

SURFACE is a publication of TRUST dedicated to bringing news about the financing of Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure to community, business and policy leaders around the state. This biannual publication has a central focus of:

- Federal and state funding
- Regulatory news from state Capitol and Congress
- TRUST events and news
- Innovative topics on transportation funding

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SURFACE

FALL 2024



OKLAHOMA VOTES 2024

DESPITE A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR, ONE OF THE LIGHTEST BALLOTS IN RECENT OKLAHOMA HISTORY GREETED VOTERS DURING THE NOVEMBER 5 GENERAL ELECTION.

With only one statewide contest (Corporation Commission) other than the presidential race, voter turnout still ran substantially ahead of the 2022 general election, however lagged behind 2020, the last year the presidential race appeared on the ballot.

Former President Donald Trump won a second term defeating Vice President Kamala Harris. In Oklahoma, Trump captured over 66% of the vote, and with his election and impending inauguration, will hold the unique titles of 45th and 47th President joining Grover Cleveland as the only American president to serve a second term nonconsecutively. Trump swept all 77 counties continuing the GOP's streak of winning every Oklahoma presidential election since 1964.

With neither of Oklahoma's two Republican U.S. Senators (James Lankford, Markwayne Mullin) on the ballot, focus turned to the five Republican U.S. House members, state legislative races and judicial retention. Four of the U.S. Representatives (Kevin Hern-CD 1, Josh Brecheen-CD 2, Tom Cole-CD 4, Stephanie Bice-CD 5) easily won re-

election while Third District Representative Frank Lucas did not draw a general election opponent and won re-election during last June's primary election.

Regarding the aforementioned Corporation Commission, Republican Brian Bingman, a longtime oil and gas industry professional and former Oklahoma Secretary of State, Senate President Pro Tempore, State Representative and Sapulpa



Corporation Commissioner-Elect Brian Bingman

Mayor won the open seat to succeed 36-year GOP Commissioner Bob Anthony. Anthony was prohibited by term limits from seeking another six-year term. Bingman will join Republican Commissioners Todd Hiett and Kim David on the three-member panel that regulates the oil and gas, utilities and

trucking industries. Another open seat will occur in 2026 when Hiett is prohibited from seeking re-election due to term limits.

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2025 OKLAHOMA LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW



Speaker of the House-Designate
Kyle Hilbert (HD 29)



Senate President Pro Tempore-Designate
Lonnie Paxton (SD 23)

WITH OVER 30 NEW SENATE AND HOUSE MEMBERS, THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 60TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE WILL CONVENE FEBRUARY 3 AT THE STATE CAPITOL.

Lawmakers will hear Governor Kevin Stitt's seventh State of the State address where he is expected to advocate once again for a reduction and ultimate elimination of the state income tax (currently 4.75%). Governor Stitt, along with the Senate and House, joined forces during the 2024 session to pass the

largest tax cut in state history by eliminating the state portion (4.5%) of the grocery tax after several years of debate. The House has previously passed a reduction of the income tax, but the issue has not advanced in the Senate. As for transportation-related priorities, TRUST will continue to advocate that the ROADS and CIRB funds are fully funded, ODOT Eight-Year Construction Plan continues uninterrupted, continue discussions regarding the trend of flat fuel tax revenues and support of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority's ACCESS Oklahoma plan. TRUST will also monitor Washington, D.C. and in particular, who is named Secretary of Transportation. Oklahoma is very lucky to have a congressional delegation fully supportive of modernizing at every turn Oklahoma's surface transportation infrastructure, and we are hopeful Congress will pass, and the President will sign, a federal funding bill that includes transportation infrastructure appropriations for highways, bridges, rail, waterways and airports.

Oklahoma's most valued physical asset is its highway and bridge infrastructure, and with

funding challenges at every turn, it's absolutely paramount that Oklahoma's elected leadership continue the momentum gained over the past two decades to truly modernize our highways and bridges to some of the best in the nation. We are making tremendous progress, but there is so much remaining to accomplish. Because of the generous support from TRUST members over the past many years, we have elevated our association to one of the most effective and respected at 23rd and Lincoln. The new leadership in each chamber and the dozens of new members present the opportunity to further our education and advocacy efforts this session and beyond. As the new year draws near, please plan to attend and support our Transportation Innovation Forum, Transportation Day at the Capitol (March 5) and our Senate and House Transportation Committee Dinners. Each of these events are impactful to our overall advocacy efforts. Thank you again to all TRUST members, past and present. Your support is imperative to our mission that transportation-generated revenues must be used strictly for transportation purposes. ■

