

Kansas Active Transportation Plan

Summary of Online Public Workshops and Focus Groups February 2021

In February 2021, the Kansas Department of Transportation held two weeks of engagement opportunities which included nine online public workshops and ten focus groups. Each of these meetings provided an overview of the planning process for the Active Transportation Plan. Participants discussed the vision and goals for the plan, improvement ideas, project types, and other issues related to improving walking, bicycling, and other active modes of transportation in Kansas.

This document provides a high-level summary of the input and key themes from the workshops and focus groups. For additional information, visit www.ksdot.org/KansasATP.asp where a recording and Mural notetaking boards from the meetings will be posted.

Draft Vision:

Kansas will be a place where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds have safe and convenient options to walk, bike, roll, and use other active modes for their daily transportation and recreation needs.

Draft Goals:

- **Safety:** Reduce the rate and severity of crashes involving pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable users.
- **Equity:** Invest in communities and populations that rely on active transportation and transit.
- **Mobility:** Increase the regular use of walking, bicycling, and other active transportation modes.
- **Connectivity:** Eliminate gaps and barriers to create comfortable, legible networks for active transportation.
- **Health:** Increase physical activity and promote the benefits of active transportation and recreation to Kansans' overall wellness.
- **Community Vibrancy:** Leverage transportation investments to support economic development, placemaking, and quality of life.
- **Sustainability:** Increase the use of carbon-neutral transportation, maintain existing infrastructure, and invest in transportation that moves all Kansans safely and comfortably regardless of travel mode.



Comments on Vision and Goals:

- Like that the vision is inclusive of many groups and broad enough to cover future scenarios
- Like that both transportation and recreation are included
- Like all ages, all abilities
- Vision should specifically call-out Accessibility, Education, Safety, and Equity
- Simplify the wording for a broad audience: Not everyone understands “legibility” and “connectivity”
- Need quantifiable goals to measure success
- Include a focus on the environment, emphasizing health benefits, and having equitable access to other public transportation routes
- Incorporate all users, including rural users, such as equestrians
- Should call out needs of people with disabilities
- Include a focus on economic development, marketing, and tourism
- Make the ATP an “action-based” plan that is given priority within KDOT
- Normalize active transportation
- Connect to major destinations
- Think more broadly about safety. Not just crashes: theft prevention, shade, and wildlife diversion can further protect users and improve their active transportation experience
- Provide more structured wording of goals.
- Incorporate these ideas into KDOT’s everyday way of doing business
- Should address vibrancy, sustainability, connect to essential services.

Comments and Ideas around Key Themes:

Equity

- Should be able to make a true “choice” between modes
- Equity between smaller and larger communities
- Equal and safe access to the built environment
- Should address equity between transportation user groups (car vs ped vs bike, etc), equity between neighborhoods
- Want to see more BIPOC and older and younger people walking and bicycling
- Need a better focus and a clearer understanding of equity
 - Rural and urban areas might respond differently to active transportation
 - User experiences with of public mobile transport, e-bikes, and/or bike share, may differ among communities
- Equity should do more than focus on populations that rely on active transportation—focus on all populations, regardless of the need for active transportation
- Funding improvements
 - Urban and rural areas will have different approaches and needs
 - Funding the most heavily used areas is important

Connectivity

- Want access to basics: jobs, food, healthcare facilities, schools, church, home, etc
- Open Space
- Parks and open green space
- Signage and wayfinding
- Maintenance and amenities
- Jobs
- Include signs/wayfinding, trail amenities, and direct routes to public transportation.



- Maintenance of improvements
 - Impacts usage of active transportation facilities
- New trails to connect to old trails
- Connect to transit
- Need end of trip facilities

Other Improvements

- Provide incentives for active transportation
- Emphasize trail heads, specifically quality, safety, access, and appeal (potential to become regional destinations)
 - Trailhead location may influence active transportation and public transport and associated common areas
- Provide education to various users: to drivers, bikes, peds regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety, horse buggies
- Education on pedestrian safety and respect
- On-street bike lanes
- Partnerships with schools
- Local projects
- Further funding safety and security
- Need reduction in traffic fatalities

Comments from Regional Meetings:

KC Metro

- Equity important
- Would like to see focus on access for all to multimodal facilities
- Need better connectivity between cities and between cities and rural areas
- Connect Manhattan, Topeka, Lawrence, KC
- Focus on safety
- Adopt statewide complete streets and vision zero

Wichita Region

- Build consensus with non-AT users
- On-street bicycle lanes
- Bike path networks connecting nearby cities
- Wide shoulder on rural roads - connectivity and tourism
- Pair events together, e.g. Bike/ped + other community events
- Community wide AT events like Open Streets, Cyclovia (Wichita) <https://openstreetsproject.org/>
- Parking lot retrofits at large commercial centers
- Sample ordinances (and other policies) for cities, counties
- Partnerships with schools
- Driver education on bike facilities
- Development of Big Ditch Bike trails connecting zoo and nearby neighborhoods
- Bel Aire - safe routes to school(s), fill in sidewalk gaps, etc., maintain crosswalks
- Douglas Ave needs separated bike lanes or other protection



Northeast Kansas (District 1)

- Need urban to rural connections
- Rails-to-Trails very important for rural communities
- Equity especially for limited access populations
- Prioritization should focus on fact that older parts of town may have greater needs
- Finish the Lawrence Loop
- Safety, equity important
- Need incentives for multimodal use
- Review KDOT projects for connectivity to shared use paths/trails during project scoping process
- Connect new trails to existing trail systems
- Connect lake Shawnee Trail with Deer Creek Trail
- Bike lane on highway 40 from Stuhl road to K-10 so I can ride to Lawrence
- N Manhattan Ave 2-way Protected Bike Lane (Manhattan)
- Casement Road Trail and Bike Lanes (Manhattan)

