

Reactions from the public on September 22, 2008
Olathe, Kansas
Reported by Julius Karash

Carl Gerlach, Mayor of Overland Park – “This is a new day. We are willing to consider local (tax) options for gas. We’re willing to step up and talk when those options are made available.”

Dale Crawford, KanBikeWalk and Johnson County Bicycle Club – “I would like to see the state be a leader in encouraging bike and pedestrian transportation. Wisconsin is a great example of a state that used highway modernization to keep motorists safe and provide bikers a place to ride. And they’ve gained tourism money in the process.”

David Greene, Gardner Public Works Director - “The intermodal facility is going to be a huge economic engine for southwest Johnson County, including Gardner. It will lead to further transportation needs, such as improvements on Interstate 35, U.S. 56 and the local road system.”

David Kerr, T-LINK member and Kansas Secretary of Commerce - “In economic development we compete with other states and other countries. We want to keep our companies and bring in new companies. Transportation is one of the things they look at.”

Dean Palos, Johnson County Planning Director - “Bicycle sales have gone up and bicycle repairs have gone up. For every person you have on a bicycle you have one less person on the road driving. The benefit of that is you’re saving highway capacity, and there is energy conservation as well.”

Doug Wood, Johnson County Commissioner – “Our roads and bridges network is of the highest priority. Those are what open up economic development and address needs of public safety.”

Fred Backus, engineer for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas - “So far this has been an excellent meeting. I’ve found the presentations to be enlightening, interesting and especially helpful in understanding both the current transportation needs of the state as well as the available revenue options. It’s extremely important for KDOT’s local partners to have role in the development of the T-LINK recommendations, and the local consult sessions are a key part of that process.”

John Paden, Olathe Chamber of Commerce – “I enjoyed today’s meeting. There were a lot of good comments in our highway group. I’m particularly excited to see that KDOT is looking at economic analysis as a component of project selection. In Olathe, we have more than a billion dollars in economic development potential that could be captured if we meet our highway needs.”

Marge Vogt, T-LINK member and Olathe City Councilwoman - “Here to date, Kansas has been insulated from some of the economic problems other states have experienced. We have a great work ethic and a great transportation system. We need to continue that.”

Marcia Bernard, Transit Manager, Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas – “Transit is more important than ever in Wyandotte County. We already have standing room only on many of our routes. We need increased funding.”

Mickey Sandifer, Johnson County Transit Committee and City of Shawnee Councilmember – “I hope some of the ingenious ideas that were discussed in today’s meeting will be used in developing transit systems around the city.”

Ronald Norris, Lenexa Public Works Director - “The meeting has been very good so far. It’s been broad-ranging. I like the idea of broadly addressing the question of funding.”