

Reactions from the public on September 12, 2008
Hays, Kansas
Reported by Julius Karash

Bob Barker, board member of LINK, an agency in Hays that works with persons who have disabilities – “You’ve got a lot of local transit services that run within a small city or town, but they don’t get outside of those towns. I know a double amputee who’s an Iraq veteran who lives on the other side of Colby who needs to come to Wichita to have his medical needs taken care of. He has no way to get there. There’s no regional coordination.”

Cindy Wallace, Russell County economic development director – “Highway 281 is a major north-south highway. There’s no shoulder. Between the hills and some of the valleys and the canyons, there’s absolutely no place to go. It’s very dangerous. I don’t know how many deaths it’s going to take before it gets looked at.”

Dan Johnson, Kansas representative from Hays – “Since our region is dominated by agriculture, we need to have a good infrastructure so farmers can haul their grain and other people can get to where they need to be. Of course, safety is always important to me, because these roads have very little shoulder on them.”

Darrell Sammons, Stockton City Commissioner – “It has created an economic depression in our town, not having a railroad. It is increasing truck traffic in town, which is creating problems with our highways and streets.”

Eber Phelps, Kansas representative from Hays – “In this part of the state, you don’t have anything established as far as bicycle paths or any kind of incentives by employers for their employees using a bicycle. I’m not sure the state needs to be involved in it, other than if you have something that goes on state land.”

Mark Coberly, Gove County Commissioner – “One of my main concerns is the method of funding for roads. If it’s going to be on a usage basis, almost all the monies are going to go to areas east of Salina. Western Kansas will never receive any monies based on usage of roads, due to the scarcity of population. I just want to make sure there’s something in the funding package that took that into account.”

Martin Miller, manager of Great Bend Airport – “You can’t put a price tag on health care and the traumatic needs of a relative or somebody in rural Kansas that needs to get to the hospital.”

Troy Sporer, highway contractor with Sporer Land Development Inc. in Oakley – “How are we going to build more if we can’t maintain what we’ve got? Once you’ve got a bridge there you’ve got to maintain it. If you close down the bridge and you’ve got to drive four or five miles in another direction to get to market, that hurts the farmer.”