

Meet Our New Local Field Liaison, Clark Rusco

Clark Rusco is Kansas LTAP's first Local Field Liaison. He is a licensed engineer and land surveyor, with more than 30 years of experience working with KDOT and FHWA.



After graduating from K State, Clark started his career at KDOT in Emporia, then joined the rotational training program where he got a variety of experience in construction engineering, surveying, and road design. From there he went to KDOT headquarters in Topeka for several years, where he was involved in bridge design. "We worked on the bridge design squad that conducted the load ratings for the bridges on the State and Federal routes in Kansas," Clark said. "This was in the era of punch cards and slide rules, before there were personal computers."

From there, Clark joined public works at Fort Riley and was later transferred to the Corps of Engineers in Virginia to do military work for Saudi Arabia. "Saudi was a unique experience," he said. "It was just starting to modernize in the late 1970s."

Eventually Clark and his wife returned to their hometown of Great Bend, where Clark was City Engineer for more than a decade. He served as the Barton County Engineer for another decade and more, before retiring in 2016.

As Barton County Engineer in 2015, Clark volunteered as a member of the Kansas County Highway Association (KCHA) to update KDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. He served as a member of the Local Roads Team for the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. He recalls that crash rates on state and federal routes were coming down with improvements made to those routes over the years. However, local roads crash rates were remaining about the same. FHWA hosted several peer exchanges to bring states together to discuss strategies to reduce crashes on local roads. "Some of the strategies we considered were systemic improvements, countywide safety plans and field liaison programs," Clark said.

“I’ve had 30-plus years of working with KDOT and FHWA,” Clark said. “KDOT’s Bureau of Local Projects has several grant programs that can be used to lower crash rates on local roads. In the last thirty years, I’ve used most of these programs.”

As Local Field Liaison, Clark will work with county and city public works agencies in Kansas, identifying low cost safety improvements, as well as providing guidance in applying for funding for safety improvements, practical road safety assessments, and assistance in the implementation of local road safety plans. Clark will be answering questions, distributing road safety materials to local agencies, and providing information on Kansas LTAP resources and training available to local agencies.

“I know I’ll enjoy visiting with public works agencies in Kansas,” Clark said. “We’ll have a lot of similar stories to talk about.”

Clark and his wife, Donna, have two boys and three grandchildren, and they all live in Emporia.

Kansas LTAP plans to hire two more Local Field Liaisons this year, to increase the local outreach and one-on-one communications with our members across the state. You can reach Clark at (620) 282-1717 or KSLTAPClark@gmail.com.

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