

*Kansas*  
LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



**Kansas Department of Transportation  
December 2002**

STATE OF KANSAS

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E. Dean Carlson  
Secretary of Transportation

Bill Graves  
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December 2002

Dear Transportation Customer:

This Kansas Long-Range Transportation Plan has been developed to guide future transportation program development in Kansas and to meet the requirements of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). The Plan is a broad-based policy document, which identifies important transportation trends and issues and provides direction for future programs and actions.

I am pleased to adopt this Kansas Long-Range Transportation Plan. It represents a significant effort to shape the future of transportation in Kansas and is the result of considerable research and outreach.

I want to thank those citizens, as well as business and government leaders, whose valuable input contributed greatly to this Plan. If you have questions about the information contained in this report, please contact the Kansas Department of Transportation's Division of Planning and Development at (785) 296-2252.

Sincerely,



E. Dean Carlson  
Secretary of Transportation

## Executive Summary

This Kansas Long-Range Transportation Plan is a broad-based policy document that serves as a reference for the transportation planning process and will guide future transportation program development in Kansas. The Plan was developed to guide policy over a 20-year planning horizon. It encompasses all modes of transportation in Kansas and is the result of significant coordination with local, state, and federal agencies and the Indian Nations of Kansas. The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) continually and actively seeks input on transportation issues from the public and other stakeholders. This Plan is the result of several extensive public involvement initiatives: External Customer Surveys completed in 1997 and 2000, Road Rallies, and the Transportation 2000 Study Group formed by Governor Graves.

In addition, considerable effort has been made to reach out to governmental agencies and other major stakeholders of the transportation network to gain their input. Meetings were held with partnering state agencies, several advocacy groups, the five Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and the four Indian Nations in Kansas.

This Plan reviews trends in demographics, travel, and transportation funding to help provide a vision for transportation in Kansas. The aging population will bring new challenges to the transportation field, such as providing services that allow older Kansans to maintain their mobility, and roadway enhancements that increase safety. The population shift from rural to urban areas continues, reducing rural tax bases and in turn impacting rural counties' abilities to maintain secondary roads that are often critical for agricultural transport and access to the state highway system. Travel trends continue to show an increase in the number of registered cars, licensed drivers and vehicle miles traveled. Although carpooling and transit do offer the opportunity to reduce the number of vehicles on the road system, they only represent 11% of commuter trips in Kansas. Increased use of alternative fuels and more fuel-efficient vehicles may impact transportation funding in the future, as a large portion of the current funding depends on traditional fuel taxes and user fees. KDOT will need to monitor this funding trend and may have to seek out other funding sources.

A review of the conditions of Kansas roads, streets, and highways shows that transportation needs will still exist at the completion of the Comprehensive Transportation Program (CTP). Surveys of Kansans continually rank the preservation of our existing road system as a high priority for the State. A long-term commitment will be required to ensure that existing roads are maintained properly in addition to any new road construction that may be required.

Kansas and its neighboring states have several corridors that are experiencing growth in both commercial truck and passenger travel. As this growth continues, maintaining adequate capacity on the highway system, within and across state borders, will become increasingly important. Long-range highway system planning can help KDOT prepare for expected future improvements along identified corridors. In addition, improving the coordination between land use and transportation will help to preserve the

system. Corridor preservation, corridor management and access control offer opportunities to better integrate land use and transportation for the betterment of both the state and local transportation systems.

In addition to the road and highway network, several other modes of transportation significantly contribute to the overall transportation system. Aviation plays a critical role in the Kansas economy, linking Kansas to our increasingly global economy. Airports are also important to rural Kansas providing agricultural, and scheduled and emergency medical services. Walking and bicycling have been gaining popularity as a form of exercise and transportation, especially in urban areas. Bicycle paths and routes that are well connected to activity centers and integrated within the road system provide an alternative to vehicular trips. Rail transportation is an integral part of the transportation system. Freight travel minimizes the effects of truck traffic on the state highway system and county roads, and it helps with capacity issues. Short-line railroads are particularly important to rural areas where farmers depend on them to haul grain. Public transportation is also an important transportation service. Currently, public transportation programs are provided in 93 of the 105 Kansas counties. Transit will become increasingly important in the future as the population ages and driving is no longer an option for more citizens. In rural areas, where the median age is often older, public transportation provides the means for citizens to get to medical appointments, reach meal sites, and remain self-sufficient.

