



TRIP REPORTS: OKLAHOMA TRANSPORTATION FUNDING HAS ALLOWED FOR IMPROVEMENTS, BUT CHALLENGES REMAIN ...

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TRIP

A National
Transportation
Research
Nonprofit

TO ADDRESS NEEDED ROAD & BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS, MAKE FURTHER ROADWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AND RELIEVE TRAFFIC CONGESTION AS TRAVEL NEARS PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS

While the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been able to make significant improvements to state-maintained roads and bridges, additional progress may be stalled due to a lack of reliable funding. Increased investment in transportation improvements at the local, state and federal levels could improve road and bridge conditions, boost safety, ease congestion and improve reliability, and support short- and long-term economic growth in Oklahoma, according to a new report released today by [TRIP](#), a Washington, DC based national transportation research nonprofit.

According to the TRIP report, [“Keeping Oklahoma Moving Forward: Providing a World Class Transportation System in the Sooner State.”](#) despite recent improvements in road and bridge conditions, current statewide transportation needs still outpace available funding. ODOT is able to address only 15 percent of needed pavement improvements in the current Eight-Year Construction Work Plan, which does not reflect additional deterioration over time that will require more investment in the future to keep from falling farther behind. More than 50 percent of the 9,500 miles of two-lane highways in the state lack sufficient shoulders. And, with the state’s traffic fatality rate one of the highest in the nation, ODOT’s current Eight-Year Construction Plan will only allow it to make improvements to 15 percent of the state’s two-lane highways that currently lack adequate shoulders.

ODOT has made significant progress in recent years in improving the condition of state-maintained roads, and expects to address more than 3,200 miles of pavement in poor or fair condition from 2021-2028. However, the pavement improvement projects planned by ODOT through 2028 will only allow the agency to address approximately 15 percent of pavement needs during this period. This does not take into account the amount of additional deterioration that is expected to occur during this period, further increasing future roadway preservation needs. According to TRIP, driving on rough roads costs motorists additional vehicle operating costs (VOC) including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional vehicle repair costs, increased fuel consumption and increased tire wear. TRIP estimates that additional VOC borne by Oklahoma motorists as a result of deteriorated road conditions is \$987 million annually, an average of \$394 per driver statewide. “Recognizing the importance of transportation to business growth and recruitment, for years, the Greater OKC Chamber has advocated for necessary, adequate funding for transportation projects, including adequate funding streams to



support ODOT’s Eight-Year Construction Work Plan, continued work on addressing structurally deficient bridges and maintaining a nationally leading bridge improvement program, among other efforts,” said Roy Williams, president and CEO of the Greater OKC Chamber. “The Chamber also supports the research and development of sustainable and equitable funding alternatives in support of transportation infrastructure.”

ODOT has made strides in recent years in reducing the number of structurally deficient bridges on the state-maintained system; however, more work is still needed. Since 2004, when an all-time high of 1,168 state-maintained bridges were rated structurally deficient (of a total of approximately 6,800 bridges), ODOT has reduced the number of structurally deficient state-maintained bridges each year, dropping to just 86 structurally deficient state-maintained bridges in at the end of 2019. While 86 state-maintained bridges were rated structurally deficient at the end of 2019, an additional 1,181 state-maintained bridges are deemed at risk of becoming structurally deficient in the coming years and will require additional maintenance, improvements and funding to keep them from becoming structurally deficient.

“A safe, modern and well-maintained Interstate Highway System can strengthen Oklahoma’s and America’s economy, enhance personal mobility and facilitate more efficient movement of goods,” said Leslie Gamble, AAA Oklahoma public and government affairs manager. “But the future of this network could be in jeopardy without increased federal investment. AAA Oklahoma advocates for the prioritization of transportation investments to ensure safe, efficient and reliable mobility in Oklahoma and across the Interstate Highway System.”

From 2015 to 2019, 3,276 people were killed in traffic crashes in Oklahoma. The state’s 2019 traffic fatality rate of 1.43 fatalities for every 100 million miles traveled is the sixth highest in the nation and higher than the national average of 1.11. The fatality rate on Oklahoma’s non-interstate rural roads is more than double that on all other roads in the state (2.27 per 100 million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.94). More than half – 5,299 of 9,500 miles- of two-lane, state-maintained highways in Oklahoma have deficient shoulders. From 2021-2028, ODOT plans to add 780 miles of paved shoulders on two-lane highways. ODOT has also installed 716 miles of cable barrier and more than 250 miles of centerline rumble strips to improve roadway safety.

