

### Atchison To Apply For KDOT Funding

(KAIR)--The city of Atchison is moving forward with a grant application to the Kansas Department of Transportation that could provide the funds needed to improve a section of US Highway 73.

City Public Works and Utilities Director Justin Pregont says the city has spent a few years working with KDOT on the highway, as well as US Highway 59. He says that “over the past five years, the city of Atchison has invested a lot of money into what are called city connected link highways. Those are KDOT highways that exist in our city limits. We have about twenty three miles of those, and KDOT offers some partnership programs to help fund highway maintenance through that. So we have spent city out of pocket money...an average of about \$250,000 a year doing highway maintenance projects.”

Pregont came before City Commissioners Monday to ask for authorization for a new source of funds from KDOT. He says the new source “makes available a larger pot of money with less match from the city, but you have to convince them that it's a geometric improvement and not just a resurfacing project. We have done substantial work on US 73 doing geotechnical analysis and looking at what is going on through there, and the problem is that there is a lot of water that sits there. This section of highway badly needs an underdrain installed. The problem is, with funding tightening up on KDOT's end, funds are certainly tight in our CIP...a lot of competing priorities, how do we scope that project together?”

Pregont adds that officials will also look at the possibility of informing KDOT that the city will no longer be responsible for the upkeep of those highways.

Commissioners voted 5-0 to approve the application submission.

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