



D. Mitch Robinson, Executive Director  
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Salina – September 6, 2018

August 29, 2018

Senator Carolyn McGinn, Co-Chairperson  
Representative Richard Proehl, Co-Chairperson  
2018 Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force  
Room 68-West, Statehouse  
300 SW Tenth  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

RE: Salina / Saline County Priorities

Dear Senator McGinn and Representative Proehl:

On behalf of the City of Salina, Saline County Commission, Salina Airport Authority and OCCK, we wish to provide this letter to the 2018 Joint Legislative Task Force for submittal of key projects from our community. We greatly appreciate the time and effort the members of the Task Force are taking to travel across the State of Kansas to gather input from communities and citizens on the needs of transportation.

Representatives of the City of Salina, Saline County, Salina Airport Authority and OCCK met to discuss key items related to transportation. They include the following:

#### **Improvements to K-4 in southern Saline County**

Previously improvements to K-4 was one of the top projects here in our community. K-4 provides access to southern Saline County, including school bus service to Southeast of Saline District 306 high school and elementary school. Numerous issues were identified that moved this project to the top of the local priorities. This was a T- Works project before funding was eliminated due to Department of Transportation budget cuts. We again support this project's funding and construction by KDOT.

#### **Improvements to Magnolia Road**

Also identified as a key project by all local parties is the upgrade/reconstruction of Magnolia Road from Interstate 135 to Centennial Road. This is the main route from the interstate to the campus of Kansas State Polytechnic and Salina Area Technical College. Centennial is also the key access route to both the Salina Airport and the industrial complex surrounding the Salina Airport. The current condition of Magnolia is a narrow two-lane road with no curbs, no shoulders with steep ditches along the route from the interstate. A rail crossing is also located on this road. This road gets high usage of both semitrucks and passenger vehicles. As this area grows this corridor is a critical transportation link for the entire region. Increased flight service

in Salina is also increasing the use of Magnolia. We support the inclusion of Magnolia Road on a future project list for the State of Kansas.

### **Salina Regional Airport and Airport Industrial Center Priorities**

The Salina Airport Authority supports the adoption of a multi-year, multi-modal transportation plan to follow the expiring T-Works program. A new program should include funding mechanisms for highways, roads, bridges, rail, public transit and airport infrastructure and program improvements. The continuation of KDOT's Kansas Airport Improvement Program (KAIP) will enable the State of Kansas to maintain the Kansas system of airports that contribute to the economic viability of all 105 counties.

The Salina Regional Airport is nationally known as "America's Fuel Stop." Business jets, air carrier aircraft and military aircraft of all types use Salina as a mid-continent fuel stop. The Wichita based Bombardier Flight Test Center uses Salina for flight test and aircraft certification work. The Kansas National Guard, Ft. Riley, KS and the U.S. Special Operations Command use the Salina Airport for critical unit training and deployment flights.

As measured by the Docking Institute of Public Affairs, the Salina Airport Industrial Center is home to over 100 businesses and organizations that account for over 6,450 jobs – 17% of the total employment for Saline County. Highway and road access to the Airport Industrial Center is critical to sustain and grow jobs.

### **Salina Regional Airport Future Needs**

1. KAIP assistance to resurface the airport's 12,300-foot primary runway
2. KAIP assistance to acquire Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) transceiver at the Salina Regional Airport to fill a coverage gap that impacts the Salina based K-State Aviation program and aircraft operating near the Salina Airport.
3. KAIP assistance with the construction of T-hangars at the Salina Regional Airport.
4. KAIP assistance with the acquisition of an Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System (ACARS) messaging system for use by air carrier and military aircraft operating at the Salina Regional Airport.
5. KAIP assistance to resurface the Airport's 6,510 cross-wind runway.

### **Salina Airport Industrial Center Future Needs**

1. KDOT assistance to reconstruction of Magnolia Road from I-135 to Centennial Road
2. KDOT assistance to reconstruct the southern portion of Centennial Road from Wall Street to Water Well Road.