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It was a quiet night within Oklahoma state legislative races, as every incumbent, regardless of party affiliation, won their general election contest, and all open seats were won by individuals whose party affiliation matches that of their predecessor. This results in the GOP maintaining its supermajority status within both chambers (40-8 Senate; 81-20 House) for the first session of the 60th Oklahoma Legislature. New members were sworn in November 13 (Senate) and November 20 (House) and the bi-annual Organizational Day occurs January 7. New Democrat Senators are Regina Goodwin (SD 11), Mark Mann (SD 46) and Nikki Nice (SD 48). New Republican Senators are Julie McIntosh (SD 3), Avery Frix (SD 9), Jonathan Wingard (SD 13), Lisa Standridge (SD 15), Randy Grellner (SD 21), Brian Guthrie (SD 25), Spencer Kern (SD 31), Christi Gillespie (SD 33), Aaron Reinhardt (SD 37), Kendal Sacchieri (SD 43) and Kelly Hines (SD 47). The Senate President Pro Tempore-Designate is Senator Lonnie Paxton (SD 23). New Democrat Representatives are Michelle McCane (HD 72), Ron Stewart (HD 73) and Ellen Pogemiller (HD 88). New Republican Representatives are Mark Chapman (HD 12), Tim Turner (HD 15), Jonathan Wilk (HD 20), Ryan Eaves (HD 22), Derrick Hilderbrant (HD 23), Jim Shaw (HD 32), Molly Jenkins (HD 33), Stacy Adams (HD 50), Jason Blair (HD 53), Mike Kelley

(HD 60), Rob Hall (HD 67), Mike Lay (HD 68), Emily Gise (HD 90) and Gabe Woolley (HD 98). The Speaker of the House-Designate is Rep. Kyle Hilbert (HD 29).

In a hard-fought campaign for Tulsa mayor, former state Rep. Monroe Nichols (HD 72) defeated former Tulsa County District 2 Commissioner Karen Keith. With heavy advertising on both sides, voters retained two (Noma Gurich, Jim Edmondson) of the three Oklahoma Supreme Court justices who were up for retention. Longtime Justice Yvonne Kauger was not retained. Each of the Court of Criminal Appeals and Court of Civil Appeals justices on the ballot were retained.

The 2026 primary and general election ballots will be more crowded with all statewide offices (Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Treasurer, Auditor, Superintendent, Labor Commissioner, Insurance Commissioner, Corporation Commission) appearing as well as 24 (even-numbered) state Senate seats, all 101 state House seats, all five U.S. House seats and the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Senator Mullin. In addition, State Question 832 will appear on the primary ballot which will ask voters to approve or disapprove a phased-in increase to the minimum wage. The issue is expected to draw a multitude of advocacy groups on both sides. ■

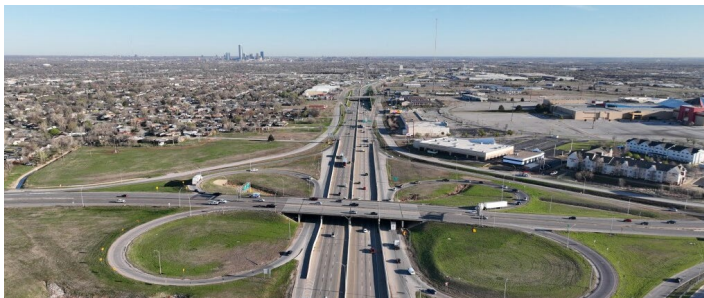
STATE HIGHWAYS TO RECEIVE NEARLY \$9 BILLION

The Oklahoma Transportation Commission recently approved the latest update to the ODOT Eight-Year Construction Plan. The Federal FY 2025-2032 Eight-Year Construction Plan contains nearly \$9 billion of highway construction and safety projects designed to enhance safety and travel reliability of Oklahoma interstates and highways. Commissioners also approved the Four-Year Asset Preservation Plan, which includes \$496 million in investments for preventative maintenance aimed at extending the life of the state’s highway system in Fiscal Years 2025-2028. Asset preservation projects include pavement resurfacing, bridge rehabilitation, painting and joint-sealing. The plan has 276 projects addressing 81 highway bridges and resurfacing 1,964 miles of pavement.

“Our Eight-Year Plan serves as a guide for the department’s construction and maintenance efforts and allows us to ensure we are addressing as many transportation needs as we can statewide,” said ODOT Executive Director Tim Gatz. “Our main focus continues to be safety and reliability, and we are working to enhance safety by improving interchanges, adding shoulders to rural two-lane highways and addressing bridges statewide.”

Oklahoma, like many other states, has taken inflation and the changing economic climate in supply costs into consideration and adjusted plans accordingly. Construction costs have increased more than 60% since 2022. While some projects have been redistributed in the plan to accommodate these increases, no projects were removed from the Eight-Year Plan.

