

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force



Transportation investments are not just a series of highway, transit, rail or aviation projects. Rather, they collectively are designed to get people where they need to go and move goods to generate economic growth.

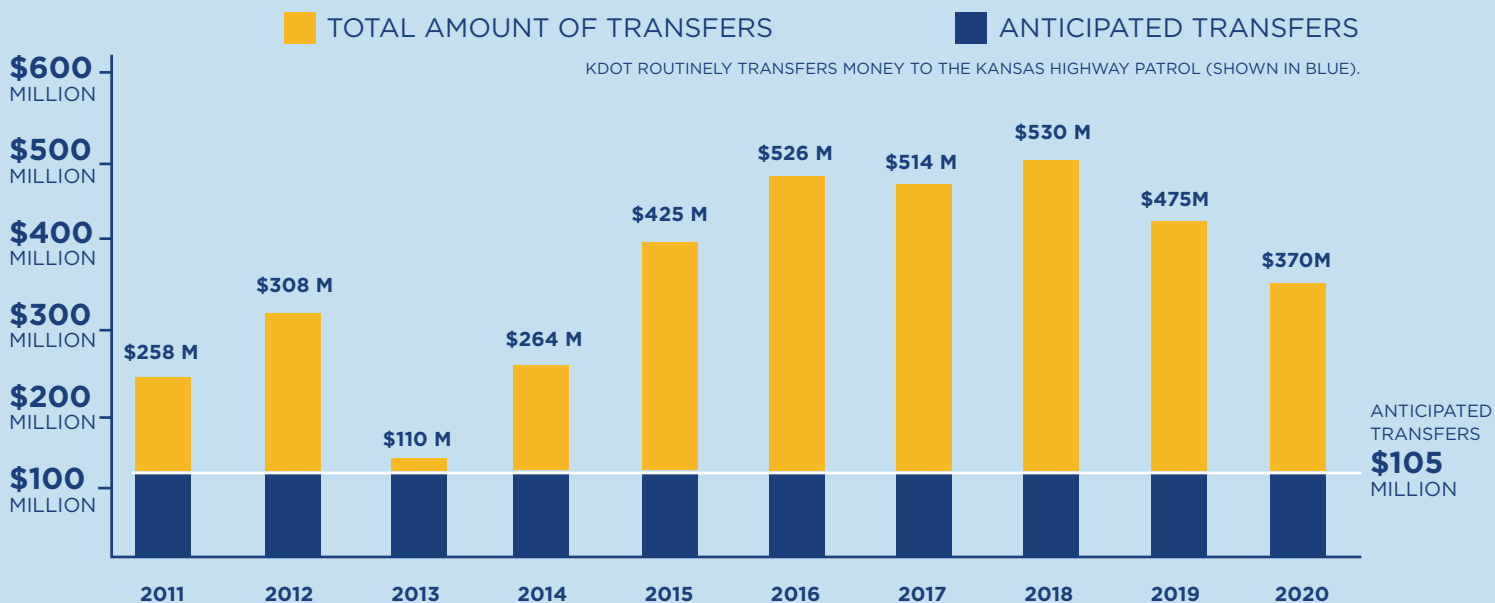
The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) is responsible for delivering these investments. That means making sure that our infrastructure is safe, ensuring that all citizens have mobility options and our investments are creating jobs across Kansas. Investments are about the future. Thus, KDOT must not only ensure people and goods are getting where they need to go today, but also plan for where they're going to want to go tomorrow.

Understanding the importance of preparing for the future, the Kansas Legislature initiated the Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force, which was comprised of 35 members from across the state and led by Senator Carolyn McGinn and Representative Richard Proehl. From August to November 2018, the task force convened 12 meetings to review and evaluate the status of the transportation system, including nine regional meetings where stakeholders provided input directly to the task force. The following are highlights of the key findings and strategies recommended by the task force.



What we learned:

Since 2010, approximately \$2 billion has been removed from the State Highway Fund to help fund other (non-transportation) state services.



★ Our infrastructure is growing older and our future maintenance needs are increasing.

