

Business Plan

2023-24

MINISTRY OF HIGHWAYS

Saskatchewan! 

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Highways*

The transportation system is essential to supporting and growing Saskatchewan's economy. It connects Saskatchewan communities and businesses with jobs, markets, essential services, families, schools, and recreation. The ministry focuses on providing transportation infrastructure and services for a growing Saskatchewan by regulating, planning, building, maintaining, and operating a safe network. As Saskatchewan continues to produce the commodities the world needs, our focus on ensuring mobility within and connections to destinations outside of the province assists in promoting Saskatchewan production.

In 2023-24, the ministry will continue to deliver on its commitments within Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: The Next Decade of Growth 2020-2030. The ministry is investing \$422 million for over 1,000 kilometres of capital improvements, which makes important progress towards the 10-year goal of improving 10,000 kilometres of highways, bringing the total to more than 4,600 kilometres after four years. This year's investment includes major projects such as Highway 5 corridor improvements, beginning construction of twinning projects near Rowatt and Corinne on the Highways 6 and 39 corridor, and planning on the third and final phase of the Saskatoon Freeway functional study. With the 2023-24 budget, we will also be able to meet our five-year commitment to enhanced intersection safety.

Investments in improving and maintaining the highway network, along with the ministry's multi-year road safety strategy, support the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. Our transportation investments contribute to a stronger province and an improving quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. The ministry will continue to focus its efforts on maintaining and enhancing a sustainable transportation network that supports communities and businesses and connects the province to markets across Canada and around the world.



2023-24 Budget Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>Support the 10-year Growth Plan targets to build and upgrade 10,000 kilometres by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing \$48.8 million in major projects; • Delivering 870 kilometres of capital pavement preservation to improve road conditions; and, • Investing \$62.8 million to rebuild or replace 14 bridges and multiple culverts.
<p>2</p>	<p>Deliver the fifth and final year of the \$100 million investment into road safety to reduce the frequency and severity of collisions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$12.4 million for enhanced intersection safety as part of the five-year \$65 million intersection safety investment; and, • \$7.3 million for spot improvements through the Safety Improvement Program.
<p>3</p>	<p>Support the expansion of the forestry sector through a \$6.0 million investment in gravel preservation and right of way maintenance in northern Saskatchewan.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Invest an additional \$3.9 million for a \$30.5 million total investment for Road Safety and Traffic Guidance programs. This includes an additional \$1.5 million for forestry sector roads right of way maintenance as well as delivering mowing, sign rehabilitation and pavement marking as part of the ministry’s integrated road safety strategy.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Invest an additional \$9.4 million for the maintenance and preservation of highways and bridges, including \$4.5 million targeted for roads supporting the forestry sector. The surface preservation program investment of \$115.4 million helps maintain road conditions until asset renewal.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Dedicate \$90 million for 115 kilometres of thin membrane surface and other rural highway upgrades.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Invest \$26.5 million to support a one-network approach by working with partners to fund strategic transportation infrastructure investments and maintenance through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rural Integrated Roads for Growth program - \$15.0 million; • The Urban Highway Connector Program - \$6.6 million; • The Strategic Partnership Program – \$3.5 million, including \$1.3 million to support a significant expansion of the Moosomin airport; • The Community Airport Partnership program - \$850,000; and, • The Short Line Railway Improvement Program - \$530,000.

Government Vision and Goals

Saskatchewan's Vision

"...to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2023-24 annual reports.

Ministry of Highways Overview

Mandate

The ministry manages and provides for the future development of an integrated sustainable provincial transportation system, which supports economic growth and prosperity for Saskatchewan. Our infrastructure investments will be guided by strategic transportation policy and incorporate operating and maintenance practices which promote the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Mission

To provide a safe, reliable transportation system that supports Saskatchewan's growth agenda and quality of life. We strive to deliver innovative, sustainable infrastructure that serves the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

Vision

Transportation – Connecting Saskatchewan to the world.

