

Testimony to Kansas Transportation Task Force

Vision of Kansas Government

1. Funding for each Department of the State of Kansas should be considered and evaluated separately and independently, and compete for funding from the legislature, with oversight by the Governor.
2. Funding designated by vote of the citizens of Kansas should remain in the Department where it was designated. Do not “rob Peter to pay Paul.”
3. “New” initiatives (additional funding) should not become unfunded mandates. All action should have a funding mechanism identified. IF a majority cannot agree on the action AND the funding, then do not enact an unfunded mandate. (Constitutional Amendment!!!)
4. Find ways to NOT make exceptions to the above. Automatically disregard (veto) an unfunded mandate.

Based on the above:

Kansas Transportation Vision for the future

1. Return transportation funding to the Department of Transportation.
2. Pay as you go. Do not bond, except where monetary “payback” occurs. Revolving Fund, Economic Development loans, other?
3. Recognize modes of transportation
 - a. Roads (and bridges –the most important)
 - b. Rail
 - c. Air
 - d. Transit
 - e. Economic Development
4. Allocate funding according to existing need and future desires.

Considering bridges and roads

1. Keep State (Fed) bridges up.
2. Share bridge upkeep funds with locals, and allow locals to make decisions on which bridges and when to maintain. Minimize strings attached (maybe adjust for differences between locals). Trust local officials. Let local citizens handle accountability.
3. Keep State(Fed) roads up.
4. Share road upkeep funds with Counties and Cities, and allow locals to make decisions on which roads and when to maintain. Minimize strings attached (maybe adjust for differences between locals). Trust local officials. Let local citizens handle accountability.
5. Develop an acceptable (reasonable) financial sharing mechanism.
 - a. One size does not fit all
 - b. Vehicle miles?
 - c. Lane miles of paving (*gravel?*)?
 - d. Number of bridges?
 - e. Sq Ft of bridges?
 - f. Road or bridge life expectancy?
 - g. Population (*same as vehicle miles?*)?
 - h. Gross Domestic Product in each County? Sales generated? NRCS/Extension stats?
 - i. Other?
 - j. Combination of the above?
 - k. Not sq ft of deficient bridges!!!
 - l. Rural western Kansas counties are different than urban counties. Chetopa is different than Garden City, etc.
 - m. Educate newly elected officials (State and Local)!!!
6. Recognize there are more “needs” than money.
7. Require experienced competent people make decisions
 - a. Not who is elected picks projects
 - b. NOT the rich get richer! (fund all roads, NOT “until the money runs out” Have a plan)
 - c. Find an acceptable R&B quality that can be sustained!!
 - d. Consider risk. (Urban 2,500+ ADT has a different risk than a rural 30-300 ADT. Rural western Kansas counties risk is different than risk in urban counties.)
8. Supporting Economic Development is important!
 - a. Support communities which have legitimate business startups (expansion) with a transportation need, by a partial grant (but only if appropriate).
 - b. Support communities with a loan when other funding is not available.