

Reactions from the public on September 18, 2008
Abilene, Kansas
Reported by Julius Karash

Abner Perney, Salina city commissioner and candidate for Kansas Senate – “One of our biggest problem areas is trying to keep up with the streets and roads and connections with the outside world. The meeting has gone real well. I like the approach that you’re trying to make this a little more flexible than programs in the past. We need to be looking at some different alternatives on how to approach transportation.”

Dana Peterson, producer policy specialist with the Kansas Wheat Commission and Kansas Association of Wheat Growers – “We are increasingly getting competition. We’re seeing major growth in China and India. Being able to transport our goods to consumers is of primary importance for wheat farmers. I applaud KDOT for going ahead with the freight study.”

Dennis Lauver, president and CEO of the Salina Chamber of Commerce – “Making another 10-year plan is probably not the best approach in terms of providing flexibility for the state and local communities to create the infrastructure that makes Kansas appealing to those that make capital investments to create jobs for Kansans.”

Joe Nold, Dickinson County Commissioner – “We’re fortunate to have all the state and federal highways we’ve got. Most roads and bridges are in pretty good shape. But for the things we know we need to do, we can’t pull the wagon on our own.”

Joe Reardon, mayor of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas – “We can’t go back to property tax as the source to improve or expand our local roads. We need more options at the local level to find new revenue. This exchange of information and ideas is absolutely valuable in putting a plan together where all of Kansas can succeed.”

Peter Van Kuren, Manhattan Regional Airport manager – “It’s important to recognize the quality of life airports provide and the economic development importance of airports throughout the state of Kansas. Aviation programs within the state have been underfunded for the past 10 years. This is a great opportunity to evaluate and understand the needs each airport in Kansas has.”

Phyllis Anderson, director of community resource development for OCCK Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides transit and other services – “Transportation is not just a KDOT issue and it’s not just a roads and bridges issue for cities and counties. It’s an issue for employers. It’s an issue for human service organizations that are trying to deal with people’s needs.”

Rep. Tom Moxley of Council Grove – “You’ve got main arteries that are heavily, heavily traveled. They’re not safe, because there are no shoulders and they’re hilly. If you fall off the road, you’re upside down. Everyone knows someone who’s been killed on those roads.”