Goal 1: Improved Safety and Environmental Sustainability

The ministry works to continually improve road safety, worker safety, environmentally responsible delivery of operations and projects, and minimizing the impact of transportation on the environment. These are important to ensuring the safety of ministry employees, Saskatchewan citizens and their families, as well as ensuring Saskatchewan communities are strong and safe. The ministry takes a proactive, risk-based approach to identify, mitigate, and respond to safety and environmental hazards. We strive to reduce and prevent serious injuries and fatalities through multi-year investments in road safety and infrastructure.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Target reductions in fatalities and injuries by delivering safety improvements on the transportation system.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Continue to implement the road safety strategy to reduce fatalities and injuries from collisions. The strategy is focused on intersections, dark driving conditions, single vehicles running off the road and collisions with wildlife.
 - Invest \$12.4 million towards the fifth and final year of the ministry's five-year \$65 million enhanced intersection commitment.
 - Deliver the pavement marking program to provide visible pavement lines for the safe flow of traffic.
 - Deliver the signing stewardship program to rehabilitate, replace and install new signs to keep the overall condition of the approximately 120,000 regulatory, warning, guide, and information signs on the provincial network in good condition.
 - Deliver the mowing program, which will achieve approximately 43,500 hectares of mowing along highway right of ways.
- Improve traffic flow and increase safety through the construction and planning of major capacity and safety improvement projects, including:
 - Highway 5 corridor improvements east of Saskatoon; and,
 - Highways 6 and 39 corridor planning and beginning the construction of twinning projects near Rowatt and Corinne.
- Ensure rail line safety through inspections and safety management plan audits.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Foster a culture of safety by enforcing an injury prevention strategy to pursue Mission Zero.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Communicate safe driving practices to the public through the Work Zone and Snow Zone campaigns to reinforce slowing to 60 km/h in work zones and driving safely when approaching snowplows.
- Reinforce safe workplace practices and behaviors by conducting work zone audits on construction projects and maintenance activities.
- Continue to deliver and improve the Ministry's Health and Safety Management System to achieve and sustain a healthy and safe workplace.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Provide environmental stewardship on all ministry activities through responsible operations, maintenance, and project delivery.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Perform audits to assess project delivery and compliance with federal and provincial environmental regulations.
- Explore and implement environmentally sustainable approaches for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining the transportation system.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Reduction in fatality and injury collisions rate

Target = five-year (2021 to 2025) rolling average of 8.9 collisions per 100 million vehicle kilometres traveled

This measure uses a five-year rolling average collision rate for fatality and injury collisions to track highway safety over time. The ministry aims to reduce the rate through operations and maintenance practices and infrastructure safety improvements delivered through the road safety strategy. Focus areas of the safety strategy are incidents relating to dark driving conditions, intersections, single vehicles running off the road and wildlife.

Per cent of provincially regulated railway Safety Management Plans (SMP) audited on a five-year cycle

Target = 100 per cent of plans on file with the ministry by March 31, 2027

Safety management plans are used by industry and the ministry to ensure that procedures are in place to prevent or address rail incidents. To obtain an operating license from the Highway Traffic Board, it is a requirement of short line and industrial rail lines to have a safety management plan. The SMP audit includes a review of records, as well as a physical inspection.

Per cent of short line inspections performed within specified timelines

Target = 100 per cent

There are 1,206 short line public grade crossings and 2,131 kilometres of short line track in the province. A crossing is where the rail line intersects with a road. The ministry inspects the crossings on a four-year cycle to ensure the safe movement of rail cars, and recommends repairs to the short line companies. The ministry inspects rail lines on a three-year cycle to ensure the safe movement of rail cars, and recommends repairs to the short line and industrial rail line companies.

Number of Work Zone safety audits performed by the ministry

Target = 50 Work Zone audits

The ministry performs regular safety inspections on work zone locations. This is done to improve the safety of workers and road users, so that incidents are prevented.

Number of safety incidents in work zones and snow zones

This is a measure of safety incidents occurring in ministry work zones and snow zones. An incident is an unplanned event that results in or has the potential to result in injury or property damage. A work zone is a controlled and marked area where active work is ongoing, typically noted with work zone signage. Snow zone incidents are between the public and a snowplow.