There are also several other factors that are important to consider in the field of transportation. One of KDOT's top priorities is the safety of the traveling public. Various educational campaigns, such as "Kansas Driving: Safe. Not Sorry", have proven to be effective in reducing crashes and their impacts. KDOT is and will remain committed to improving road safety. KDOT conducts Road Safety Audits to identify locations that may require road safety improvements.

In emergencies, KDOT strives to maintain the integrity and usefulness of the transportation system, to restore traffic movement and protect citizens' health and safety. KDOT deals regularly with emergencies like traffic accidents, flooding, debris removal, blizzard conditions, and damage assessment. In the wake of events on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the ability to respond quickly and effectively to security and emergency incidents has become increasingly important. Advances in technology can serve to aid response times and facilitate information sharing that can be critical to effectively addressing security concerns. The enhancement of the 800 MHz system in Kansas is one example of that potential.

The recommendations contained within the Plan reflect the broad policy direction KDOT should take over the next 20 years. They are based on comments received from transportation users and stakeholders. In some cases, they point out activities that are currently underway and should be continued. In others, they call for taking steps to prepare for emerging areas of concern.

# Kansas Long-Range Transportation Plan

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## **Chapter 1**

# **The Long-Range Plan and KDOT Decision Making**

# The Long-Range Plan and KDOT Decision Making

## Purpose and Role of the Long-Range Transportation Plan

This Long-Range Transportation Plan has been developed to guide transportation program development in Kansas through the year 2025 and to meet the requirements of the federal Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). The Plan is a broad-based policy document that identifies important transportation-related trends and issues and provides direction for future programs and actions. It also provides valuable guidance for cooperating and coordinating with other state agencies, local officials, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Indian Nations, and federal agencies with responsibility for roads and other transportation-related facilities in the State. Federal legislation dictates that the Plan address seven factors as listed in Appendix A.

KDOT utilizes this Plan in achieving its mission “to provide a statewide transportation system to meet the needs of Kansas.”<sup>1</sup> This mission is important to the overall development and economic health of the State, because the activities of the Department affect every citizen, business, and visitor who enters Kansas. Some of our responsibilities are to:

- perform necessary road and bridge maintenance activities;
- determine project scope, design, and construct state and local improvement projects;
- identify and study future highway traffic needs through data collection and evaluations across the state;
- administer federal funding, contract compliance, and inspection of material and labor;
- develop innovative materials through extensive research to lengthen the life span of roadways;
- provide resources to assist aviation, public transit, rail, and local partnership improvement activities.

There are several policy and programming tools that KDOT relies on in order to meet these responsibilities. The Strategic Management Plan is one tool that serves as a guide for the agency. Within this plan, strategic goals have been developed to close the gap between where we are and where we want to be within selected priority performance areas. KDOT’s Strategic Goals are:

- ❑ **Program Delivery-** KDOT will successfully complete the Comprehensive Transportation Program on time and within budget.
- ❑ **Organizational Improvement-** KDOT will continually improve as an organization.
- ❑ **External Relationships-** KDOT will build relationships with all of its non-governmental external customers and partners.
- ❑ **Workforce-** KDOT will successfully maximize the effectiveness of its workforce.
- ❑ **Technology-** KDOT will optimize its use of technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department’s operations.
- ❑ **Intergovernmental Relations-** KDOT will build on its relationship with all of its intergovernmental customers and partners.<sup>2</sup>



The Long-Range Transportation Plan provides guidance for program development by identifying areas where additional emphasis is needed. This may lead to new programs, or in elimination or modification of existing ones. This guidance will also be considered when determining the allocation of funds to various transportation programs.

While the Plan provides policy direction for transportation programs, actual project selection is based on a mixture of needs criteria and local competitions. The project selection processes reflect the institutional values and needs identified in the Strategic Management and Long-Range Plans. Specific projects are identified in the Comprehensive Transportation Program (CTP), which provides funding over a ten-year period ending in July 2009. This whole process is cyclical as improvements to the transportation system are evaluated against new and existing needs together with public input to determine if changes to overall policy are needed.

KDOT approaches its responsibility for protecting and maintaining the state’s investment in intermodal transportation systems by providing responsive and professional services to the users of these systems. We acknowledge our reliance on our customers for resources and guidance, and strive to be forward-looking and proactive while maintaining an open and ethical attitude in addressing our customer-driven objectives.