Congested roads and bottlenecks choke commuting and commerce and cost Oklahoma drivers \$1.5 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel. The average Oklahoma City drivers spends 50 hours each year stuck in traffic congestion and loses \$842 annually in the form of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion. In Tulsa, the average driver loses 46 hours and \$732 annually due to traffic congestion. The TRIP report identifies the most congested segments of freeways in Oklahoma during morning and evening peak travel times.

Rank	AM Peak		PM Peak	
	Area	Extents	Area	Extents
1	Oklahoma City Metro	I-44 EB from SH-152 to I-40	Oklahoma City Metro	I-235 NB from NE 23rd St. to I-44
2	Oklahoma City Metro	I-35 NB from I-240 to I-40	Oklahoma City Metro	I-235 SB from NE 23rd to I-40
3	Oklahoma City Metro	I-35 NB from SW 19th St. to I-240	Oklahoma City Metro	I-40 WB from Pennsylvania Ave. to I-44
1	Tulsa Metro	I-44 EB from I-244 to US-75	Tulsa Metro	I-44 EB from US-169 to S 165th E Ave.
2	Tulsa Metro	US-64 WB from I-44 to I-444	Tulsa Metro	US-64 EB from I-44 to I-444
3	Tulsa Metro	US-75 SB from I-244 to I-44	Tulsa Metro	US-75 SB from I-244 to I-44

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, vehicle travel in Oklahoma dropped by as much as 33 percent in April 2020 (as compared to vehicle travel during the same month the previous year) but rebounded to five percent above March 2019 levels by March 2021.

The efficiency and condition of Oklahoma’s transportation system, particularly its highways, is critical to the health of the state’s economy. Annually, \$294 billion in goods are shipped to and from Oklahoma, relying heavily on the state’s network of roads and bridges. Increasingly, companies are looking at the quality of a region’s transportation system when deciding where to re-locate or expand. Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient and more modern transportation system. Approximately 796,000 full-time jobs in Oklahoma in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture and manufacturing are dependent on the quality, safety and reliability of the state’s transportation infrastructure network.

“It is critical that Oklahoma continues to make progress toward improving the condition, safety and efficiency of the state’s transportation system, and that adequate funding is available to reach those goals of improving safety, mobility and accessibility, which are vital to the state’s residents, businesses and visitors,” said Dave Kearby, TRIP’s executive director.

KEEPING OKLAHOMA MOVING FORWARD
Providing a World Class Transportation System in the Sooner State



Executive Summary

Accessibility, connectivity and mobility are critical factors in a state's quality of life and economic competitiveness. The growth and development of a state or region, and the quality of life of its residents, hinge on efficient and safe access to employment, customers, commerce, recreation, education and healthcare via multiple transportation modes. The quality of life of Oklahoma's residents and the pace of the state's economic growth is directly tied to the condition, efficiency, safety and resiliency of its transportation system.

An adequate and reliable source of transportation funding is critical to providing the system of roads, highways and bridges that can support commerce within Oklahoma and connect the state to markets throughout the country and around the globe, while providing the safe, smooth and efficient mobility that residents require. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) has made significant strides in recent years in improving road and bridge conditions, making needed safety improvements to decrease the number of fatalities on the state's roads, and increasing the efficiency of the transportation system to ease congestion and bottlenecks. In order to continue to make needed improvements to Oklahoma's transportation system, adequate and reliable funding must be made available at the local, state and federal levels.

TRIP's "Keeping Oklahoma Moving Forward" report examines the condition, use, safety and efficiency of Oklahoma's surface transportation system; improvements made to the state's transportation system in recent years; and the importance of reauthorization of the federal surface transportation program. Sources of information for this report include the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), the U.S. Census Bureau, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

OKLAHOMA'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FUNDING

While ODOT has been able to make significant improvements to state-maintained roads and bridges, additional progress may be stalled due to a lack of reliable funding. ODOT's current [Eight-Year Construction Work Plan](#) includes a variety of projects that address multiple needs across the state, including addressing 804 miles of two-lane highways with deficient shoulders, completing interchanges at I-235/I-44 and I-35/I-240 in Oklahoma City, continuing improvements at I-44/US-75 in Tulsa, expanding the I-40 corridor between Oklahoma City and Shawnee, improving pavement conditions and traffic operations on the US-69 and I-35 corridors and continuing to address bridge improvements throughout the state.