Because of budget reallocations, KDOT has performed lighter preservation actions on the surface of roadways. These actions do not address the more expensive subsurface needs of the pavement which help extend the service life of the highway. The result has been a decline in the overall health of our highway system.

★ Projects that modernize infrastructure and address traffic congestion have been delayed.

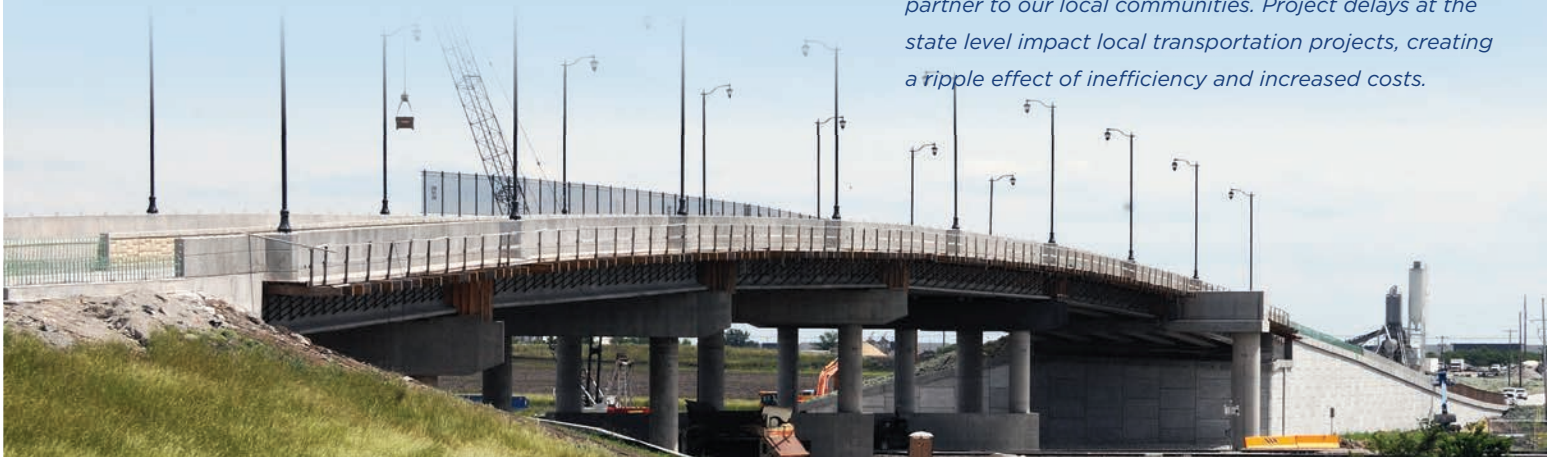
There are 21 T-WORKS modernization and expansion highway projects that have been delayed indefinitely due to budget cuts. These projects were selected to improve safety and to generate economic growth for communities.

★ Reduced funding limits opportunities to generate economic growth.

A lack of stable revenue has limited KDOT's ability to begin planning and developing projects that will address and advance emerging economic opportunities.

★ Returning to stable funding will improve KDOT's ability to deliver efficient transportation solutions alongside its community partners.

