

## Roads report details ODOT's successes, areas of improvement

By Rebecca Pryor



OKLAHOMA CITY (KOKH) — Over the past few years, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation has made significant improvements to the State's highways and bridges. However, according to [a new report](#) released by The National Transportation Non-profit group "TRIP", some of ODOT's progress may be underfunded for the road ahead.

"Without adequate resources, they're going to start to slip back," said TRIP Director of Policy and Research, Rocky Moretti.

According to Moretti, recently Oklahoma's roadways have turned the corner in the right direction, but could quickly get off track if more funding isn't placed into pavement improvement projects.

TRIP's report claims ODOT only has enough funds to complete 15% of the pavement projects needed over the next eight years.

The report also claims more than 50% of the state's two-lane highways lack sufficient shoulders. It's an issue that's likely contributing to the state's high fatality rate.

"Over the last five years more than 3,200 people being killed; There's room for significant improvement," said Moretti.

"We, you know, you chisel away at it as much as you can," said ODOT spokesperson, Terri Angier.

Angier agreed these issues need more attention, but says decades of underfunding has left them with an uphill battle. The agency is now hoping Biden's infrastructure bill will potentially help with funding. In which case, pavement projects and safer shoulders are a top priority.

The following is ODOT's full statement regarding TRIP's report:

- “ **The Oklahoma Department of Transportation agrees with TRIP that Oklahoma has certainly come a long way in improving highway bridge conditions but that many critical transportation needs remain like addressing pavement conditions, rural two-lane highways with deficient shoulders and urban area traffic congestion.**
- “ **Much like improving the condition of the state's highway bridges from 49th in the nation in 2004 to 9th best in 2019, these issues cannot be solved overnight and require a long-term commitment to modernizing our transportation system. Adequate and sustained state and federal funding will be necessary as ODOT continues to make much-needed improvements to the highway system, especially with recent harsh winters accelerating the deterioration of older and already stressed pavements and as the state's population and economy continue to grow.**

For more local news delivered straight to your inbox sign up for our daily newsletter by [clicking here](#).