

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

News Contact: Steve Swartz, (785) 296-3585 or [stevew@ksdot.org](mailto:stevew@ksdot.org)

## **Partnerships key to award-winning Kansas project**

The K-18 highway expansion project that will accommodate the rapid growth of a Kansas Army base, as well as the development of a national agro-defense facility nearby, has been awarded the 2010 National Partnership for Highway Quality (NPHQ) Making a Difference Silver Award for partnering.

The award recognizes the strong partnership forged by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), the Army, the federal government, Union Pacific Railroad, consultant HNTB, the Cities of Ogden and Manhattan, Riley County, and other local stakeholders. The partnership was essential for state transportation leaders to meet the strict deadline necessary to qualify the K-18 expansion project for funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

In 2008, KDOT decided to advance the complex road/drainage plans to their final stage to have partial improvement plans in place when funding became available. With the schedule accelerated by more than six months to meet ARRA deadlines, partnering was a key to meet these deadlines.

“Given the proximity of the conflicting uses, communities and user groups, it is remarkable how well KDOT and its partners were able to coordinate everything and

communicate the results to us in a timely and comprehensive fashion,” said Peter Rombold, attorney for the City of Ogden, which is located on K-18.

“By means of an innovative and open design process, KDOT was able to simultaneously provide greater access, flood control and development to this small Kansas town,” he said.

Funded by \$80.3 million in ARRA money, the project will convert about two miles of K-18 between Fort Riley and Manhattan into a four-lane freeway with multiple bridges, an intersection, flood control measures and rail and utility location. The entire 7.3-mile stretch between the fort and Manhattan is one of the fastest growing corridors in Kansas. Fort Riley anticipates accommodating an additional 16,000 troops and their families in the next few years. Also, the new \$450 million National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan will employ 500 people and 50 additional research-related firms may locate in the area. Manhattan is also home to Kansas State University.

The K-18 project is expected to be completed in late 2012.

NPHQ is a national coalition that combines public highway agencies and private industry expertise to lead the advancement in highway quality, safety and service to the highway users.

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