Goal 2: Improved Road Conditions

The ministry maintains over 26,400 kilometres of highways, the largest per capita network in Canada. Optimizing asset life cycles and ensuring quality work and service levels is an important part of reliable and safe access for Saskatchewan's communities and businesses. This goal is about preserving and maintaining roads and bridges, addressing aging infrastructure, and providing road users with essential information on road conditions. This goal delivers on the 10-year Growth Plan goals to build and upgrade 10,000 kilometres of highways, including over 2,000 kilometres of thin membrane surface roads, as well as rebuilding 200 bridges and replacing 2,000 culverts to support a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Maintain and rehabilitate provincially owned transportation infrastructure to improve the driving experience and optimize service life of provincial highways.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Deliver 230 kilometres of repaving of highways, which renews the pavements life cycle by restoring it to new condition.
- Deliver 300 kilometres of medium pavement treatments like thin lift over lays or micro-surfacing, which primarily mitigate rutting and improve longevity.
- Deliver 340 kilometres of light pavement treatments like sealcoats, which seal the surface from moisture and increase longevity.
- Deliver 115 kilometres of upgrades to rural provincial highways.
- Deliver 35 kilometres of gravel surface rehabilitation projects.
- Extend the service life and ensure the adequacy of bridge and drainage structures:
 - Replace 13 short span bridges at end of their service life with new bridges or culverts;
 - Complete major repairs on one bridge to extend the service life of large span bridges; and,
 - Replace over 100 culverts.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Support a well-informed transportation user by communicating road conditions.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Continue to provide accurate, timely and reliable road information for travelers through the Highway Hotline.
- Continue to invest in Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) devices such as cameras, variable message signs, road weather information systems, and traffic counters to increase the accuracy and timeliness of information available to transportation users.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Number of kilometres that are built or upgraded

Target = 10,000 kilometres by 2029-30

The ministry continues to support Growth Plan goals by expanding the number of passing lanes and thin membrane surface improvements, such as light pavement construction, spot improvements, and upgrading some highways to good sustainable gravel surfaces.

Number of bridges and culverts replaced or rehabilitated

Target = 200 bridges and 2,000 culverts by 2029-30

The ministry uses a bridge condition index to assess the general health of the provincial bridge inventory. This is used to identify and prioritize structures that need replacing or rehabilitation.

Per cent of pavements in fair to very good condition on the National Highway System (NHS)

Target = 90 per cent

The ministry maintains over 16,000 kilometres of paved highway, including 4,013 kilometres on the NHS. The ministry uses a measure of roughness to represent road condition. This information, when combined with other data, determines when repaving or other pavement preservation treatments are needed.

