

Business Plan

2024-25

Ministry of Highways

Saskatchewan! 

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Lori Carr
Minister of Highways*

At the core of Saskatchewan's economic engine is a robust transportation network, serving as the backbone of our prosperity. This year's \$741 million investment continues our focus on improving road conditions, road safety and connecting people and goods to keep Saskatchewan growing. Transportation supports growth that brings employment opportunities, access to markets, and connects people to services, friends, and families.

In 2024-25, our ministry will continue to fulfill its commitments within Saskatchewan's Growth Plan: *The Next Decade of Growth 2020-2030*. The ministry's capital investment of \$404 million will deliver more than 1,100 kilometres of improvements, continuing our progress towards the 10-year goal of improving 10,000 kilometres of highways. This year's work will raise the total to more than 5,900 kilometres after five years. Our government completed its five-year \$100 million road safety investment in 2023-24 which included the \$65 million enhanced intersection safety investment. In 2024-25 we will continue to focus on safety by investing \$17.6 million in the capital Safety Improvement Program. We will also continue to enable economic growth while improving safety through Highway 6 and 39 twinning near Rowatt and Corinne and Highway 5 corridor improvements east of Saskatoon.

Improving the transportation system is a key priority to ensuring that Saskatchewan remains an attractive place for business and delivers an excellent quality of life for residents. The ministry is continuing its work with other levels of government and neighbouring jurisdictions to make trade more efficient through infrastructure and regulatory improvements. This year we will continue to focus on first and last mile maintenance and improvements to ensure the supply chain is open in Saskatchewan and our commodities can get to market effectively.

2024-25 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 \$56.5 million through continuing major multi-year projects, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ twinning improvements on Highways 6 and 39; ○ corridor improvements on Highway 5 east of Saskatoon; and, ○ planning and design work for the ongoing multi-year passing lane strategy. • Delivering 1,000 kilometres of capital pavement preservation to improve road conditions; and, • Investing \$59.3 million to rebuild or replace 17 bridges and multiple culverts including the second of two bridges on Highway 6 over Regina’s Ring Road.
<p>2</p>	<p>Deliver \$17.6 million through the Safety Improvement Program. This investment delivers improvements to intersections, guardrails, lighting, and other assets to reduce the frequency and severity of collisions.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Invest an additional \$6 million for the maintenance and preservation of paved highways. The surface preservation program investment of \$116.9 million helps maintain road conditions until asset renewal.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Dedicate \$46.7 million for 58 kilometres of thin membrane surface and other rural highway upgrades.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Invest \$29.5 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 - \$17.4 million, including increases of \$1.0 million for capital projects and \$1.4 million for Clearing the Path operating and maintenance agreements; • The Urban Highway Connector Program - \$8.6 million, an increase of \$2.0 million for capital projects; • The Strategic Partnership Program - \$2.2 million for truck route agreements and other municipal partnerships; • 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 enable the safe, reliable, and sustainable mobility of people and goods to support Saskatchewan's growth and quality of life.

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 minimize the impact of transportation on the environment. These are important to ensure 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 \$17.6 million towards the ministry's Safety Improvement Program with projects like guardrail, lighting, and intersection improvements.
 - 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 124,000 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;
 - Highway 6 and 39 corridor twinning projects near Rowatt and Corinne; and,
 - Planning and design work for future corridor improvement projects through the ongoing multi-year passing lane strategy.
- Ensure rail line safety through inspections and safety management plan audits.

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

Foster a safety culture in the workplace 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*

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.

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

A five-year rolling average collision rate for fatality and injury collisions is used 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 that are conducted utilizing a risk-based approach on a 3, 4 or 5-year cycle.

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. The ministry educates road users through advertising campaigns and work zone signage to influence drivers to encourage safe driving practices and to plan ahead using the Highway Hotline.

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Goal 2: Improved Road Conditions

The ministry maintains over 26,400 kilometres of highways, the largest per capita network in Canada. The ministry strives to optimize asset life cycles and ensure quality work and service levels as 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 reliability and comfort on the road. This goal also 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 (TMS) 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 260 kilometres of repaving of highways, which renews the pavement's life cycle by restoring it to new condition.
- Deliver 365 kilometres of medium pavement treatments like thin overlays or micro-surfacing, which primarily mitigate rutting and improve longevity.
- Deliver 400 kilometres of light pavement treatments like sealcoats, which seal the surface from moisture and increase longevity.
- Deliver 58 kilometres of upgrades to rural provincial highways.
- Deliver 25 kilometres of gravel surface rehabilitation projects.
- Extend the service life and ensure the adequacy of bridge and drainage structures:
 - Replace 14 short span bridges at the end of their service life with new bridges or culverts;
 - Complete major repairs on three bridges to extend the service life of large span bridges; and
 - Replace 100 culverts.