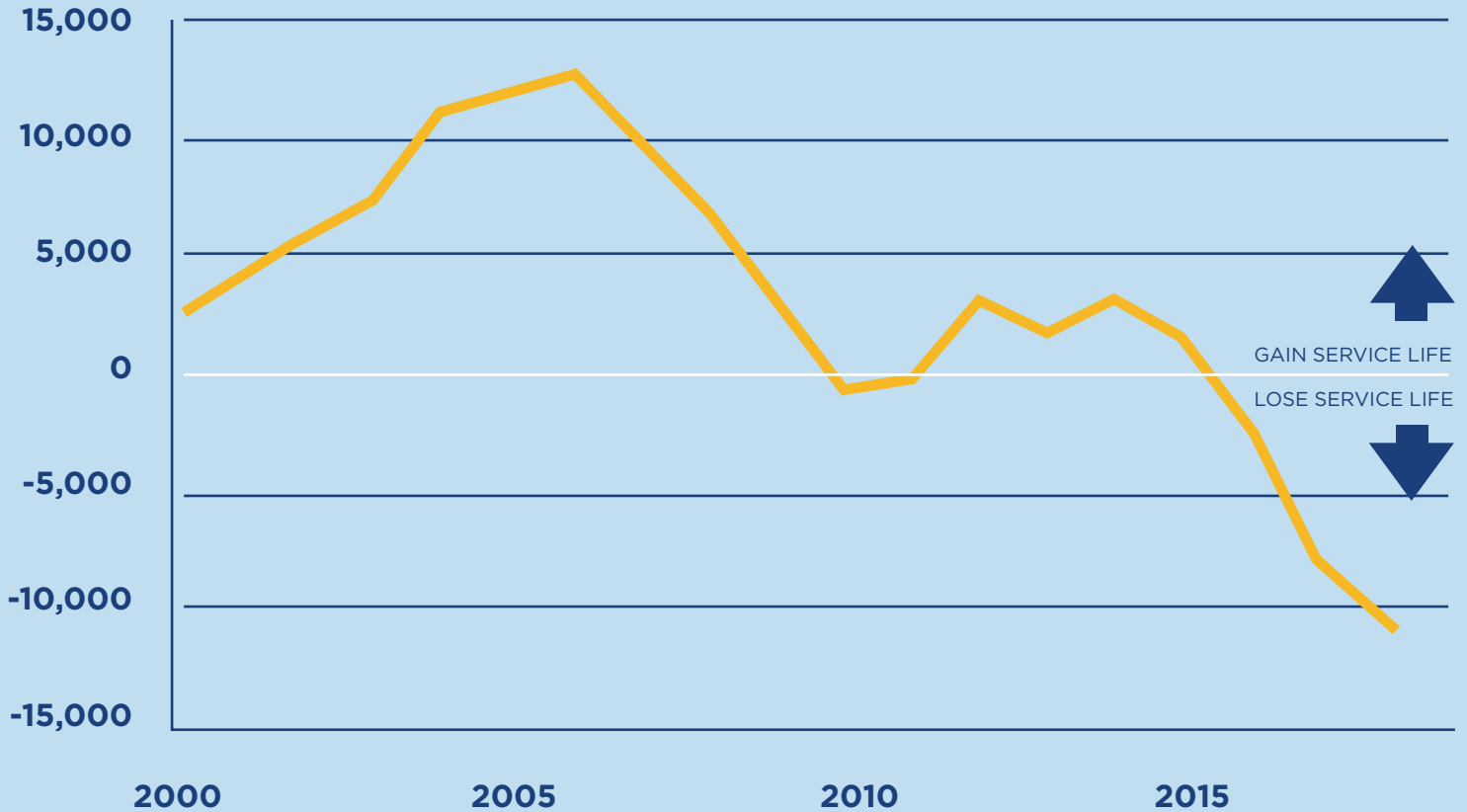
In a single year, more than half a billion dollars was transferred out of KDOT's budget, over \$2 billion since 2011. Substantial reductions in available funds have caused project delays and reduced scopes, costing taxpayers more in the long-run. Without consistent and reliable funding, it is difficult for KDOT to be a good partner to our local communities. Project delays at the state level impact local transportation projects, creating a ripple effect of inefficiency and increased costs.



The Health of Kansas' Highway System is Declining

Reductions in funding are having a significant impact on the state's transportation network. Taxpayers notice the decline in condition. Beyond the visible wear and tear, often a larger issue exists below the surface.

Pavement Service Life in Mile Years:



Trouble below the surface:



At left is a stretch of U.S. 83 in Haskell County where the pavement surface seems smooth and in good condition.

However, upon inspection, pavement cores taken from that same stretch of road show that the substructure is crumbling. The pavement rating was good - but its overall health was poor.



How does Kansas Move Forward?

A better transportation system begins with a stable, steady source of revenue that will allow KDOT to deliver promised T-WORKS projects, address emerging needs and prepare for the future. Major changes in funding cause delays, inefficiencies and reduce the overall health of the transportation system and state economy.



Fully fund preservation.

This will allow KDOT to perform the heavy preservation actions that extend the life of the system.

