

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BUSINESS PLAN GUIDANCE



Message from Secretary Reed

A strategic plan is a road map identifying where we want to be, what factors we can and cannot control, where we dedicate resources and how we measure progress. For the last six months, agency leadership - District Engineers, Bureau Chiefs, Division Directors and 44 working group members have had focused discussions with the goal of understanding what we are doing well, what could be better and what some of the threats and opportunities are to delivering on our purpose.

The result of these thoughtful and productive conversations has been the crafting of our agency's purpose, values, goals and objectives. These pieces establish what we aspire to be as an agency and where we need to go to achieve that. Now, it's time for the **most critical piece of our strategic planning effort – how we're going to get where we need to go. Developing work unit objectives, strategies, and metrics to track our progress provides us with the tools and direction we need to get where we want to go. These are the components of the business plan we're asking you to develop.**

This is your plan. Decisions are always better when the people impacted most by them have a role in shaping them. This guidance document provides structure and parameters to ensure we have a consistent approach across all work units, but we've maintained flexibility so you can tailor your business plan to fit your team. **Work collaboratively with your team to set objectives and develop strategies that inspire, benefit and challenge you all.**

Our agency's purpose is to deliver transportation that keeps Kansans moving forward. As you craft your plan, keep that as your North Star. If you can easily explain how these objectives and strategies serve our purpose, you're on the right track.

I look forward to seeing the innovation you will bring to our agency. Thank you for all you do.

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN



PURPOSE

Why we exist and what we do for Kansans.

KDOT delivers transportation that keeps Kansans moving forward.

VALUES

What guides or defines how we do our work.



People Focused

Our work puts people first.



Results

We strive to do every job well and decisions are informed by data and experience.



Forward Looking

We deliver today and plan for future generations.



Accountable

We earn trust through transparent and consistent actions.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

What we want to achieve/where we want to go.

Goal: EMPOWER PEOPLE

Provide employees and our partners the tools, resources and guidance they need to be successful.

Objectives

- Improve the employee experience to retain talent and attract new talent.
- Develop a culture of continuous learning to support employees and promote our ability to serve Kansans.
- Improve access to and delivery of tools, resources and guidance that help communities and partners thrive.
- Improve customer satisfaction to build and strengthen relationships.

Goal: IMPROVE SAFETY

Improve and enhance safety practices that put the safety of people first.

Objectives

- Promote the physical and psychological well-being of our workforce to reduce injuries and death.
- Improve and enhance practices that put the safety of Kansas first.

Goal: STEWARDSHIP

Use resources to maximize benefits today and for the future.

Objectives

- Evaluate and demonstrate the value of transportation investments through asset management and strategic analysis.
- Maximize funding to fulfill the promises of IKE and future transportation programs.
- Make data, tools and resources available, relevant and useful to support decision making.

Goal: PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Review and update practices and policies to meet the evolving needs of the agency.

Objectives

- Implement and promote the use of technologies and processes to improve efficiency and decision-making.
- Improve the organization of work and skills within the agency to promote staff development and a more effective agency.
- Review and update policies to meet the evolving needs of the workforce, agency and technologies.

Work Unit Business Plans

The Work Unit Business Plans will help serve the agency in several ways:

- Translate broad agency goals and objectives into specific, actionable initiatives at the business unit level
- Bring clarity and focus to our priorities and responsibilities
- Measure and communicate our success

The Schedule

Business Plans will be developed annually. They should be submitted by December 31. Progress and updates reporting will be due each quarter.



Some objectives may benefit from more frequent updates
Objectives and strategies can be refined and reprioritized as needed

Definition of a Work Unit

A “Work Unit” is a group that is right-sized for the purpose of developing a Business Plan and includes:

- All Divisions
- Most Bureaus
- A group of colleagues within a Bureau
- A program, process, or a service that cuts across the agency (e.g. Cost Share Program, hiring processes, etc.).