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 delivering improvements like expanding the number of passing lanes or twinned highways, pavement treatments 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

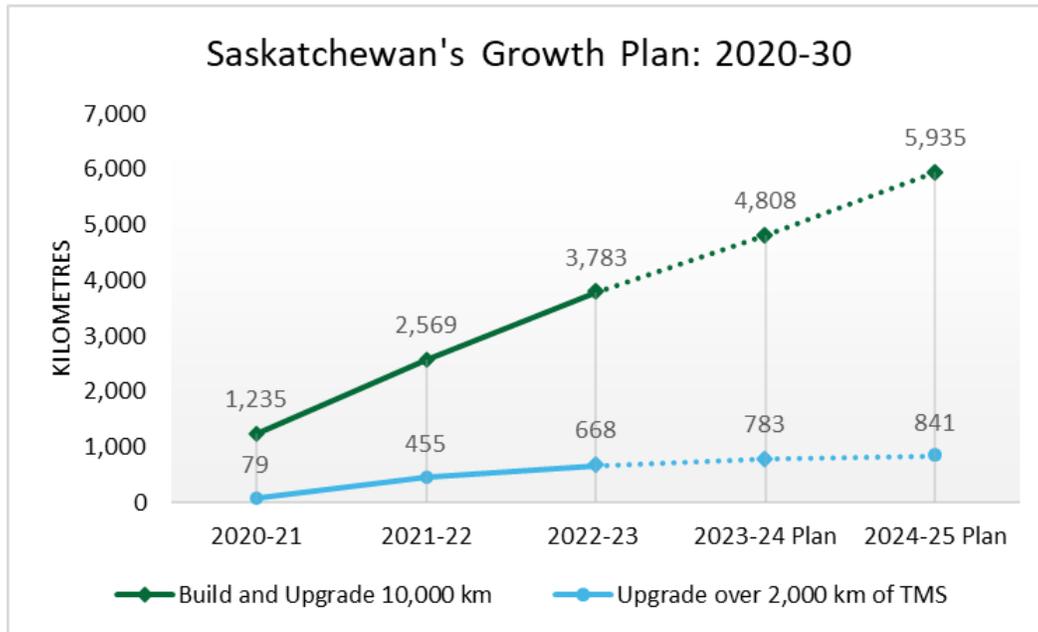
Target = 200 bridges and 2,000 culverts by 2029-30

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 pavement 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 4,016 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.



Goal 3: Improved Mobility for People and Goods

The ministry takes a one-network approach to municipal and provincial transportation system integration to better utilize the existing network, connect people and goods through multiple modes of transportation, and achieve economic growth and quality of life outcomes. We work with community and industry partners, and other jurisdictions to plan and fund strategic transportation investments.

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 \$17.4 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.
 - Deliver \$9.9 million for rural road operations and maintenance through the Clearing the Path program.
 - Deliver \$7.5 million for capital rural road and bridge improvements.
- 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 \$8.6 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 rail infrastructure.

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 \$73.5 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 advocating for investment in the national transportation system and collaborating with other jurisdictions.
- Facilitate the efficient transportation of goods on trade corridors through strengthening harmonization.

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.

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 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 4: Commitment to Excellence

Healthy, engaged, and capable employees are instrumental to living the Government of Saskatchewan’s core values and driving ministry success. The ministry strives to provide high-quality customer service by promoting accountability, innovation and effective leadership, tools, and systems. We focus on building capacity and strong teams that support a continuously improving and adaptable organization.

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 quality solutions.
- 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.

Number of graduates from the ministry’s internal leadership development programs

The ministry is committed to investing in employees to help develop leadership skills and prepare individuals for new roles and professional growth. The Accelerated Leadership Development Program (ALDP) assists candidates with developing and refining their leadership skills through workshops, collaborating with others across the ministry, mentoring, and leadership learning opportunities. The Operations Leadership Development Program (OLDP) focuses on the competencies of operations supervisors and management to deliver the best operational outcomes and prepare candidates to advance their career.