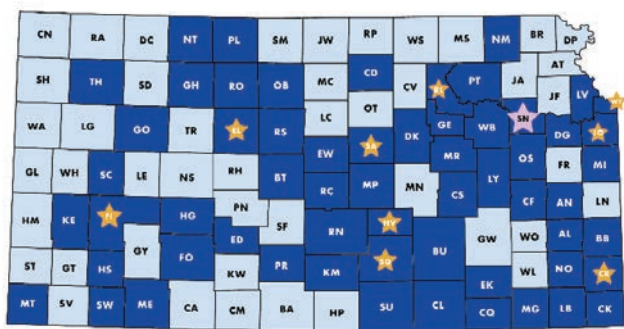


Invest in the future.

Kansas communities have identified more \$18 billion worth of transportation needs across the state. Kansans recognize that investing in highways, transit, rail, aviation and bike/pedestrian connections generate economic growth, enhance safety and improve the quality of life for all residents.

FINDING A WAY FORWARD BY

Listening to Kansans



STAKEHOLDER INPUT RECEIVED
REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER INPUT MEETING
3 TASK FORCE MEETINGS



Provide KDOT with more tools to deliver an innovative, multimodal transportation system.

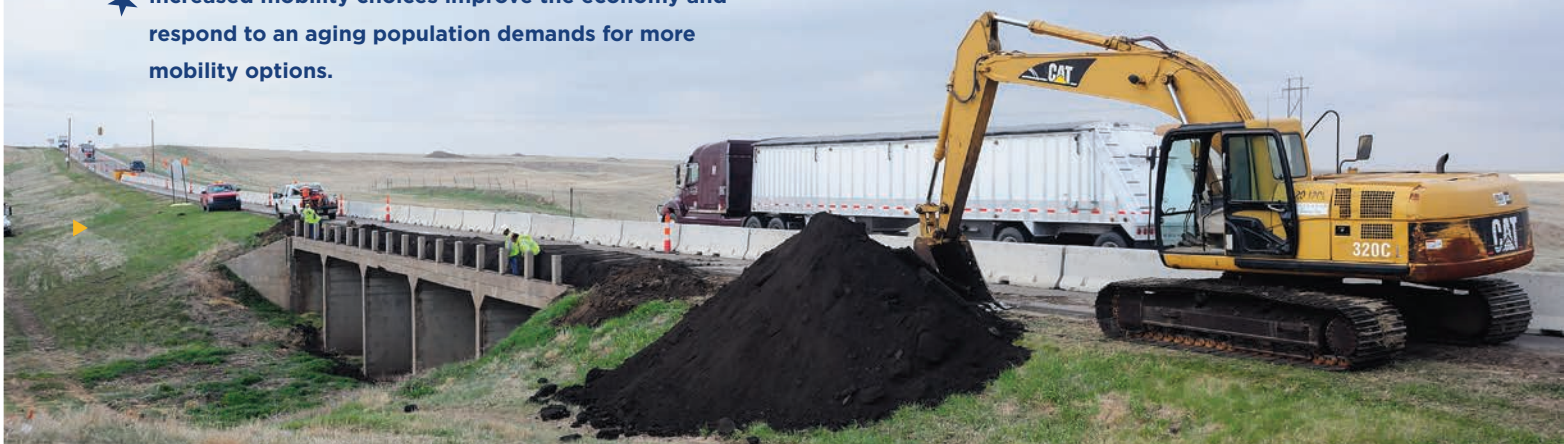
Meeting future transportation needs goes beyond more revenue. New tools are needed too. Granting KDOT the legislative authority to utilize alternative delivery methods or to explore using toll revenue to finance a portion of a project's cost - will allow KDOT to better meet future transportation needs. This also means reinstating programs that have proven effective in the past such as the County Bridge Improvement Program. and exploring others like a cost-share program.



Give local governments more tools to meet their needs.

Local roads are critical for getting people and goods where they need to go. They are the lifeblood of local economies. More revenue options should be made available to local governments to help modernize their systems.

- ★ Needs differ across the state. KDOT must be flexible and adaptive.
- ★ Roads must meet the demands of future agriculture needs
- ★ A high-quality transportation network is key to companies choosing to locate in Kansas
- ★ Traffic delays hurt the economy
- ★ Increased mobility choices improve the economy and respond to an aging population demands for more mobility options.