North Central Kansas (District 2)

- Need sidewalks in new developments
- Need more education for all users' types
- Great Bend Community College - need a safe connection to the CC from Great Bend. But also surveying students to determine interest, need and whether they would use it. Many students don't have cars. Would just take some improvements to the existing shoulder to make safer
- Work with coalitions to achieve goals
- Make sure to address urban suburban AND rural needs
- Roads should be safe for all users
- Identify funding sources
- Osborne Crossing need. US281/1st and public pool and the school.
- Good SRTS project, still some concerns with some crossing locations.
- Clay Center buses kids to school, due to distance and safety. Schools are broken up by groups of grade levels. Community divided by highways through town.
 - need for crossing improvements

Northwest Kansas (District 3)

- Promote Kansas as a destination/tourism
- Equal (or rational) geographic distribution of funds, infrastructure, resources, etc
- Need shoulders in NWKS especially along our state byways
- Keeping the Trans am route well maintained and bike friendly should be a high priority. Many foreign visitors judge the state by this.
- More trails, rail-trails
- Need end of trip facilities
- Signage, wayfinding, shoulders important
- Need paved facilities



Southeast Kansas (District 4)

- Equity means everyone can use facility
- Need more sidewalks, trails.
- In SEKS, Coordinated Transit District, but not actually coordinated across the region. A good project would be to coordinate better over the region
- Overcome the barrier of residents fighting sidewalks because they don't want to pay for it or maintain it. This is likely the reason most sidewalks are in disrepair.
- The Kansas Trails Council maintains a website with over 5000 mapped miles of Kansas trails and routes. It is interactive and amazing. The website is [GetOutdoorsKansas](#)
- Top 5 Priority List: Lincoln Park Connectivity; North Broadway to Hotels; South Broadway to Centennial Street; Downtown District; East 4th Street from Rouse to Water Street (Pittsburg, KS)
- Riverton Pride is currently working with our local utility company to provide a walking trail and community garden. (Riverton, KS)
- Will KDOT offer mini-grants for these projects?
- Looking at communities of different sizes and their different levels of resources-- keeping ped/bike needs on the front burner during typical transportation projects. Top-down policy or guidance to keep projects with amenities.
- KCK needs sidewalks
- lola is a town of 5,000 that is able to support a full-time retail bike shop. Bikes mean business!
- The recreational trails here in Allen county support a shop and a thriving little bike culture, which means people have far more resources for commuting, too.
- Active transportation is a great way to connect people and communities
- Eliminate Kansas laws: 8-1590 (d). Revise and possibly eliminate 8-1592 (c)
- I would like to see more bike/ pedestrian bridges, either thru reuse of old bridges or new construction
- All levels of government adopt the APBP Essentials of Bike Parking Guide as their technical reference point in bike parking.
- Adjust street designs and zoning regulations to support a transition to 20MPH as the default business and residential speed limit.
- Separated bike facilities (don't fund painted bike lanes on high-traffic roadways)
- Topeka Children's Discover does not have connection to/from Gage Park Trail
- Safe crossing at 68 Hwy near the school - Louisburg (no "h") high school middle school



South Central Kansas (District 5)

- Need more density to help achieve goals
- Need to pay more attention to people who walk and laws should reflect that
- Need funding for maintenance of active transportation routes.
- Connect towns-Rails-to-Trails can help
- In Barton County we do not have a safe route for students at our college to get to town, so it would be nice to get a trail for students or wider shoulders, safe for bikers or walkers
- Use more paved shoulders and signage
- Improve partnerships with railroad
- Expand Trails-Big Ditch, Prairie Sunset
- Harvey Co
 - Newton to Hesston trail/ facility along Old 81. And other connections to/from smaller communities
 - Developers request variance to avoid sidewalk construction, breaking up network.
 - Retrofit sidewalks and crosswalks to be accessible, ADA compliant
 - In-class education for walking and cycling. And materials for parents, caretakers to learn and help educate.
- Winfield - sidewalks and roadways (room for cyclists) are not safe or appropriate.
- Hutchinson
 - Restructure modal hierarchy when appropriate.
 - Sidewalk repair is passed on to homeowners, not a practical system for repair, funding would be helpful.
 - Incentives would help promote the use of active modes.
 - K-96 Hutch to Wichita - Wider shoulders and appropriate rumble strips to be more cycle-friendly
- We continue to aggressively pursue TA and SRTS funding opportunities, but we could use even more funding assistance for trail and sidewalk projects. Our sidewalk network is horribly out of maintenance and ADA compliance throughout the residential core.
- Connectivity between bike/ped and Ark River Trail opportunities (canoeing/kayaking) through Chestnut Park/Access Pt. 22

Southwest Kansas (District 6)

- Need to convince decision makers and general public that these are valid uses for transportation, not just recreation
- Need ways to prioritize projects. Garden City matrix developed and used to rate pathways needed for improvements to help prioritize funding.
- Safety is #1, but aesthetics and comfort will attract users.
- Sidewalk maintenance falling on homeowners is a barrier to more sidewalks
- Funding is heavily weighted to highway projects. E.g. Northwest bypass in Wichita, \$1M/year just on ROW but may not be built. \$1M/year on bike/ped facilities would be huge.

