

MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mike Petersen at 8:30 am on Thursday, January 15, 2015, 546-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Anthony Hensley – Excused

Senator Jeff King – Excused

Committee staff present:

Jill Shelley, Legislative Research Department

Whitney Howard, Legislative Research Department

Adam Siebers, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Carolyn Long, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Scott Wells, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Jerry Younger, Deputy Secretary and State Transportation Engineer, Kansas Department of Transportation

Mike King, Secretary of Transportation

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Bill introductions

There were no bill introductions.

Presentation, "KDOT Agency Overview and Updates" by Mike King, Secretary of Transportation

The Chairperson welcomed Secretary of Transportation Mike King. Secretary King turned the presentation over to Jerry Younger, State Transportation Engineer, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), who referenced the request from the Committee during the 2014 session to report KDOT's progress regarding safety concerns at the intersection of US-50 and US-281 in Stafford County. Mr. Younger reported that KDOT installed a radar approach speed indicator at the junction on US-281 in an attempt to draw attention to the upcoming intersection. He also noted they had removed the "kilroy" sign and installed a larger stop sign with a flashing light and an attached sign indicating traffic on US-50 does not stop. Additionally, KDOT contracted with Kansas State University to conduct a study of the intersection using various simulations, including the effect the color of a vehicle may have regarding visibility as a vehicle approached the intersection. The conclusion of the study indicated that there was not enough evidence at the present time to justify any further measures; however, the KDOT staff will continue to do traffic studies. ([Attachment 1](#))

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Younger and Secretary King returned to the podium. Secretary King introduced staff members Kent Olson, Fiscal Services Director; Halee Lindstrom, Legislative Liaison; Ben Cleaves, Budget Chief; and Kyle Malcolm, Debt and Investment Manager.

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Secretary King began his presentation by stating that the purpose of the KDOT is "to provide a statewide transportation system to meet the needs of Kansas". The agency's main responsibility is safety and they are constantly working to improve the safety of travelers by improvement of the infrastructure and the reinforcement of good driver decisions through various safety education programs. Most crashes are caused by poor driver decision, he said.

KDOT strives to manage its resources wisely to protect the investment Kansans have made in the system and KDOT staff consistently meet with government and community leaders to obtain their input. By working with these leaders they are able to generate economic growth across Kansas through investments.

Traffic fatalities continue to be a concern and KDOT believes that the primary seat-belt law, no texting while driving law, and graduated licenses law are making a difference. They work within the Four E's:

- Education
- Engineering
- Enforcement
- EMS

KDOT has established a target of 85% of r bridges on the state system to be in good condition. Bridge condition is determined by scoring the conditions of the bridge deck, superstructure and sub-structure. Presently less than 2% of the bridges are structurally deficient. A total of 75 counties and two counties requested funding of up to \$120,000 (or \$160,000 if the local jurisdiction chose to remove a second structure) for improving bridges on local roads--a total o \$10.8 million for 77 bridges. 100% of submitted requests for bridge improvement were funded. Many of the bridges had little traffic but were key for the agriculture industry.

Over 96% of interstate and non-interstate pavements in the system are in good condition, ranking Kansas number one in the nation for a rural interstate system.

In an effort to obtain local input, eight meetings were held across the state during the summer and fall. KDOT and Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA) staff were on hand to inform and answer questions from approximately 550 Kansans who participated in state-wide meetings.

Aviation plays an important role in Kansas and an "Aviation Day at the Capitol" is being planned for February 3, 2015. Secretary King provided a map showing the portions of the state where the residents are 30 minutes or less from airports capable of handling fixed-wing air ambulance flights and a map showing where airport and aircraft awareness events had taken place recently.

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The Kansas railroad system is currently in 100 of the 105 counties, for a total of 4,700 miles of which 40% are short lines. He reported Kansas received a federal grant and is using state money to repair 110 miles of track in southwest Kansas, which will benefit both freight uses and Amtrak riders.

Transit ridership continued to rise through FY 14, for both urban and rural systems; KDOT will monitor that usage with the drop in gasoline prices.

T-Works programs address, among other things, preservation, modernization expansion, transit, aviation, rail and the Special City County Highway Fund. Revenue sources on the dollar are:

- Sales Tax (29 cents)
- Kansas Motor Fuels Tax (26 cents)
- Federal Funds (24 cents)
- Registration Fees (12 cents)
- Bond Proceeds (5 cents)
- Other and Local Funds (2 cents each)

T-Works works well within their budget and their progress includes 1,165 highway projects completed; 8,608 miles which have been improved; 653 bridges have been repaired or replaced; and 104 modal (transit, air, rail) projects completed.

KDOT's partnership with KTA has accrued \$29 million in savings to date and they continue to identify additional savings. The turnpike transponder billing interoperability program recently established with Oklahoma is widely successful and they are looking into a similar arrangement with Texas.

Kansas has established a Freight Advisory Committee and their vision centers around an Integrated Multimodal System Approach which includes highways/trucks, air cargo, pipelines, freight rail, intermodal, and ports/waterways.

Secretary King believes the future of KDOT includes finishing what they have started, new transportation programs, investment priorities, and a full-integrated transportation system ([Attachment 2](#)).

Secretary King stood for questions from the Committee. The questions centered around whether the higher speed limits were responsible for higher fatality numbers in some areas and the effect texting

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has on safety.

Senator LaTurner asked that the committee be provided information regarding the dollar amount spent district by district in addition to a fiscal note relating to the US-50 and US-281 interchange.

There being no further questions, the Chairperson thanked Secretary King for his presentation. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21, 2015.