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KDOT selects 69Express design-build team

TOPEKA – The Kansas Department of Transportation has selected US69 Express Constructors to build 69Express, the state’s first express lanes, on U.S. 69 in Overland Park. This project, part of the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (IKE), will be delivered using design-build, which allows construction to start quickly. Community feedback showed that addressing U.S. 69 congestion and safety issues swiftly was important to area residents and businesses.

US69 Express Constructors was one of two design-build teams that originally submitted proposals in July 2022. Those initial proposals exceeded KDOT’s project estimate. KDOT staff worked with the two teams to modify the request for proposal (RFP) in an attempt to drive down project costs. Revised proposals were submitted Sept. 15. The revised approach will save Kansas taxpayers \$6 million.

“KDOT greatly appreciates the partnership displayed by each of the shortlisted teams,” said KDOT Project Director Steve Rockers. “The RFP revisions were successful in reducing the project costs. Further evaluation by KDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) verified the project costs are reflective of current market conditions. We are confident the winning proposal represents the best value to Kansas.”

US69 Express Constructors is a joint venture between Ames Construction and Emery Sapp & Sons. The team has extensive design-build experience on projects ranging from \$20 million to \$1.2 billion as well as constructing 12 express toll lane projects across the country. Design-build streamlines the project delivery process through a single contract between KDOT and the design-build team. Selection for the \$570 million 69Express design-build project was based on how well the winning team met KDOT's goals of balancing minimizing the impact on travel during construction, reducing cost and delivering the project on schedule.

“KDOT was pleased to receive high-quality proposals from two very strong design-build teams,” Rockers said. “US69 Express Constructors proposed innovative ideas to optimize the design, strategic incorporation of recycled materials and a coordinated approach to constructing the project that will minimize impacts to traffic.”

The 69Express project involves adding a new, tolled lane in each direction from 103rd to 151st Streets in Overland Park, replacement of 50-year-old pavement, construction of 11 noise walls and improving interchanges at 167th Street, Blue Valley Parkway and I-435. The existing four lanes of U.S. 69 will remain as non-tolled, general-purpose lanes.

KDOT plans to break ground on 69Express in November, with substantial construction beginning in 2023. The express lanes are anticipated to open in late 2025 with construction concluding in 2026.

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