## **OCCK - Unmet Public Transportation Needs & Priorities**

**Sixth Route for Salina CityGo** – Salina currently has five routes that cover about 80% of Salina with over 200 bus stops. A sixth route could be planned to pick up areas with no current

service, or as a way of connecting certain city centers. We also need to look at transportation options for third shift workers in Salina.

**Weekend Service for CityGo** – CityGo currently runs only regular bus route on Saturday only – meaning once per hour, during the operating hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Customers are constantly asking for extended Saturday hours, including peak routes running every 30 minutes. Customers are also requesting Sunday service.

**Peak Hours Expansion** – CityGo’s peak hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. During this time, the buses arrive at each stop every 30 minutes. Expanding the peak hours to have more frequent stops all day would benefit the public. Some other transit programs run buses every 20 minutes.

**Driver Wages Increased** – With the low current unemployment rate in Salina, attracting and retaining quality drivers has become a challenge. Turnover is increasing each year, and one of the primary reasons is low wages. Because we are a nonprofit agency and with the majority of our funding coming from state and federal dollars, we are limited on the amount of money we can pay in wages. We have slowly been increasing our starting driver wage, but we need to be able to better compete with other job markets to attract quality employees.

**Bike Sharing Program for Salina** – Salina is on the short list of larger communities without a bike sharing program. We need to develop and implement a plan for increasing multi-modal transportation options in the community with the completion of the downtown construction and river projects. Adding bicycles would be a great step in that direction.

**Outside Service Area Trips** – We also get a lot of requests for trips to Wichita, Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City, Hays, etc. from the Salina area that are out of OCCK’s general service area. Most of these trips are for medical reasons. And most of the time we are unable to provide those rides because our schedules are so full, and we have yet to coordinate rides with other service providers that make trips to those regions.

**Regional Routes in all four directions from Salina** – the 81 Connection route from Belleville to Salina has been running since September 5, 2017. It has been a successful venture into intercity routes. Because of its success, we have had requests to create additional routes in the other three directions from Salina (i.e., Salina to Hays, Salina to Wichita, and Salina to Manhattan).

**Coordinated Dispatch within the North Central Kansas Region** – One of the goals from KDOT’s Regional Business Model for the North Central Kansas Region is coordinated dispatch. This

means that one agency would provide all the dispatching services for all the KDOT vehicles within the 8-county area that comprises the Coordinated Transit District Number 7. Having information on all the regional vehicles would allow more coordination between rides with less overlap and redundancy.

**One-Call – One Click Centers for Transit Information** – other areas across the United States have created One Call-One Click centers. This provides transit customers with a single phone call or website address that would allow them to complete all their transit requests at one time. OCCK could provide this service for the region. The Kansas Rides website is also a start.

**Expanded Regional Access** – there are still unmet needs for transportation in the 14-county region that OCCK serves. Because of our already full schedules, we have to turn down rides. In a perfect world, we would get to the point where we would not have to turn down rides because we have plenty of drivers, vehicles, volunteer drivers, and coordination within the region and state with other providers.

**Mobility Management in Kansas** – Kansas currently has only two Mobility Managers across the state. The ultimate goal would be to have 10, one in each region, with a network established to bring all of the regions together, working to move transit in Kansas forward as a whole.

In closing, we again appreciate the work of the 2018 Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force. Improved transportation funding is critical for the State of Kansas's cities and counties. Funding for safe roads, safe bridges and improved transportation systems are key for economic growth and prosperity for Salina, Saline County and the State of Kansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Mitch Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending from the end.

D. Mitch Robinson, CEcD,  
Executive Director  
Salina Community Economic Development Organization

CC: Mike Schrage  
Rita Deister  
Michelle Griffin  
Tim Rogers  
Darren Fishel  
Don Weiser