

**Wakarusa Drive Extension
Town hall meeting 9/29/2022
Summary of questions received from roundtable discussions**

When will future public meetings be held?

The next public meeting will be scheduled when preliminary design information is available. This will be an opportunity to review design options and discuss concerns. This will also be the time to address specific environmental concerns.

A final public meeting will be held when construction plans are nearly complete, to share project information and discuss the construction schedule.

Is the city partnering with the county to build this road?

This project has been described as a city/county partnership for the last few years; however a formal decision has not been made. If the city participates, the project may include the addition of a shared use path and additional park space. An interlocal agreement will be required to define the partnership.

Could an additional fire station be built instead of extending the new road?

Improved fire and medical response is just one of the major benefits of the proposed road extension. The road will also provide more reliable access for rural residents, reduced traffic on the dam road, and reduced total vehicle use. An additional fire station would be much more expensive than the proposed 1.4 mile road project.

Does existing traffic need this connection?

Yes. Traffic counts in July 2022 show 3,500 vehicles per day travelling on E 1000 Road south of the project area. Roughly half of that traffic is diverting over the dam road; which is not designed to function as an arterial roadway. The rest of that traffic has to travel 3.5 miles east to reach a north/south road.

Will roads in the city be impacted by this project?

Yes. Traffic on Iowa Street will be slightly reduced. Traffic on Wakarusa Drive and Clinton Parkway will increase slightly. Those roads are capable of handling the planned traffic.

Will Wakarusa Drive be improved north of the trafficway?

Yes, the city is funding improvements to Wakarusa Drive from 27th Street to Clinton Parkway. The road will be designed to handle traffic from the expanded south Lawrence Trafficway.

What will the speed limit be on the new road?

County routes are usually posted with a 55 mph speed limit. A 45 mph speed limit may be warranted where the road transitions to the KDOT interchange. This will be evaluated during design.

Will there be traffic lights or roundabouts on the new road?

KDOT plans to build a roundabout at the Wakarusa / K-10 interchange. There will not be any roundabouts or traffic lights on the county route continuing south.

What's the timeline? When will the road be built? How long will it take?

The extension of Wakarusa Drive could be constructed at the same time as the South Lawrence Trafficway expansion. In that case, construction could begin in 2025. Parts of the trafficway project will have to be complete prior to opening the new county route. A completion date will depend on KDOT's specific schedule for the trafficway project.

Is this a KDOT project?

No, this is a local project. The city and county will complete the design, with the assistance of an engineering consultant. The road will be maintained by Douglas County.

Is KDOT providing funding for this road?

No, the proposed Wakarusa Drive extension will be locally funded. Funds have been identified in the city and county Capital Improvement Plans.

Is this road project dependent on KDOT support?

No, this road is part of the local road network and does not require KDOT support or approval.

Is this road project dependent on KDOT completing trafficway improvements?

Yes, KDOT's proposed trafficway expansion will make it possible to extend Wakarusa Drive further south. The Wakarusa Drive project should not precede the trafficway project, because it would add traffic to the area of concern at 27th Street and K-10.

What are KDOT's plans for the trafficway? When will it happen?

KDOT plans to expand the South Lawrence Trafficway to four lanes, similar to the divided highway east of US-59. Information is available at slt-ks.org. The project is scheduled to start construction in 2025. The project will take two to three years to complete.

**When will the 27th / Wakarusa intersection problems be fixed?
When will access to the Youth Sports Complex be improved?**

KDOT's trafficway project will address these concerns. The traffic light at 27th Street will be eliminated and replaced with a grade separated interchange (bridges and ramps). KDOT's project will extend Wakarusa Drive 0.3 miles south, to provide access to highway ramps and the soccer fields. That plan provides the point of connection for the proposed county route continuing south.

Is it possible to reconnect Kasold Drive across the trafficway?

This option has been eliminated due to floodplain concerns. A crossing or interchange at Kasold Drive would require elevated roadways and bridges within the floodways of Yankee Tank Creek and the Wakarusa River. These would be expensive improvements to avoid increased flooding in existing Lawrence neighborhoods. A map of Kansas floodplains is available here:

<https://gis2.kda.ks.gov/gis/ksfloodplain/>