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Highway projects advanced to create jobs, save taxpayer dollars

The Kansas Department of Transportation will accelerate \$50 million worth of preservation projects to produce jobs ahead of schedule and to take advantage of low construction costs currently available.

The 32 projects that will be advanced are included in the 10-year, \$8 billion T-WORKS transportation program passed by the 2010 Legislature. They are part of the \$4.2 billion set aside under T-WORKS for preservation, which includes work such as the repair and reconstruction of roads and bridges.

“T-WORKS projects not only enhance the safety of travelers and support the state’s economic goals, they create jobs. By starting these projects ahead of schedule, we can create hundreds of construction jobs sooner than planned and provide an economic benefit to thousands of other Kansans and businesses,” said Gov. Sam Brownback.

Many of the 32 preservation projects were to be scheduled for 2013; others had yet to have a start date. KDOT is able to move these projects ahead of schedule partly because of savings captured in recent project lettings.

“We will get these projects under contract this spring and summer so we can take advantage of the great bid prices,” said Acting Transportation Secretary Barbara Rankin. “And, accelerating the schedule means more workers will be receiving paychecks before the end of the year.”

Advancing the project schedule was suggested last month by the Democratic legislative leadership during a news conference focusing on jobs.

“When Representative Davis and I announced our Kansas Jobs First plan last month, more than 50,000 Kansans were still unemployed. Accelerating T-WORKS projects will not only improve our state economy, it will give hope to hundreds of Kansas families still struggling to make ends meet,” said Senate Democratic Leader Anthony Hensley. “I’d like to thank the Governor and KDOT for moving forward on this important endeavor. This is the right thing for Kansas because it’s the right thing for Kansas workers.”

“Job creation must be the first priority of the 2012 legislative session. This is a simple, revenue neutral action that will help get Kansans off the unemployment rolls and onto a payroll,” said House Democratic Leader Paul Davis.

“Kansans expect their leaders, whether they’re Republicans or Democrats, to work together to move the state’s economy forward, and I think today’s announcement is a great example of how we can work together to create jobs,” the Governor said.

The list of projects to be advanced, as well as all other T-WORKS projects, can be viewed on the T-WORKS website at www.ksdot.org/TWorks/.

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