

Executive Summary

The Kansas Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is an evaluation of the current status and future needs of all modes of the Kansas transportation system, including state highways and the local road network, transit, rail, aviation, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This plan complies with federal legislation enacted in 2005 titled “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users.” It updates two previous long-range plans developed by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) in 1995 and 2001.

The drafting of this plan is timely, given that the state’s Comprehensive Transportation Program, or CTP, expires in 2009. It’s important to understand that while this LRTP does not set forth a new transportation funding proposal, it does provide a framework for future discussions about a new transportation program.

The LRTP sets forth a practical vision of how to maintain and improve the state’s transportation system between now and 2030. It is based on a year-long dialogue with more than 120 Kan-

sans representing many different groups that share a common interest in transportation, including: government officials, both elected and professional staff; the Indian Nations; economic development interests and private businesses; transportation planners; and those who provide transportation services. These stakeholders have made recommendations about what KDOT and its partners need to do to assure that transportation meets the needs of Kansas citizens and businesses in the future.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The strong opinions stakeholders voiced about the state’s transportation system and its future had three themes.

Preserve the transportation system

In the last two decades, Kansas has upgraded its transportation network. Accomplishments include smoother roads and safer bridges, modern highways, expanded transit service, new trails for bicyclists and pedestrians, improved rail lines and safer airports. KDOT must protect the state’s investment in its transportation infrastructure.



Make travel safer

The state's highway fatal crash rate is falling but is nevertheless persistently higher than the national rate. Some 2,331 people lost their lives on Kansas roads in the last five years. KDOT must work with stakeholders and the public to make state highways and local roads safer and to diligently promote safe driving.

Support economic growth

Transportation often supports economic opportunities that benefit all Kansans. Windows of opportunity may open and close rapidly, however. If the Kansas economy is to grow, our approach to transportation must be more flexible and responsive, and we must be ready to make strategic investment choices among various transportation modes – choices that ensure wise use of limited resources.

OVERARCHING THEMES

Two points were raised in nearly every discussion during the development of the LRTP: the gap between future transportation needs and projected revenues and the need for KDOT to develop a more strategic, flexible and responsive approach to decision-making. These points, drove discussion, and are central to the recommendations presented at the end of this summary.

Projected revenues fall short of future transportation needs

Transportation in Kansas has been well funded over the past 20 years. As a consequence, the state's highway system is in good condition and the other modal transportation networks, including aviation, rail, transit and bike and pedestrian trails, are operating moderately well. However, when needs are projected forward, it becomes clear that, absent some action, the future poses a good many challenges.

As a part of the long-range planning process, KDOT conducted a comprehensive technical analysis, and then, with the help of local partners, developed information about the transportation needs in Kansas. As shown in Figure EX-1 on the next page, the cost of the next 20 years of transportation needs was calculated and then averaged to arrive at an annual estimate of \$2.9 billion dollars a year (in 2006 dollars) to address all needs. About \$1.5 billion of that need is for state highways; the remainder is for local roadways and other modes of transportation. In contrast, it is projected that Kansas will take in about \$1.4 billion a year (in 2006 dollars) in state, federal and local revenues to fund transportation.

Kansas would need to invest an additional \$1.5 billion annually over projected revenues to meet estimated transportation needs.