An additional area of interest is the southern I-35 corridor. Throughout the Eight-Year Plan, there are 14 projects totaling more than \$377 million that will widen nearly 53 miles of I-35 between the Oklahoma River in Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma-Texas state line.



The final three phases of I-35/I-240 interchange improvements in south Oklahoma City are scheduled in the 2025-2032 Eight-Year Construction Plan.

This marks the 22nd edition of the Eight-Year Construction Plan. Since its inception, ODOT has made major impacts to the safety and quality of the state’s transportation system. Oklahoma’s number of structurally deficient bridges has decreased from 1,168 bridges to fewer than 50, which are scheduled to be addressed in the Eight-Year Plan, and Oklahoma continues to rank in the top 10 in the nation for good bridge conditions. An interactive map showing all projects on both plans can be found on the ODOT homepage at odot.org, under “Programs and Projects” then “8-Year ODOT Construction Projects.” This tool allows users to easily locate projects and related information.



The US-70/Roosevelt Bridge replacement over Lake Texoma between Durant and Kingston, will begin in 2026 as part of the 2025-2032 Eight-Year Construction Plan

FFY 2025-2032 EIGHT-YEAR CONSTRUCTION PLAN

- **\$8.6 billion in total investment**
- **1,647 total projects**
- **Addresses 632 bridges**, including 299 structurally deficient or at-risk bridges
- **3,755 miles of roadway improvements**, which includes 954 miles of safety improvements on two-lane highways with deficient or no shoulders.

NOTABLE PROJECTS IN THE EIGHT-YEAR CONSTRUCTION PLAN

- In the Oklahoma City metro area, the final three phases of I-35 at I-240.
- In the Tulsa metro area, widening US-169 between 66th and 86th St.
- In southeastern Oklahoma, US-70/Roosevelt Bridge replacement over Lake Texoma advanced from 2029 to 2026.
- In south central Oklahoma, widening I-35 to six-lanes in Love County.
- In southwestern Oklahoma, new interchanges will be built along the Duncan Bypass in Stephens County, as well as along US-62 and Goodyear Blvd. in Comanche County.
- In north central Oklahoma, the final phases of widening SH-33 to four-lanes between Guthrie and Stillwater.
- In western Oklahoma, an interchange improvement project along I-40 at I-40 Business in Custer County.
- In northwestern Oklahoma, adding shoulders to more than six miles of US-412/US-60 between Ringwood in Major County and the Garfield County line.

Why Join TRUST?

Be part of the voice for transportation advocacy that works with members of the Oklahoma Legislature to implement solutions. Without your membership, we risk losing the valuable momentum we have gained since 2006. At the state Capitol, we must have a constant and growing voice for transportation and urge you to join us in this vital cause.

MISSION STATEMENT

TRUST, Transportation Revenues Used Strictly for Transportation, is an advocacy group dedicated to restoring Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure. We are committed to creating a culture within Oklahoma government that adequately funds and values transportation as a core priority.

Principles of TRUST

- Use all state transportation-related taxes and fees strictly for transportation
- Protect and grow dedicated funds for Oklahoma's transportation system
- Educate policy makers and the public on the importance of investing in highways and bridges
- Support leaders who are committed to transportation as a core priority of state government
- Use high-quality, lasting materials in building and maintaining highways and bridges
- Advocate efficiency and accountability within the Oklahoma Legislature and Oklahoma Department of Transportation

TRUST ONLINE restoreTRUST.org

OKLAHOMA TRANSPORTATION NEWS



Our online news page is updated with local and national legislative and transportation articles. To receive our weekly *Oklahoma Transportation News* email newsletter, please contact TRUST Membership Director Helra Han at helrahan@gmail.com.

EVENTS ONLINE

restoreTRUST.org allows members to register for annual events and renew their membership with just a few clicks. Please take advantage of this convenient method to stay engaged with TRUST. For questions on events or membership, please contact TRUST Membership Director Helra Han at helrahan@gmail.com.

UPDATE YOUR MEMBER PROFILE ONLINE

TRUST continually updates its mailing lists and contact database. If you wish to continue receiving our mailings, emails and newsletters, or wish to add additional contacts within your organization, please contact TRUST Membership Director Helra Han at helrahan@gmail.com.

TRUST STAFF

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John Cox – Communications Director

Helra Han – Membership Director

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Dues paid to TRUST, a project of Oklahomans for Safe Bridges and Roads, Inc. are not deductible as charitable contributions. However, 40% of dues paid may be claimed as business expense for federal income tax purposes for FY-2024. Any dues paid used for lobbying efforts are not tax deductible.

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Please Plan to Attend TRUST

- Transportation Innovation Forum
- Transportation Day at the Capitol – March 5
- Senate/House Transportation Committee Dinners – April/May

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING TRUST!