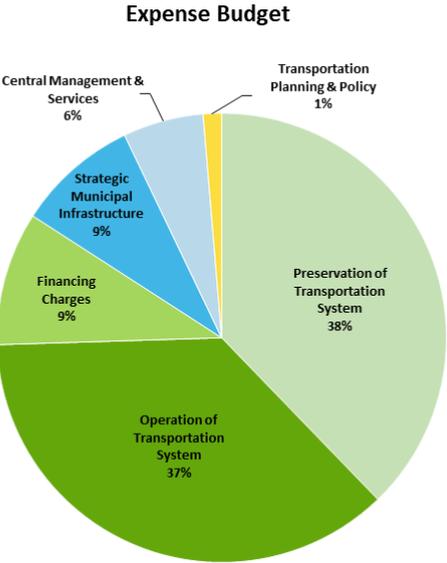
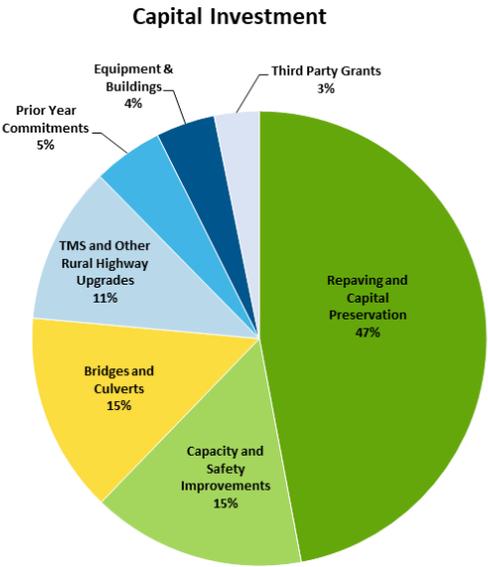
2024-25 Improvement and Innovation Highlights



1	<p>Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Regulation update: Commercial carriers looking for the most efficient method of getting products to market drives innovation in the industry through advancements in vehicle configurations and capacity. The ministry regulates the configurations, weights and dimensions of vehicles allowed on the highway system. Through annual legislative review the ministry maintains safety standards, increases harmonization across jurisdictions and enables companies to increase their efficiency. The review and updates to The Weight and Dimension Regulations support the sector and contribute to economic growth.</p>
2	<p>Aviation Strategy development: Saskatchewan has more than 145 airports/aerodromes owned and operated by various organizations across the province; these airports are a key component of the provincial transportation network. The ministry operates 16 provincial airports and delivers a grant program to support community airport maintenance and upgrades. The ministry is developing an aviation strategy to optimize the sector’s potential to support economic and social development in the province. The strategy will provide current information on trends in the sector and identify priority actions, policy needs and potential investments in provincial air services and airport infrastructure that support safe, efficient, and reliable aviation services and align with Saskatchewan’s Growth Plan.</p>
3	<p>Construction Manual update: The ministry’s Construction Manual houses the ministry’s policies, practices and procedures related to construction administration. The manual was published in 1997 and is used by the construction industry to deliver consistent construction projects for the ministry. The Construction Manual is a key tool utilized to onboard consultants to effectively manage projects for the ministry. To ensure the manual reflects current procedures, software, and ministry organizational structure, the ministry plans to implement 74 updated sections of the Construction Manual. Through implementation of the updates the ministry will be raising awareness with consultants and staff on the purpose and intended use of the manual. The ministry also plans to continue reviewing, amending, and publishing additional sections in consultation with staff and industry. The revised manual will provide clear expectations, protocol and processes to the industry stakeholders that deliver and manage construction work for the ministry.</p>

Financial Summary

Ministry of Highways 2024-25 Estimates (\$741 million)	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$19,525
Preservation of Transportation System	\$127,389
Transportation Planning and Policy	\$4,454
Infrastructure and Equipment Capital	\$403,946
Custom Work Activity	-\$
Operation of Transportation System	\$156,288
Strategic Municipal Infrastructure	\$29,547
Total Appropriation	\$741,149
Capital Asset Acquisitions	\$(403,946)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	\$279,874
Total Expense	\$617,077



Links to More Information

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