Other Resources Available to You

- Senior Leaders can provide advice, direction, and support
- The Continuous Improvement Team is available to provide or arrange support in a variety of areas, such as:
 - Technical assistance with data
 - Facilitation of team discussions
 - Review of draft ideas/language
 - Coordination across work units
- The Agency Objectives were established by Working Groups, members of which can help provide additional context as you develop your Business Plans (see last page for members).

The following information describes the process that can be used to develop the Business Plans:

Gather Input from the Team

The Strategic Plan is an opportunity for all KDOT employees to weigh in on what is important to KDOT, identify what the priorities should be, and shape the Strategic Plan. Use this as an opportunity to gather the team together and to get input on what the Work Unit Business Plan should focus on.

How To Do It

- Introduce** the concept of the Strategic Plan and Work Unit Business Plans.
- Discuss** how your work connects to the Purpose: “KDOT delivers transportation that keeps Kansans moving forward”
- Discuss** what issues, challenges, and priorities are most pressing for your work unit.
- Review** the agency-wide objectives and identify which ones best align with your work unit and the issues/challenges/priorities you’ve discussed.

Craft a Work Unit Purpose

KDOT’s purpose is to **deliver transportation that keeps Kansans moving forward**. It’s important for all employees to understand the unique role they play in achieving KDOT’s purpose. When you draft your work unit purpose use words that resonate with your teams. This is about connecting the work you do with the agency’s purpose and does not need to be formal language.

How To Do It

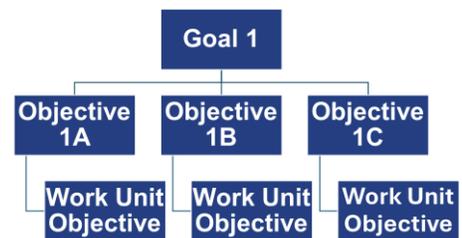
For your work unit purpose, please complete this statement: “We deliver transportation that keeps Kansans moving forward by...”

Create Work Unit Objectives

Work Unit Objectives are the heart of our Strategic Plan. These are the measurable steps your work unit will contribute to achieving our goals. Focus on the things that matter most and are a priority for you. Objectives should be specific and measurable, whenever possible. They should focus on outcomes (the results of achieving an objective) vs. outputs (simply the number of something). For example: the percentage of pavement in good condition is an outcome, while the number of miles paved is an output.

Objectives don’t have to be designed to create new initiatives; they can be things that you’re already doing that help advance the Strategic Plan.

They should be achievable, but it is okay for an objective to be difficult – stretch goals are good and we don’t expect we’ll complete 100% of every objective. We can adjust our target if circumstances change.



How To Do It

- Create** 2-3 work unit objectives.
 - Work Unit Objectives need not be created 1:1 for every Agency Objective.
- Identify** an owner or person in charge of each objective.
- Determine** how you will measure success and any relevant data.
- Determine** how frequently you plan to provide progress updates (at least quarterly)

Create Work Unit Strategies

Work Unit Strategies are what make our Strategic Plan a living, actionable plan. They are intended to provide a clear guide for us to follow to achieve our long-term goals and bridge the gap between high-level agency objectives and the day-to-day operations. Strategies should reflect your highest priorities and be mindful of our limited time and resources. They need not be long term, and in fact may have short timelines; new strategies can (and likely will be) be added periodically. If meeting an Objective will require several steps or strategies, it's okay to start with just the first one or two, then move on to the next steps later.

How To Do It

Create at least one strategy for each Work Unit Objective.

Focus on actions that will bring about improvement, efficiency, or positive change.

Set a target date for completing the strategy.

Determine who will lead each strategy.

Decide how frequently you plan to provide progress updates.

Check-in with Senior Leadership

Periodic discussions with Senior Leadership help ensure your work unit is contributing to the progress necessary to help meet the agency goals and objectives.