Despite these improvements, the current needs statewide have outpaced available funding. ODOT is currently able to address only 15 percent of needed pavement improvements in the current Eight-Year Construction Work Plan, which does not reflect additional deterioration over time that will require more investment in the future to keep from falling farther behind. And, according to ODOT, more than 50 percent of the 9,500 miles of two-lane highways in the state lack sufficient shoulders. And, while the current Eight-Year Construction Plan will address roughly 804 miles, more than 4,000 miles of two-lane highways lack the funds needed for improvement.

The ability of revenue from Oklahoma's motor fuel tax – a critical source of state transportation funds – to keep pace with the state's future transportation needs is likely to continue to erode as a result of increasing vehicle fuel efficiency and the increasing popularity of electric vehicles.

The current federal transportation legislation, [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act \(FAST Act\)](#), was set to expire on September 30, 2020. Congress extended it by one year to September 30, 2021. The FAST Act is a major source of federal funding for road, highway and bridge repairs in Oklahoma. Throughout the FAST-Act – fiscal years

2016 to 2021 – the program provided \$4.1 billion to Oklahoma for road and bridge improvements, an average of \$676 million per year. From 2014 to 2018, the federal government provided \$1.09 for road improvements in Oklahoma for every \$1.00 state motorists paid in federal highway user fees, including the federal state motor fuel tax.

ROAD CONDITIONS IN OKLAHOMA

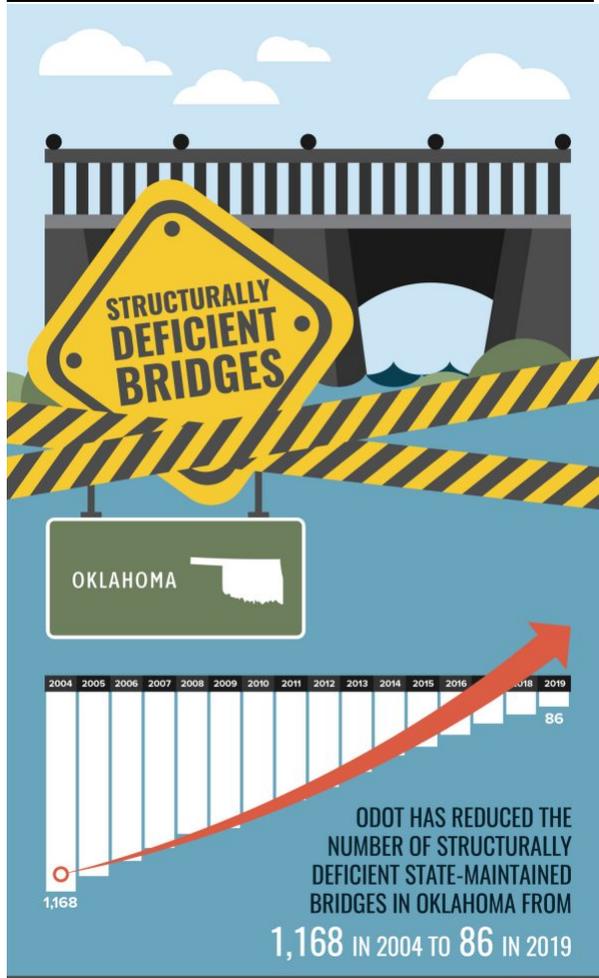
ODOT has made significant progress in recent years in improving the condition of state-maintained roads, which includes non-tolled interstates, U.S. highways and state highways. The chart below details the share of pavements in good, fair or poor condition on Oklahoma’s Interstate, non-Interstate National Highway System (NHS) and State Highway System roads.

