



Frequently Asked Questions

Oklahoma 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

September 2025

1. Why is the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) important?

The 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a policy plan that outlines the vision for Oklahoma's transportation system for the next 25 years. It is important because it is a federally mandated document that guides future transportation investments, ensuring they are cohesive, financially sound, and aligned with community goals. The 2050 LRTP summarizes public engagement efforts, identifies emerging trends, looks at existing conditions, and estimates funding needs for improvements and maintenance. Most importantly, the LRTP provides specific, actionable strategies to accomplish its goals.

The LRTP guides several statewide plans, including the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Oklahoma Freight Plan, and various metropolitan, regional, and tribal transportation plans. Within the LRTP, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) develops a long-term vision that considers key themes identified by transportation planning efforts across Oklahoma.

2. Who is responsible for transportation planning in Oklahoma?

ODOT is primarily responsible for transportation planning in Oklahoma. ODOT directly manages the condition, safety, and performance of Oklahoma's highway system and assists with a variety of different types of transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, passenger rail services, and public transit systems. However, ODOT does not act alone. Federal and state agencies, metropolitan and regional planning organizations, transit agencies, tribal governments, local jurisdictions, and advocacy groups all partner with ODOT throughout the planning process.

ODOT's long range transportation planning process reflects the 'Family of Plans' in Oklahoma. The Family of Plans includes other statewide plans (Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Oklahoma Freight Plan, etc.), Metropolitan Transportation Plans, Regional Transportation Plans, and Tribal Nation Transportation Plans. ODOT reviews these plans as part of the planning process to understand each plan's priorities and goals in order to develop a statewide LRTP that reflects the key themes identified in other transportation planning efforts throughout Oklahoma.



3. How does the 2050 LRTP address improvements to passenger rail service?

For the past twenty-six years, passenger rail service in Oklahoma has been centered around the Heartland Flyer that connects Oklahoma City to Fort Worth, Texas. ODOT remains committed to engaging with Oklahoma and Texas legislators, along with TxDOT, to identify potential funding options that could ensure the sustainability of this important service in the future.

The 2050 LRTP encourages coordination with Amtrak, neighboring states, and regional partners to explore expanded service options, including potential new routes and connections. The 2050 LRTP has identified rail expansion opportunities such as, a second daily service on the current Heartland Flyer route, a new station in Thackerville, a northward extension connecting Oklahoma City to Newton (Kansas), and new services connecting Norman to Edmond. These expansion projects require \$81.3 million per year between 2025 and 2050. The LRTP also highlights the need for capital investments in stations, track upgrades, and equipment to improve service reliability and passenger experience. Additionally, ODOT has retained the Passenger Rail Easement for the line and still has the right to operate from Midwest City to Sapulpa, which is the extent of the Sooner Sub. We look forward to our continued work to find a solution.

4. How does the 2050 LRTP address bikeways, pedestrian paths, public transit, and other forms of alternative transportation?

ODOT recognizes the importance of alternative transportation for connectivity, public health, and economic development. The 2050 LRTP supports the expansion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including bike lanes, shared-use paths, and shoulder paving for bike use. It highlights ambitious plans from MPOs such as INCOG and ACOG to add more than 2,500 miles of bicycle roads and bridges in Tulsa and Oklahoma City. The plan also emphasizes continued support for 19 rural transit operators, six urban transit agencies, and 12 tribal transit providers, along with investments in mobility management programs to improve access for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents. ODOT estimates that \$7.1 billion will be needed to meet public transit needs through 2050.

5. How does the 2050 LRTP address traffic safety and road conditions?

Safety is one of seven primary goals that drive the 2050 LRTP. The plan outlines specific measures that will ensure a safe and secure transportation system, such as paving shoulders on rural two-lane highways, leveraging Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) for real-time traffic monitoring, and increasing priority for maintenance projects with the greatest safety impacts. Additionally, the 2050 LRTP notes the importance of bridge and pavement conditions, with a particular emphasis on interstate highway maintenance.



6. Does the 2050 LRTP address an alert system for road hazards and weather events?

Yes. The 2050 LRTP supports the use of Vehicle-to-Infrastructure (V2I) technologies, which will enable vehicles to receive real-time alerts about traffic conditions, hazards, and weather events. These systems are part of ODOT's broader Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) strategy to enhance safety and operational efficiency.

7. How does the 2050 LRTP address highway maintenance needs?

Highway maintenance is a core responsibility of ODOT. It is essential to keep roads and bridges safe, working well, and lasting longer. Beyond major construction and rehabilitation projects, regular maintenance ensures that roads, bridges, and related infrastructure remain in good condition despite daily wear, environmental impacts, and unexpected issues.

The 2050 LRTP estimates future maintenance needs by analyzing historical spending across routine, heavy, and special maintenance categories. However, unmet maintenance needs—those that exceed current budget ability—remain a challenge. These represent critical activities that ODOT has historically been unable to fully address due to limited funding. Maintenance needs total \$8.6 billion (\$333.1 million annually) from 2025-2050.

8. Can Oklahoma stop building highways and spend more on public transit instead?

The 2050 LRTP does not propose ending highway expansion. Maintaining and modernizing existing roads and bridges remains a priority. These roadways are an important element of our state transportation system and require regular assessments to meet safety standards, population demands, and traffic needs. The 2050 LRTP supports increased funding for transit projects but requires that new revenue sources be identified instead of decreasing the budget for our public roads. For example, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides several government competitive grants to support bus rapid transit lines, passenger rail systems, and other transit investments.

9. What is the difference between ODOT and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority (OTA)?

ODOT and the OTA are separate state organizations with different boards, funding, and legal authority.

- ODOT is responsible for the planning and upkeep of non-tolled interstates, U.S. highways, and state highways. It also works on other types of transportation, such as rail, airports, and ports. However, it does not handle the planning, design, building, funding, or maintenance of turnpikes.



- OTA, on the other hand, is responsible for the construction and operation of the Turnpike System. For more information, please visit: <https://oklahoma.gov/ota.html>

10. What does ODOT do with the feedback it receives for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan?

ODOT collected feedback through online surveys and public comment periods. This feedback is used to inform the development of the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2050 LRTP. Comments about specific projects or programs are provided to the appropriate ODOT Division or Field District Engineer.

11. How is ODOT addressing environmental impacts in transportation projects, particularly related to roadside stabilization and protection of groundwater resources?

ODOT is working to incorporate environmentally sustainable practices into its long-range transportation planning. Two areas of note include roadside stabilization and groundwater resources. ODOT staff are working to develop seed mixes for the state and are writing a special provision to incorporate this measure into construction design plans. The seed mixes being developed will include perennial plant species and be tailored to the ecoregion in which the project occurs.

In addition, there are studies in progress on the effects of groundwater withdrawals on the degradation or interference for springs and streams originating from the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer and, tools to measure and project the impacts of those withdrawals will be developed from the outcome of those studies (2019 HB2471). ODOT is committed to tracking new or revised regulations related to environmental studies as they are developed and/or implemented.