Submit your Plan

To streamline the information gathering process, a [Business Plan Portal](#) has been developed and can be found by [clicking here](#). The portal includes:

- A template to develop and submit your Business Plan
- A mechanism to link to relevant data
- The ability to provide progress updates in the future
- Instructions, including a walkthrough video

If you have any questions about how to use the portal, please reach out to Valerie Jimenez in the Continuous Improvement Team at Valerie.Jimenez1@ks.gov or 785.217.0704.

Track and Report Progress

Tracking and reporting progress towards the Strategic Plan goals and objectives will be important to ensure success and to help us communicate that success to Kansans.

How To Do It

Establish how your work unit will review your progress on a regular basis

- Meet frequently (bi-weekly or monthly) to review your progress
- These meetings can be short and as simple as assessing if a priority is on-track

Report your progress

- At a minimum progress should be reported quarterly and annually
- For strategies and objectives that are appropriate to measure more frequently, monthly may be appropriate

Keep in mind that you will have the opportunity to refine and reprioritize strategies as needed or as conditions change.

The following is a collection of thoughts from Senior Leaders and the Working Groups that developed them, and could provide context as you develop your Business Plan:

Goal: Empower People

Provide employees and partners with the tools, resources and guidance they need to be successful.

OBJECTIVE 1

Improve the employee experience to retain talent and attract new talent

Consider any aspects of the employee experience that are a priority, such as:

- Communicating/promoting the value of working at KDOT
- Reducing turnover, improving recruiting and onboarding
- Improving communication within the agency
- Improving employee satisfaction, recognition and rewards
- Encouraging a sense of ownership and accountability

OBJECTIVE 2

Develop a culture of continuous learning to support employees and promote our ability to serve Kansans

This could include a wide variety of topics, including:

- Mentoring, training, professional development, coaching, career progression paths, etc.
- Knowledge management (capturing, organizing, and sharing knowledge and information)

OBJECTIVE 3

Improve access to and delivery of tools, resources and guidance that help communities and partners thrive

Consider how we can:

- Support and coordinate with communities as they pursue federal grant opportunities
- Share our expertise with stakeholders, communities, and partners
- Provide tools and resources to stakeholders and partners to help them achieve their goals

OBJECTIVE 4

Improve customer satisfaction to build and strengthen relationships with those we serve

Consider how we can:

- Measure customer satisfaction to inform the public about what we do and/or answer questions quickly and effectively
- Improve our relationships with each other, communities, stakeholders, industry partners, and the public

Goal: Improve Safety

Improve and enhance safety practices that put the safety of people first.

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote the physical and psychological well-being of our workforce to reduce injuries and death

Consider how we can:

- Keep safety top of mind, especially in the field and in work zones
- Ensure staff are supported not just in their physical safety, but also mental health

OBJECTIVE 2

Improve and enhance safety practices that put safety of employees and Kansans first

Consider how we can:

- Reduce fatalities and injuries on the transportation system
- Incorporate additional safety features into our planning, design, and construction of projects
- Utilize technology to improve safety on the roadways and in the workplace
- Impact driver behavior through strategic communications and messaging

Agency Goal: Stewardship

Use resources to maximize benefits today and for the future.

OBJECTIVE 1

Evaluate and demonstrate the value of transportation investments through asset management and strategic analysis

Consider how we can:

- Better inventory our assets and their condition
- Incorporate life-cycle costs into our analysis and decision-making
- Use technology and innovation to better manage our assets (asset management tools, predictive analytics, etc.)
- Communicate the value of transportation to our stakeholders and the public

OBJECTIVE 2

Maximize funding to fulfill the promises of the IKE and future transportation programs

Consider how we can:

- Optimize our resources by ensuring alignment with our strategic priorities
- Identify creative funding and financing approaches to maximize our resources
- Leverage additional funding sources, e.g. federal grants
- Manage our budget(s) as efficiently as possible

OBJECTIVE 3

Make data, tools and resources available, relevant and useful to support decision making

Consider how we can:

- Integrate and centralize our data
- Better use the technology and tools we have to improve decision-making
- Adopt the use of new technology and tools to support decision-making
- Offer technical training and support to assist those who could benefit

Agency Goal: Program and Service Delivery

Review and update practices and policies to meet the evolving needs of the agency.