	Good	Fair	Poor
Interstate	61%	38%	1%
Non-Interstate NHS	39%	58%	4%
State Highway System	35%	60%	5%

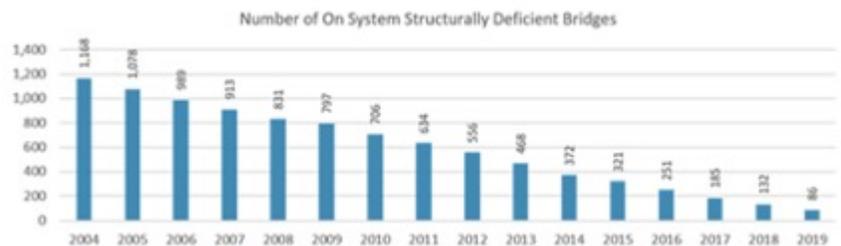
ODOT expects to address 3,216 lane miles of pavement in poor or fair condition from 2021-2028, during the Eight-Year Construction Work Plan. The 2021-2024 Asset Preservation Plan will also address 2,540 miles of roadway that are in poor or fair condition. The pavement improvement projects planned by ODOT through 2028 will only allow the agency to address approximately 15 percent of the pavement needs during this period, an estimate which also doesn’t take into account the amount of additional deterioration that is expected to occur during this period, further increasing future roadway preservation needs.

Driving on rough roads costs motorists additional vehicle operating costs (VOC) including accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional vehicle repair costs, increased fuel consumption and increased tire wear. TRIP estimates that additional VOC borne by Oklahoma motorists as a result of deteriorated road conditions is \$987 million annually, an average of \$394 per driver statewide.

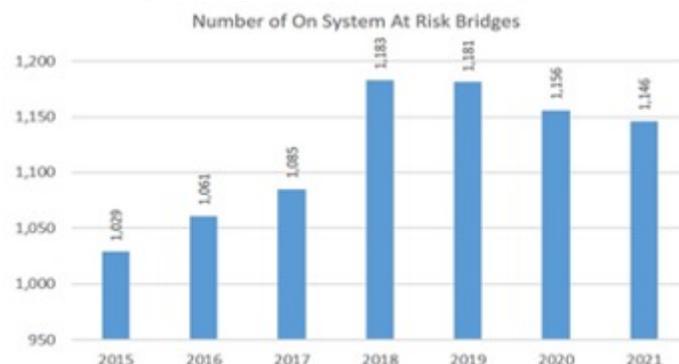
BRIDGE CONDITIONS IN OKLAHOMA



ODOT has made strides in recent years in reducing the number of structurally deficient bridges on the state-maintained system; however, much work is still needed. Since 2004, when an all-time high of 1,168 state-maintained bridges were rated structurally deficient (of a total of approximately 6,800 bridges), ODOT has reduced the number of structurally deficient state-maintained bridges each year, dropping to just 86 structurally deficient state-maintained bridges in at the end of 2019.



While 86 state-maintained bridges are currently rated structurally deficient at the end of 2019, an additional 1,181 state-maintained bridges are deemed at risk of becoming structurally deficient in the coming years and will require additional maintenance, improvements and funding to keep them from becoming structurally deficient.



Within the 2021-2028 Eight-Year Construction Work Plan, ODOT expects to address a total of 609 state-maintained bridges, in addition to addressing 152 bridges in the 2021-2024 Asset Preservation Plan. Of these bridges, 44 are currently rated structurally deficient and 376 are at risk of becoming structurally deficient.

TRAFFIC SAFETY IN OKLAHOMA

From 2015 to 2019, 3,276 people were killed in traffic crashes in Oklahoma. The state’s 2019 traffic fatality rate of 1.43 fatalities for every 100 million miles traveled is the sixth highest in the nation and higher than the national average of 1.11. The fatality rate on Oklahoma’s non-interstate rural roads is more than double that on all other roads in the state (2.27 per 100 million vehicle miles of travel vs. 0.94). Improving safety on Oklahoma’s roadways can be achieved through further improvements in vehicle safety; improvements in driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist behavior; and a variety of improvements in roadway safety features.



More than half – 56 percent — of two-lane, state-maintained highways in Oklahoma have deficient shoulders (5,299 of 9,500 miles). In order to improve traffic safety and reduce the number of fatalities on the state’s roads, ODOT’s Eight-Year 2021-2028 Construction Work Plan includes the addition of 780 miles of paved shoulders on two-lane highways, improving 15 percent of the state-maintained, two-lane highways that currently have deficient shoulders. ODOT has installed nearly 716 miles of cable barrier and more than 250 miles of centerline rumble strips to improve roadway safety by reducing crossover and lane departure traffic fatalities. ODOT’s eight-year 2021-2028 Construction Work Plan calls for the provision of an additional 820 miles of centerline rumble strips on two-lane rural highways across the state and includes pavement markings for improved visibility under wet and dark conditions. ODOT has also invested in pavement marking improvements on metro freeways and

Interstates, which will improve visibility under wet or dark conditions, and has completed 21 projects – with 28 more to be completed by summer 2021 – to upgrade school zones with new signage and flashing beacons, primarily in smaller communities.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN OKLAHOMA

Congested roads and bottlenecks choke commuting and commerce and cost Oklahoma drivers \$1.5 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, vehicle travel in Oklahoma dropped by as much as 33 percent in April 2020 (as compared to vehicle travel during the same month the previous year) but rebounded to five percent above March 2019 levels by March 2021. The chart below details the annual hours lost to congestion and congestion costs per driver in the state’s largest urban areas.