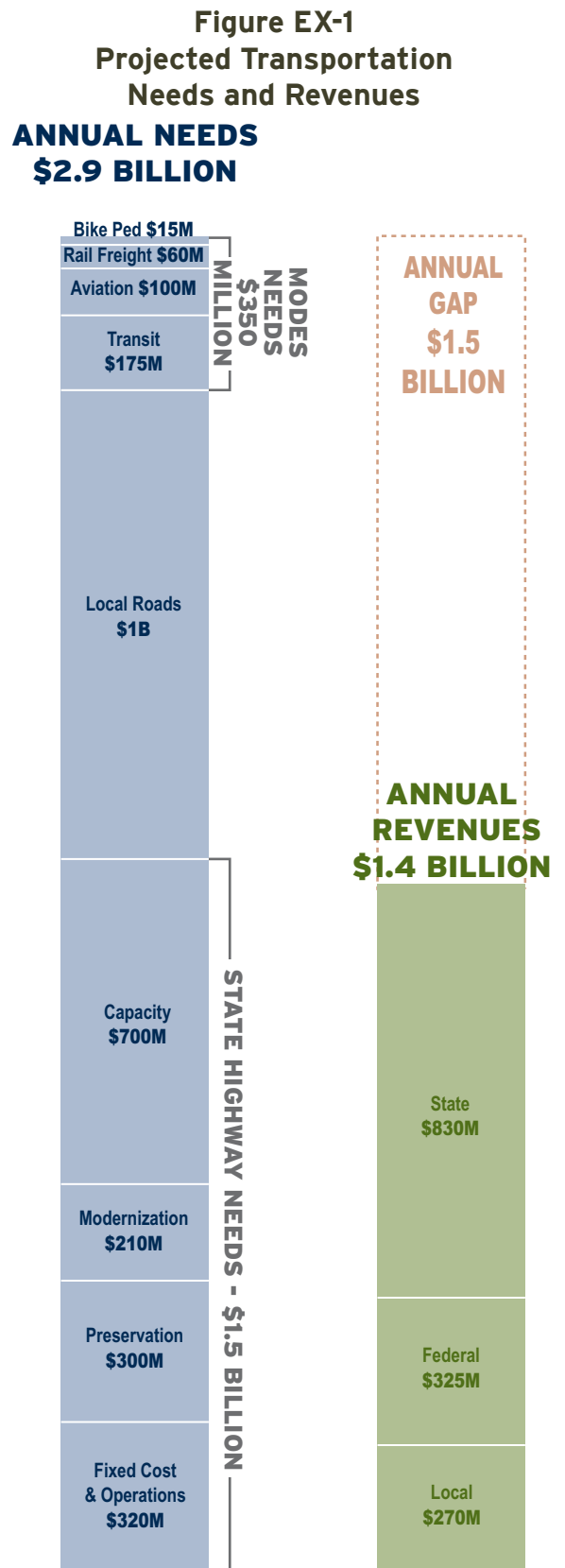
The extent to which the estimated \$1.5 billion annual funding gap can be closed and should be

closed is not yet known. High levels of consultation and informed policy discussions are needed among stakeholders to establish relative priorities and to set desired performance levels for each transportation component.

More flexible and responsive approach to decision-making, for more strategic investments

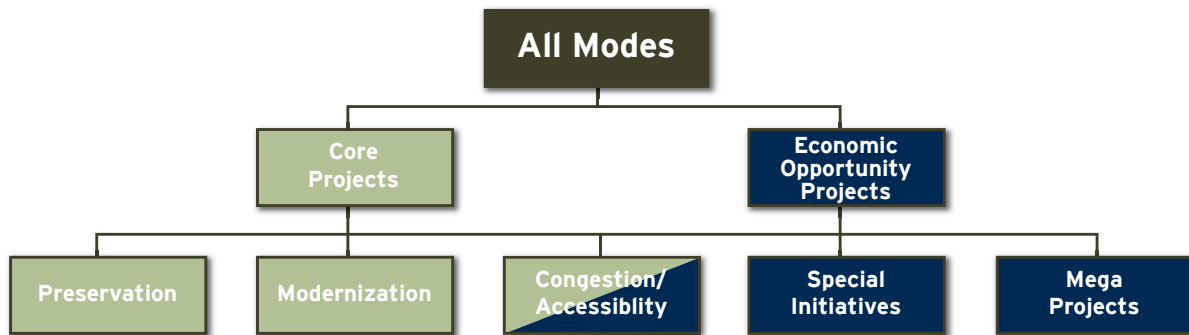
Stakeholders agreed that an important function of the Kansas transportation system is to support the Kansas economy. Because of changes in the way that business is conducted and decisions are reached in a globalized economy, significant flexibility will be required by transportation planners and stakeholders in the years ahead. KDOT will need to select projects more frequently – as needs arise – and more stakeholders will need to be involved in that selection. This LRTP recommends a two-pronged approach as shown in Figure EX-2 on the following page to increase flexibility, simplify the programming process and ensure that all transportation modes are taken into account.