OBJECTIVE 1

Implement and promote the use of technologies and processes to decision making

Consider how we can:

- Create a common data environment using data governance and management standards
- Implement tools or systems to assist with tracking and delivering projects and programs
- Improve processes to make us more efficient
- Promote technologies and processes so they are widely adopted
- Improve efficiencies between partner and sister agencies

OBJECTIVE 2

Improve the organization of work and skills within the agency to promote staff development and a more effective agency

Consider how we can:

- Identify the skills and staffing gaps that inhibit our ability to achieve our goals and deliver our programs and services
- Organize our agency to be more productive and successful
- Better collaborate (internally or externally) to deliver our programs and services
- Provide support and training for staff as they learn new skills, especially in the areas of project management and customer service

OBJECTIVE 3

Review and update policies to meet the evolving needs of the workforce, agency and technologies

Consider how we can:

- Gather input and develop feedback mechanisms regarding our policies
- Create flexibility within our policies to help us be more effective
- Develop review cycles to ensure policies remain relevant
- Assess the impact an existing or new policy has on the agency

Examples for Reference

The following demonstrates how the components of a Business Plan might come together:

Example Purpose Statement:

“We deliver transportation that keeps Kansans moving by improving and maintaining the highway network in our District”

Example Work Unit Objectives:

- Reduce turnover in our Division by X%.
- Provide additional professional development opportunities for staff.
- Increase employee satisfaction in our Division by X% (or start measuring it).
- Maximize the service life (insert asset).
- Deliver 100% of our (insert program or project phase) on-time.
- Increase utilization of (insert tool or technology) in our Division.
- Decrease the time it takes to do (insert task or process) by X%.
- Reduce the backlog of (insert detail) by X%.
- Increase the number of people that can do (insert task or skill) by X%.

Example Work Unit Strategies

- Develop a training program for (insert task or staff group).
- Celebrate our successes by doing X.
- Develop a methodology for measuring the cost/benefit of X.
- Establish and conduct a customer satisfaction survey.
- Increase outreach to (insert group) by sharing the benefits of (insert program).
- Pilot the use of technology X.
- Establish a system to track and report (insert task).

AN EXAMPLE WORK UNIT THREAD

Work Unit: District X

Purpose: “We deliver transportation that keeps Kansans moving by improving and maintaining the highway network in our District.”

Goal: Empower People

Objective: Reduce turnover in our District by X%

Strategy: Develop a mentoring program for all new employees

Goal: Safety

Objective: Reduce workplace injuries in our District by X%

Strategy: Conduct safety briefings at the start of every work day

Goal: Stewardship

Objective: Improve the condition of our District Fleet

Strategy: Conduct a comprehensive inventory and assessment of fleet conditions

Goal: Program Delivery

Objective: Deliver X% of our District projects on time

Strategy: Improve collaboration between X and district staff.



Thank you to all who contributed to our strategic planning efforts.

When we launched our strategic planning efforts at the December 2023 KDOT Leadership meeting, a clear takeaway was that for this effort to be successful, it needed to be an employee-driven process. Thanks to our leadership team and the 44 employees who stepped up to serve on our four working groups, we've crafted goals and objectives that provide a roadmap for improving how we deliver transportation for Kansans and for making our agency a better place to work. Now, work units will have the opportunity to put forth their ideas for how to bring these goals and objectives to fruition by crafting their business plans. This is an exciting time for our agency. Together, we're building a future that moves Kansas transportation forward and makes us even more proud to work at KDOT. Thanks again for all your work to make this happen.