Specific Task Force Recommendations

Funding & Needs

The following Task Force recommendations address funding issues and transportation needs:

- ▶ **\$500 million for highway preservation funding annually.** This is needed to maintain or improve the health of the transportation system in Kansas by looking at subsurface as well as surface quality. Please note that a minimum of a \$100 million in modernization and expansion work is required as well to restore system health.
- ▶ **\$500 million to complete the delayed T-WORKS modernization and expansion projects within four years.** These projects should be let to construction within 4 years.
- ▶ **\$20 million in additional funding for transit, aviation, rail and bicycle/pedestrian paths. Investments in modes are vital for delivering a quality transportation system.** More funding is needed in these areas to meet growing demands for services.
- ▶ **Continue and restore popular local programs such as the Kansas Local Bridge Improvement Program.**
- ▶ **Increase funding for Local Governments by increasing payments for city connecting links maintenance.** These payments have not increased since 1999.
- ▶ **The State should explore new revenue sources such as fees for alternative fueled vehicles or oversize vehicles, expanded tolling or fees based on vehicle miles traveled.**

Policy Changes

The following Task Force recommendations call for specific changes for how transportation is delivered in Kansas:

- ▶ **A new transportation program should include revenue-increasing options for local governments and provide incentives to remove unnecessary transportation infrastructure from the public system.**
- ▶ **The Task Force supports the KDOT project selection process for expansion and modernization projects; but recommends additional priority for projects that incorporate practical improvements, remove transportation infrastructure from the system, identify priority corridors, and include local participation with an eye towards the equity of effort.**
- ▶ **The Task Force supports continuing emphasis on practical improvements to the state's transportation infrastructure.**



Photo Credit: KAKE News

Specific Task Force Recommendations

Legislative Review/Authorization

The following Task Force recommendations call for the Kansas Legislature to conduct additional review or require Legislative authorization in order to be implemented.

- ▶ The Legislature should review the role of sales tax in transportation funding and examine additional sources of funding for transportation. It notes portions of the sales tax are directly attributable to motor vehicles and related items.
- ▶ The Legislature should also review potential sources of additional funding, including increasing registration fees, motor fuel taxes, fees for oversized vehicles, and new fees specific to alternative-fuel vehicles which should be commensurate with fuel-tax amounts paid to operate vehicles of similar weight.
- ▶ KDOT, working with the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA), should be authorized to collect tolls to offset a portion of the cost of construction, maintenance, or both of transportation infrastructure improvements. In consultation with local officials, the Secretary of Transportation should consider tolling for individual projects where traffic volume, local contribution, or other relevant reasons make tolling a worthwhile option.
- ▶ The Legislature should consider removing the state law requirement that each KTA toll expressway project be financed wholly through the investment of private funds in toll road revenue bonds.
- ▶ The Legislature should consider authorizing revenue-increasing options including, but not limited to, an exemption in the tax lid statute (KSA 2018 Supp. 79-2925c) for transportation purposes and modifications to demand transfers.
- ▶ The Legislature should review the statutory amounts for payments to cities for city connecting links maintenance, which have not increased since 1999.
- ▶ KDOT should be authorized to use alternative project delivery methods, perhaps such as those authorized under the State Educational Institution Project Delivery Construction Procurement Act.
- ▶ The 2019 Legislature should study possible statutory changes to authorize testing of automated vehicles, connected vehicles, or both in Kansas and also review in-vehicle technology and traffic management systems. Related to implementation of these new technologies is broadband infrastructure across the state, and the Task Force recommends the Senate Committee on Utilities and the House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications also review transportation needs related to broadband.
- ▶ The Legislature should consider regular oversight of state transportation needs and resources either by a standing committee or by interim committees requested by the chairperson of the House Committee on Transportation, the chairperson of the Senate Committee on Transportation, or both. It recommends, at minimum, any new plan expected to be in place for 10 years or longer be thoroughly reviewed after five years.

The official Task Force Report can be found online at:



<http://www.kslegresearch.org/KLRD-web/Committees/Committees-JtLegTrnsprtnVisionTF.html>

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