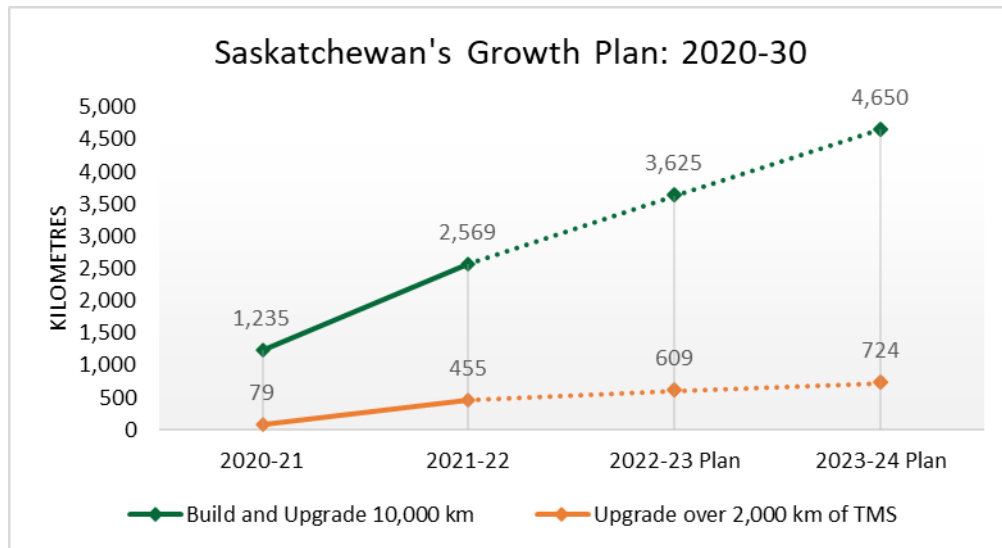


Figure 1. Planned progress on the Growth Plan goals

Goal 3: Integrated Transportation Infrastructure Network

The transportation system connects Saskatchewan communities to jobs, markets, essential services, families, schools, and recreation. Most trips do not begin and end on provincial highways, so the ministry takes a one-network approach to municipal and provincial transportation system integration to better utilize the existing network and achieve economic growth and quality of life outcomes. The ministry also supports airports and regulates short line rail to ensure safety and economic competitiveness. We work with partners to manage transportation assets effectively and efficiently, as well as plan and fund strategic investments to improve and maintain access to communities and industries.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Work with stakeholders and community partners to manage traffic demand and improve transportation asset conditions through a one-network approach.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Invest \$15 million through the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) program. RIRG is a partnership agreement with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities for municipal road and bridge enhancement and preservation.
 - Continue the delivery of the RIRG commitment for the enhancement and preservation of 100 roads and 100 bridges.
- Deliver alternate truck route partnerships to optimize the utilization of existing infrastructure.
- Work with rural municipalities and stakeholders to create new construction and maintenance partnerships to improve and sustain the network.
- Invest \$6.6 million through the Urban Highway Connector Program to improve efficiency, connectivity, and the surface condition of roads through urban centres.
- Invest \$850,000 through the Community Airport Partnership program to advance rehabilitation, construction, and capital investments in community airport infrastructure; and,
- Invest \$530,000 through the Short Line Railway Improvement Program to support the short line rail industry in maintaining and upgrading rail infrastructure.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Per cent of thin membrane surface highways managed using partnerships

Target = 16 per cent

This measure reflects the strategic partnerships that are assisting the ministry in maintaining reliable access. These partnerships with municipalities involve the utilization of municipal roads to re-route heavy vehicles that would otherwise damage sensitive segments of the provincial highway network.

Goal 4: Efficient Travel for People and Goods

This goal focuses on regulatory harmonization and investing in major corridors so goods can move efficiently in and out of the province. Improving network mobility attracts and supports trade and investment in Saskatchewan communities. The ministry invests in a multi-modal network that meets the needs of travelers and businesses across Canada. We work with stakeholders, community partners, and other jurisdictions to provide safe, reliable, and efficient movement of goods and people for the resilience of local economies.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Ensure the safe and reliable flow of goods and people by efficiently managing a multi-modal transportation system.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Deliver the Transportation Partnership Program to contribute to the commercial vehicle efficiency of partnering companies shipping goods to or from their Saskatchewan facilities.
- Invest in capital upgrades at ministry airports to improve access and safety, including planning for future projects to be delivered through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- Invest \$89.4 million to improve and maintain transportation infrastructure in northern Saskatchewan.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Identify and develop transportation options to improve Saskatchewan's competitiveness, by working proactively with the province's export and transportation sectors, other western provinces, the federal government, and the U.S.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Promote economic competitiveness by supporting a National Transportation Strategy and jurisdictional regulatory harmonization.
- Facilitate the efficient transportation of goods through trade corridors, including examining options to enhance north-south networks and to provide competitive alternatives and broader multi-modal access.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Per cent availability of the highway network

Target = 99.99 per cent

This measure is used to determine highway network reliability. It is a measure of kilometres closed for various reasons, including extreme weather and collisions.

Per cent availability of provincially operated ferries

Target = 98 per cent

This measure shows the reliability of the 12 provincially operated ferries. It is a measure of scheduled availability against time lost for various reasons, including water levels and weather conditions.

Per cent availability of airport services at the provincially operated airports

Target = 98 per cent

This measure shows the reliability of the 16 provincially operated airports. It is a measure of scheduled availability against time lost for various reasons, including weather conditions.

Per cent of single trip permits issued within 24 hours

Target = 98 per cent

Single trip permits are required for vehicle configurations that exceed vehicle weight and dimension regulations for a particular route. Permitting is offered to ensure efficient travel for commercial vehicles while protecting road infrastructure assets. This is a measure of the efficiency of the permitting system in serving industry.