## Stakeholder/Public Input

KDOT continually and actively seeks input on transportation issues from the public and other stakeholders. Several sources of information that were relied upon in the development of the Long-Range Plan are described below.

### External Customer Survey

KDOT conducted External Customer Surveys in 1997 and 2000, with the plan to repeat on a three-year cycle. The purpose of the surveys was to provide KDOT with information regarding how well the agency is meeting the transportation needs of Kansas residents. The 2000 survey was administered by phone to a random and statistically valid sample of 1,848 Kansas residents. Based on the results of the latest survey, 98 percent of residents think KDOT is fulfilling its mission.

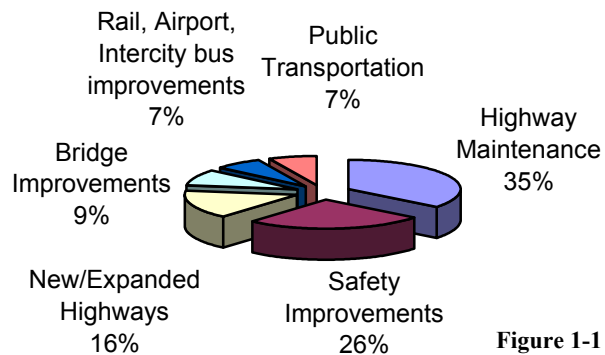


Figure 1-1

Issues of greatest concern included the

width of shoulders, number of paved shoulders and smoothness of the roadway. The survey showed that KDOT is exceeding expectations on the condition of bridges, signing, intersection visibility and the ease of getting on and off the system. Figure 1-1 depicts how respondents would divide funding among various transportation needs, providing insight into public priorities. An executive summary of the survey results may be found in Appendix B.

## **Road Rallies**

In 2001, KDOT conducted Road Rallies to gain insight into how the public perceives the condition of Kansas roads. Randomly selected citizens were invited to participate in the rallies. Three sessions were held in each of KDOT's six districts, with about 30 people participating in each session. Within each District, vans were used to tour 13 or 14 road sections. Participants were asked to rate these sections on various characteristics. Results showed that for the Interstate and four-lane facilities the most important feature was physical condition. On two-lane roads, lane width and shoulder width were the predominant characteristics of concern. More detailed results are available in Appendix C.

## **Transportation 2000 Study Group**

In 1998, Governor Graves formed the Transportation 2000 Study Group, with the charge of "seeking the input, advice, and dreams of Kansas citizens, communities, regions, and advocacy groups." Based on the comments received at twelve public hearings around the state, the study group assessed the progress of the previous transportation program and created a priority needs assessment for a future program. Several conclusions were drawn by the Study Group, including:

- Kansas needs a new transportation program
- Existing resources will not be adequate
- All modes of transportation should be funded
- Local governments will require additional resources as well

The findings of the Study Group were forwarded to Governor Graves for his consideration. The report was influential in the Governor's proposal for a Comprehensive Transportation Program (CTP). Legislative deliberation regarding the CTP continued throughout the 1999 Legislative session. As a result, the CTP was enacted in May 1999, which increased resources for transportation by \$2.66 billion over the Fiscal Years (FY) 2000 – 2009 time period.

## **Meetings with other Stakeholders**

For the express purpose of seeking input for the Long-Range Plan, meetings were held with all interested state agencies, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Indian Nations located in the state, and transportation advocacy groups. City and County

officials were invited to comment through the Kansas Association of Counties and the League of Kansas Municipalities. A complete list of comments from the meetings may be viewed in Appendix D.

### **Long-Range Plan Web Site**

KDOT has developed a website on its main web portal to inform the public and also to solicit comments regarding transportation issues in Kansas. It contains information about the previous plan, the update process, and a comment form by which users can provide input. The web address is

<http://kdot1.ksdot.org/public/kdot/burtransplan/kstranplan/index.html>

*“The ultimate goal of public involvement is to build and sustain relationships with citizens, business people, legislators and other government agencies.” – KDOT Public Involvement Plan*

This Long-Range Plan serves to encompass the ideas, concerns and desires of the public and other stakeholders as presented to KDOT through these public involvement efforts. Major themes expressed were incorporated into the Plan and some have been presented as recommendations for possible future action.