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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Wellington, Pottawatomie County projects selected for funding**

Two projects that will have safety benefits and support expected economic growth have been selected for funding in 2011 through the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) Local Partnership Program.

The city of Wellington will receive approximately \$700,000 to widen to four-lanes a section of the U.S. 160 corridor on the city's east side that is experiencing commercial development. The project, which is located between Wellington High School and Wal-Mart, is expected to provide an immediate safety enhancement and support the anticipated growth in Sumner County associated with the future construction of a casino. The location of the casino has yet to be decided.

The state funding will pay for 90 percent of construction, inspection and design. The city will pay for the other 10 percent, plus right of way purchase and utility relocation. The total project is expected to cost \$780,000.

Also selected for KDOT's Local Partnership Program is a turning lane/frontage road project on U.S. 24 just east of Manhattan in Pottawatomie County. The county will receive up to \$360,000 to pay for as much as 75 percent of the construction, inspection and design costs of the project. The county's share of the \$500,000 project will be a minimum of 25 percent.

The project will enhance safety in the area of the Manhattan Livestock Commission sale barn, where trucks and trailers hauling livestock sometimes back up while waiting to turn across traffic into and out of the facility. In addition, the improvement will support the expected economic growth of the area associated with the expansion of Fort Riley.

Typically, more than 20 projects are selected annually for some \$12 million through the Local Partnership Program. However, because of funding uncertainties related to the conclusion of the current state Comprehensive Transportation Program and the expiration of the federal funding bill – both in 2009, only two projects were selected.

“Because of these uncertainties, I could not responsibly commit to the usual level of funding for projects scheduled for 2011,” said KDOT Secretary Deb Miller, who announced the selections today in Wellington.

“These two projects were selected because they not only will provide immediate and long-term safety benefits, they will support economic growth. Although we don’t know what the next transportation program will look like, it’s likely that most projects in the future will have to be driven by an economic imperative,” she said.

In the past 24 years, about \$240 million has been awarded to 220 communities for 400 projects through the Local Partnership Program.

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