Goal 5: Commitment to Excellence

The ministry strives to be a high performing organization by being accountable, transparent, engaged, and having effective leadership, tools, and systems. Having engaged, healthy and skilled employees is instrumental to uphold the Government of Saskatchewan’s core values, and drives an adaptable and efficient organization. This will result in high-quality customer service, and processes that are continuously improving for a modern transportation system that supports Saskatchewan’s economy and its citizens.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Foster an accountable, solution-focused, and knowledgeable workforce by enhancing employee engagement and inclusion.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Improve employee engagement and maintain corporate knowledge through learning and development activities.
- Continue work to enhance the ministry’s inclusive and diverse workforce through increasing employment opportunities for indigenous people and other diversity groups.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Promote and strengthen a citizen-centred organization with effective tools, processes and systems through continuous improvement and innovation.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Continuously improve project delivery through engaging with stakeholders and working together to promote innovation, collaboration and solutions in the effective delivery and quality of construction projects.
- Provide citizens and industry with easy access to services and information through the ministry’s Customer Service Centre and the trucking inquiry line.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Customer satisfaction in their interaction with the ministry’s Customer Service Centre

Citizen-centered service is a primary goal of the ministry’s strategic direction. The Customer Service Center strives to assist the people of Saskatchewan to easily access information by being a single point of contact for inquiries, complaints, and vehicle damage claims. This measure represents the Customer Service Centre’s ability to consistently deliver high quality service.

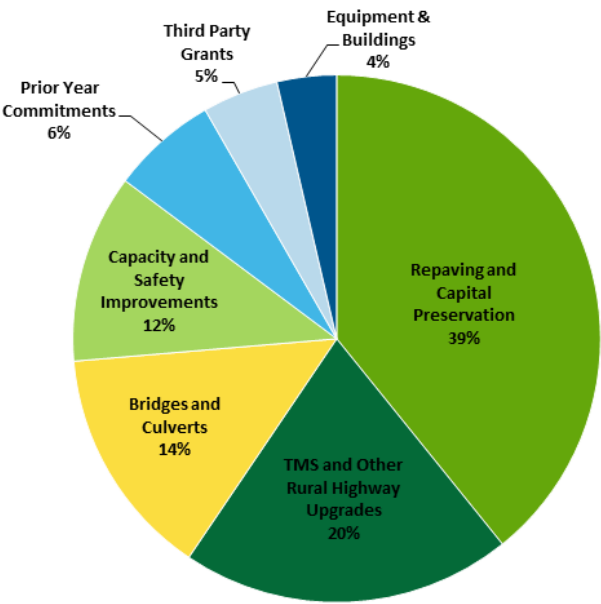
Per cent employee engagement

Employee engagement is measured by survey every two years. This is an important measure for the ministry as it relates to advancing a desired value-based culture where employees are excited about and committed to their work in delivering citizen-centred service.

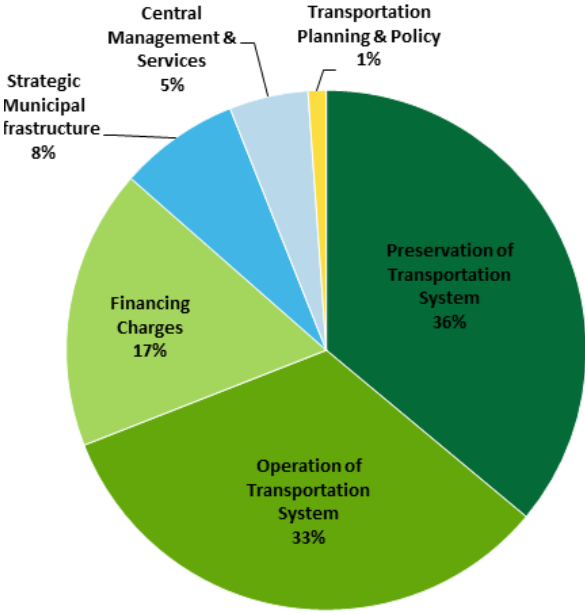
Financial Summary

Ministry of Highways 2023-24 Estimates (\$776.054 million)	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$17,361
Preservation of Transportation System	\$127,554
Transportation Planning and Policy	\$3,968
Infrastructure and Equipment Capital	\$422,291
Custom Work Activity	--
Operation of Transportation System	\$178,383
Strategic Municipal Infrastructure	\$26,497
Total Appropriation	\$776,054
P3 Financing Charges Adjusted to Opening Accumulated Deficit	\$(28,747)
Capital Asset Acquisitions	\$(422,291)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	\$270,996
Total Expense	\$596,012

Capital Investment



Expense Budget



Links to More Information

- [Ministry of Highways](#)
- [Government of Saskatchewan Budget, Planning and Reporting](#)