RESOLUTION NO. 8313

A RESOLUTION introduced by Councilmember Karen Hiller, stating the City of Topeka’s priorities and preferences for the realignment and replacement of the Polk-Quincy Viaduct.

WHEREAS, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) has requested that the Topeka City Council (Council) advise KDOT of its priorities and preferences for the realignment and replacement of the Polk-Quincy Viaduct (Viaduct); and

WHEREAS, the Council, after consideration of the valuable input provided by its citizens, has determined its priorities and now offers its recommendations to KDOT.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TOPEKA, KANSAS, that the following issues are priorities for the realignment and replacement of the Viaduct:

- Improved safety on the curve;
- At standard or better safety and traffic flow at all exits;
- No less convenient access or egress from point of origin or to destination than what is currently in place;
- Unobstructed view under the Viaduct between Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard, allowing for visual connection for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to the north and for appropriate development of the space under the Viaduct;
- Excellent access from the Interstate to 6th Avenue for access to Downtown and East Topeka;
- Excellent access from the Interstate to both Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard for access to North Topeka;
- Best possible access to and from residential neighborhoods to the west;
• Minimize width of the Viaduct;

• Minimize need for acquisition of private property for right-of-way;

• Visual opportunities to see Downtown with sufficient time to choose a Downtown exit when approaching from the east or from the west;

• Establish excellent street-level connectivity directly east, west and south from the Riverfront area;

• Visual opportunities from the Viaduct to see the Riverfront area and North Topeka;

• Excellent street-level connectivity to Downtown, Kansas Avenue, Capitol, workplaces, parking and immediately adjacent areas;

• Excellent street-level connectivity for trucks to the industrial area;

• Minimal disruption to views and traffic flows north and south on Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue; and

• Best possible minimizing of disruption during construction.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, taking these priorities into consideration, that the Council recommends Council Version Annotated, as adopted by reference herein, with the provisos below, to KDOT.

Details of signing, signalization, landscaping of connector roads and plans for connectivity under the Viaduct are critically important. The City of Topeka urges consideration of the input and discussions to date.

During the citizen input process, an understanding with the engineers was reached that the new bridge should be iconic and beautiful and the connector roads would be landscaped parkways. This is critically important to the City of Topeka.
Business and citizen groups have said they would like to retain an advisory role through the next and all subsequent phases of design and construction, including signage decisions. We urge KDOT to establish such a role formally.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges KDOT to investigate the following elements:

Establish a final system of three off-ramps and two on-ramps going both east and west. Key participating groups have requested the elimination of what is now shown as a third on-ramp east from 6th Avenue in order to allow creation of a third off-ramp that would deliver vehicles to Monroe somewhere between 8th and 10th Streets, as shown in the attached map Council Version Annotated. The City of Topeka supports that change and further requests that this issue be approached as a priority;

Have the terms “Downtown” and “6th Avenue” included and prominent in signage from the east and the west and for all 6th Avenue exits;

Leave access at 1st Street and Topeka Boulevard open for traffic from the west if at all possible;

Allow for bicycle/pedestrian access to Topeka Boulevard and the Riverfront without diversion to 3rd Street if at all possible; and

Consider staging the process in two phases. If full development of the connector streets and immediate safety features such as the widening of the 1st Street exit and safety signalization at the 3rd Street on-ramp could happen in an early phase, the City of Topeka sees that as a benefit to KDOT as well as the City of Topeka.
ADOPTED and APPROVED by the City Council February 22, 2011.

CITY OF TOPEKA, KANSAS

No Signature by the Mayor
William W. Bunten, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Brenda Younger, City Clerk

This resolution shall take effect without the signature of the Mayor.