This increased flexibility means that KDOT must become more accountable and its decision-making more transparent. Accountability and transparency are achieved when stakeholders are involved in the decision-making and understand it better. This LRTP recommends two mechanisms to support increased flexibility: expanded use of local consultation and creation of a Kansas Transportation Advisory Panel.





**Figure EX-2
Recommended Programming Approach**



Responsiveness and flexibility are required for more strategic investment of the transportation dollars available to Kansas. It is strategic to set priorities based on preservation needs and economic opportunities. It is strategic to consider the many modes available to meet transportation needs. It is strategic to view transportation from a comprehensive, statewide perspective that requires more stakeholder input than in the past.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the LRTP recommendations were based on the points above. The recommendations emerged from a series of more than 40 stakeholder meetings held across the state and technical analysis by KDOT. In fact, more than 400 stakeholders attended recommendations review meetings, and 300 of them provided written comments. Eighty percent supported or strongly supported all but one of the major recommendations presented in the meetings. That recommendation, relating to bike and pedestrian trails, was supported by 58 percent. The following table summarizes key recommendations.

Table EX-1 Summary of LRTP Recommendations

CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
State Highways	
Most Kansas pavement and bridges are in good condition. Maintaining that quality requires on-going investment that grows at the rate of inflation.	KDOT should make maintenance of pavement and bridges a top priority.
Kansas relies on uniform pavement smoothness targets for all non-Interstate routes regardless of their usage level.	KDOT and stakeholders should reexamine pavement smoothness targets by route class.
Current design standards can be a barrier to implementing low cost designs that meet stakeholder needs.	KDOT should continue to develop and apply "practical improvement" standards.
Congestion is growing on some urban and rural portions of the highway network.	KDOT should expand the system strategically, keeping budget limitations in mind. It should use alternatives to adding capacity, including expanded use of Intelligent Transportation Systems.
Local Roadways	
Many cities and counties lack the financial and staff resources to maintain or improve their transportation systems.	The state will continue to explore opportunities to foster collaboration and improve efficiency through efforts such as the Kansas Collaborative.
Local governments sometimes have problems effectively using Federal aid, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They don't have enough funds to meet required match. • Funding amounts aren't sufficient to pay for critical projects. • They can lose federal funding if project schedules slip (due to either local funding constraints or project delivery delays). 	KDOT should make federal funding easier for local governments to use. Strategies could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging local governments to use State Transportation Revolving Fund loans to address matching fund shortfalls; and • Allowing local governments to "pool" or swap federal funding.
Many local governments lack the revenues to adequately maintain their roadway infrastructure.	Increase funding for local roads and bridges.
Multi-modal Planning	
Planning for and decisions about non-roadway modes are often made independent of roadways and each other.	KDOT should lead public-and private-sector partners in a planning process that results in the seamless integration of transportation modes.



CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
Public Transit	
<p>Future statewide transit needs are poorly understood, particularly in light of urbanization and population aging trends.</p> <p>The large number of small transit providers leads to both a patchwork of transit services across the state and inefficiencies in service delivery.</p>	<p>KDOT and stakeholders should develop a comprehensive transit plan for determining statewide transit needs, develop strategies to meet those needs, and support more efficient, effective transit programs.</p> <p>KDOT should promote alternatives to single-passenger driving.</p>
<p>The current formula for allocating state transit funding is solely based on population, while other factors can have an equal or greater impact on system needs.</p>	<p>KDOT should assess state formulas for distributing transit funds and consider additional factors such as ridership.</p>
Aviation	
<p>Although there are hundreds of Kansas airports and landing strips, there is no strategic aviation network to address increased levels of demand.</p>	<p>KDOT should develop a statewide aviation system plan to determine needs and establish an airport ranking system to help prioritize aviation investments.</p>
<p>Some Kansas communities lack adequate access to all-weather air ambulance service.</p>	<p>Make all-weather access to air ambulance service available to every Kansan.</p>
<p>Federal and state funds cannot be used at small airports for "vertical improvements" - facilities like hangars - that may help an airport develop self-sustaining revenues that can pay for ongoing airport infrastructure maintenance.</p>	<p>KDOT should promote small airport sustainability by expanding the Kansas Aviation Improvement Program to make more project types eligible for funding.</p>
Freight/Rail	
<p>Freight movements in Kansas are expected to grow dramatically, but the implications of freight growth in are poorly understood.</p>	<p>KDOT should develop a statewide freight plan that assesses freight-related challenges and investment needs.</p>
<p>Private railroad interests sometimes don't mesh with the concerns of local and state governments, making coordination and communication difficult.</p>	<p>Improve communication between rail lines and government entities. KDOT should provide a central point of contact that local governments and private-sector partners can work with to identify rail issues and develop strategies for addressing them.</p>
<p>Increased railroad traffic is leading to growing safety and delay issues associated with at-grade railroad crossings.</p>	<p>KDOT and stakeholders should expand efforts to mitigate road-rail crossing problems.</p>

CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
Bike/Pedestrian	
Many state highways are not bike/pedestrian-friendly facilities.	KDOT should accommodate bicyclists and walkers in the planning and design of transportation projects and promote bike/pedestrian safety.
General Transportation Funding	
Current resources fall short of meeting needs for all transportation modes and purposes.	Increase overall funding for transportation.
Few, if any, potential new transportation funding mechanisms offer the stability and level of funding as do the existing core sources -- motor fuels taxes, registration fees and sales taxes.	In the near term, continue to rely on core funding as the foundation for addressing statewide transportation investment needs.
Unless rates are continuously adjusted, motor fuels taxes lose purchasing power over time.	Protect revenues from inflation.
KDOT can use tools like revolving loan funds to encourage more local and private sector investment in transportation.	Make local/private sector transportation investment easier.
On selected routes, tolling and/or public/private partnerships may provide practical alternatives to traditional funding for delivering improvements at lower public cost and more quickly.	Consider additional tolling and use of local and private partnerships.
Funding megaprojects will create the kind of challenges that require partnering between state and local government, as well as the private sector.	Promote partnerships.
For some projects, it makes sense to borrow money and complete them sooner.	Use bonding to solve problems sooner. KDOT should be empowered to issue bonds up to a specified debt ceiling based on a prudent ratio of annual debt service to overall revenues.



CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p align="center">Align Transportation to Better Support the Kansas Economy</p>	
<p>The rigidity of the current programming process can hinder the state’s ability to address emerging opportunities, limit ongoing public dialogue about new priorities and restrict consideration of project economic benefits.</p>	<p>Create a more flexible and responsive structure for transportation programming.</p>
<p>A new programming process will require KDOT to be more accountable and responsive at regional and grassroots levels. Also, recent state experience indicates that expanded use of local consultation is important to stakeholders.</p>	<p>KDOT should expand use of the “Local Consultation” process.</p>
<p>Particularly with a more flexible programming process, the KDOT Secretary will benefit from broader multi-modal advice and economic perspectives.</p>	<p>Create the Kansas Transportation Advisory Panel.</p>
<p>Funding decisions require too much lead time, and projects are not always focused on creating high-quality jobs and economic growth.</p>	<p>Refocus KDOT’s existing Economic Development Program.</p>
<p align="center">Environmental Sustainability</p>	
<p>Transportation affects the human and natural environment in many ways. While KDOT currently meets or exceeds all applicable and state regulations, a comprehensive environmental policy is not in place.</p>	<p>KDOT should work to develop a clear and comprehensive environmental policy. It should address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Agency Operations - materials, equipment, fuels, and practices, b. Projects - placement, design scale, and relationship to the environment, and c. Systems - relative roles, priorities, and the integration of different transportation systems to provide the best performance and promotion of environmental sustainability.