



To: County Engineers/Road Supervisors/Highway Administrators/Public Works Directors; County Commissioners; City Engineers/Street Superintendents; City Mayors

From: Ron Seitz, P.E., Chief, Bureau of Local Projects

Subject: Kansas Local Bridge Evaluation Program

Date: April 2011

As most of you are aware, upon review of the 2007 and 2008 National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) program in Kansas, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) found that Kansas was not in compliance with standards for documenting scour critical and fracture critical bridge inspection and analyses in the state.

Through a negotiated agreement, a unique multi-phase initiative was developed to address these shortcomings. The initial phase was completed last year. It confirmed select inventory data of all the bridges within Kansas, which included gathering information about bridge locations, types and existing action plans for the bridges. We very much appreciate your assistance with that effort and now are asking for your continued cooperation in working with KDOT and our consultant team during Phase 2. Our team will be on site, examining bridges and taking photos as well as asking to review your bridge plans and records so that we can capture more detailed information needed to move forward.

Phase 2 will involve conducting (a) detailed evaluations of bridges over water features to determine whether they are in danger of being damaged or washed out due to the forces of waterways (scour critical evaluation) and (b) fracture critical inspections and load rating analyses to determine whether a bridge is of a type and physical condition making it susceptible to possible collapse in its current condition and arrangement.

The effort is being financed through Federal Highway Administration funds. Each year, the FHWA allocates about \$45 million to the State of Kansas for bridge maintenance, repair and construction. Over the course of the next four years, about \$20 million of the \$180 million allocation will be used for the bridge evaluation program to meet the requirements established by the FHWA.

This is obviously a massive undertaking. In response, KDOT has secured the technical support of six consulting engineering firms to conduct the scour and fracture critical evaluations. The TranSystems firm will be the program and data manager. By approaching the project this way, KDOT will be able to provide the appropriate level of attention to each bridge--focusing on those structures posing the greatest concern-- and achieve economies of scale while working within the budget.

Further, it is anticipated that the process will be uniform and consistent; information will be readily stored; and appropriate documentation of scour-related concerns will be documented.

These analyses will serve as the foundation for future NBIS biennial inspections, with every effort taken to see that each of the more than 20,000 bridges receives equal consideration.

This effort is necessary for Kansas to remain eligible for federal aid bridge funds.

KDOT is committed to keeping each bridge owner up to date on the process. We will do so with in-district meetings beginning in June, through the KDOT web site at <http://KLBEP.ksdot.org>, and by other means when necessary. More details about the in-district meetings will be provided in the near future.

In addition, bridge owners will be informed of whom to call to get their questions answered. The following people are available to answer any questions you might have.

- For questions about the bridge evaluation program or the biennial inspection program, call Randy Leonard in the KDOT Bureau of Local Projects at randyl@ksdot.org or 785.296.0416;
- Questions regarding the schedule and consulting teams for the bridge evaluation program should be directed to TranSystems Project Manager Mark Shafer at mwshafer@transystems.com or 816.329.8750;
- Media inquiries regarding the program should be asked of KDOT Public Involvement Liaison Josh Powers at joshuap@ksdot.org or 785.296.6580.

At this time, your involvement will simply be to accommodate the data gathering requests of our consultants. Prior to beginning work in your city or county, one of the project team members will contact your organization.

Again, we appreciate your assistance with this important program, and we look forward to working with you throughout this process.

Sincerely,



Ronald J. Seitz, P.E., Chief
Bureau of Local Projects