

STATE OF KANSAS

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 241 SOUTH
TOPEKA, KS 66612



PHONE: (785) 296-3232
GOVERNOR.KANSAS.GOV

GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

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Contact:

Lauren Fitzgerald

785.581.4730

lauren.fitzgerald@ks.gov

Jeanny Sharp

785.296.3585

Kansas Governor moves transportation plan FORWARD

Governor Laura Kelly and Julie Lorenz, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), announced a new transportation program, FORWARD, at a news conference today as part of the Transportation Day activities at the State Capitol.

“Key features of FORWARD include a flexible, responsive rolling program where major projects are selected every two years rather than once a decade,” Kelly said. “FORWARD also calls for completion of delayed T-WORKS projects; transit, aviation, rail, bike and pedestrian solutions that solve problems in rural and urban Kansas; and more partnerships with local communities to increase both local matches and the number of improvements we can make.”

FORWARD will also provide more resources to communities through new initiatives such as the Cost-Share, Local Bridge Improvement and Strategic Safety programs to help address Kansans’ pent-up demand for transportation investments, Secretary Lorenz said.

“Most importantly, FORWARD will provide better service through helping communities solve more transportation problems by utilizing all of KDOT’s resources,” Secretary Lorenz said.

Both Governor Kelly and Secretary Lorenz stressed the need to end transfers out of the State Highway Fund. Over the past several years, more than \$2 billion has been transferred,

causing the condition of the state's highway system to decline. Governor Kelly's budget, with the Legislature's support, began to reverse that trend last year.

"To pass FORWARD, we must close the 'Bank of KDOT' – and make sure that funding for transportation is spent on transportation," Kelly said. Governor Kelly has pledged to close the "Bank of KDOT" by the end of her first term.

The FORWARD program is a plan for Kansans, developed in consultation with Kansans, that works for the whole state.

"Kansans are ready to build a better transportation system for themselves and for future generations," Secretary Lorenz said. "With FORWARD, KDOT will be ready to deliver."

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