Location	Hours Lost	Congestion Cost
Oklahoma City	50	\$842
Tulsa	46	\$732

The chart below lists the most congested segments of freeways in Oklahoma during morning and evening peak travel times.

Rank	AM Peak		PM Peak	
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1	Oklahoma City Metro	I-44 EB from SH-152 to I-40	Oklahoma City Metro	I-235 NB from NE 23rd St. to I-44
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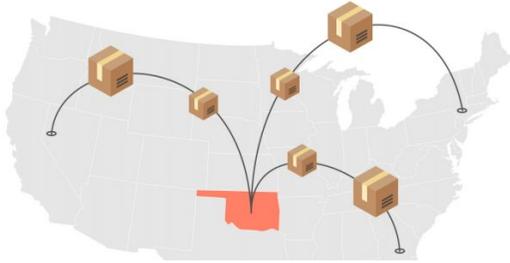
FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION AND THE IMPACT OF TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ON ECONOMIC GROWTH IN OKLAHOMA

The health and future growth of Oklahoma’s economy is riding on its surface transportation system. Oklahoma’s agricultural sector and energy industry rely heavily on the state’s transportation network to ship crops and livestock,

OKLAHOMA

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EVERY YEAR, **\$294 BILLION** IN GOODS ARE SHIPPED TO AND FROM SITES IN OKLAHOMA



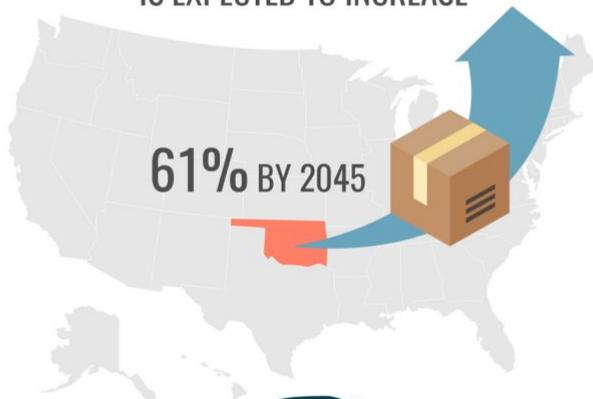
as well as oil, gas and wind energy products to market. Each year, \$294 billion in goods are shipped to and from sites in Oklahoma.

The amount of freight transported in Oklahoma and the rest of the U.S. is expected to increase significantly as a result of further economic growth, changing business and retail models, increasing international trade, and rapidly changing consumer expectations that place an emphasis on faster deliveries, often of smaller packages or payloads. The value of freight shipped to and from sites in Oklahoma, in inflation-adjusted dollars, is expected to increase 61 percent by 2045 and by 61 percent for goods shipped by trucks, placing an increased burden on the state's network of roads and bridges.

OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA

THE VALUE OF FREIGHT SHIPPED TO AND FROM SITES IN OKLAHOMA IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE



61% FOR GOODS SHIPPED BY TRUCKS

According to a [report by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association](#), the

design, construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Oklahoma support approximately 51,000 full-time jobs across all sectors of the economy. These workers earn \$1.8 billion annually.

Approximately 796,000 full-time jobs in Oklahoma in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture and manufacturing are completely dependent on the state's transportation network.

Sources of information for this report include the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), the U. S. Census Bureau, the Center for Transportation Studies, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). All data used in the report are the most recent available. Cover photo credit: Mike Robinson.

TRIP A National Transportation Research Nonprofit

Founded in 1971, [TRIP](#)® of Washington, DC, is a nonprofit organization that researches, evaluates and distributes economic and technical data on surface transportation issues. TRIP is sponsored by insurance companies, equipment manufacturers, distributors and suppliers; businesses involved in highway and transit engineering and construction; labor unions; and organizations concerned with efficient and safe surface transportation.