	Osborn	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Council Member	John	Lovell	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Council Member	Vernon	Brooks	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Council Member	Charles	Crowe	City of Cherokee	210 S Vine	PO Box 201	Cherokee	Kansas	66724
Mayor	John	Brassart	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Jerri	Burton	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Phillip	Zahm	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Jim	Burton	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Steve	Dunlap	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Rick	Draeger	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Membe	Steve	Howard	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Leo	Evans	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Rhonda	Loar	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Council Member	Gwain	January	City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
City Administrator			City of Columbus	300 E Maple	PO Box 308	Columbus	Kansas	66725
Mayor	Karl	Wicker	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Council Member	Troy	Graham	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829

Title	First Name	Last Name	Company Name	Address Line 1	Address Line 2	City	State	ZIP Code
Council Member	Ron	McKee	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Council Member	Frank	Esposito	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Council Member	Bill	Toschi	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Council Member	Don	Zornes, Sr.	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Public Works	Martin	Lentz	City of Arma	701 E Washington	PO Box 829	Arma	Kansas	66712-0829
Mayor	James	Kennedy	City of Frontenac	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Jack	Southard	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Terry	Moody	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Charles	Quenoy	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Paul	Mendicki	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Don	Pyle	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Linda	Grilz	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Dan	Bridwell	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	John	Macary	City of Frontena	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Council Member	Dan	Brunetti	City of Frontenac	313 E McKay	PO Box 1012	Frontenac	Kansas	66763-1012
Mayor	David	Nance	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Council Member	Bill	Ruston	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Council Member	Mark	Werner	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Council Member	Marty	Beezley	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Council Member	Ralph	McGeorge	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Economic Development	Jerry	Lindbert	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
City Manager	Allen	Gill	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Public Works	Bill	Beasley	City of Pittsburg	201 W 4th St	PO Box 688	Pittsburg	Kansas	66762-0688
Mayor	Maurince	Harley	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Council Member	Sandra	Hallacy	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Council Member	Dan	Smith	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Council Member	Sharon	Mattson	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Council Member	Richard	Cussimano	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
City Administrator	Michael	West	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Public Works	David	Crumpacker	City of Girard	120 N Ozark		Girard	Kansas	66743
Commissioner	Kevin	Mitchelson	Highway Advisory Commission	PO Box 610		Pittsburg	Kansas	66762
Commissioner	Don E.	Hill	Highway Advisory Commission	1101 E. Main		Independence	Kansas	67301