



February 14, 2020

Representative Troy Waymaster
House Appropriations Committee
Kansas State Capitol - 300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Re: House Bill No. 2588

Chairman Rep. Waymaster and Committee Members—

The City of Winfield supports the development of a new transportation plan, FORWARD, as set forth in HB 2588. We submit the following reasoning for our support. Thank you for your service to all Kansans.

Transportation and Jobs

Winfield area roads (K-360, US77, US160, K-15) aid and support thousands of manufacturing jobs in Cowley County. Through the last major investment in the 1990s and ongoing investment since, we have seen industrial growth many communities would love to have. There is a direct relationship between transportation investment and major employer growth. **Manufacturing earnings in Cowley County are 2.64 X more than the national average. Winfield has added nearly 2 million square feet of manufacturing or warehouse space since 2006.** Winfield has filled two industrial parks since 1998 and opened our third.

The rolling nature behind the design of FORWARD will allow our state to be flexible and sensitive to the needs of economic growth, like ours in Winfield.

Transfer from KDOT to General Fund

While thankful for the support we have received to repair the infrastructure for local and state routes, we know more needs to be done and more could be done in Winfield to support our industry transit if resources were not reallocated from the transportation fund to other funds. **The transfer from KDOT must be reduced to adequately support state highways and local projects.**

We support funding for FORWARD.

Maintenance and Preservation Funding

The financial backbone of our local road system is supported by the Special City/County Highway Fund. The monies we receive from the State of Kansas supports not only road maintenance, but activities such as snow removal, traffic control devices, street sweeping and crosswalk painting.

Unfortunately, the cost of local street maintenance is far outpacing the funds we receive from the state and local property tax dollars. In 2005, we received a low bid of \$35/ton for asphalt overlay. In 2019, our cost for the same work utilizing the same material increased to \$65/ton. The work we can accomplish with the same amount of dollars has decreased by 50%. Locally, we have compensated for this through the public approved funding of a Street Sales Tax.

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KDOT has been a very active partner in participating in highway maintenance on state routes through communities. We remain responsible for maintenance on almost 20 lane-miles of highway through Winfield and we have not had a *substantive* increase in funding since the late 2000s. We generally have 4 to 6 projects every decade under the CCLIP program. Unfortunately, the state's matching share has not increased with inflation. **Cities and KDOT will continue to fall further behind on highway work. Dollars Allocated to CCLIP Preservation and Restoration must be increased.**

The proposed FORWARD increase in apportionments from \$3,000 per lane mile to \$5,000 per lane mile for connecting links is welcomed.

Southwest Winfield Bypass

One of the points in HB 2588 calls for additional consideration to be given for projects that reduce project size.

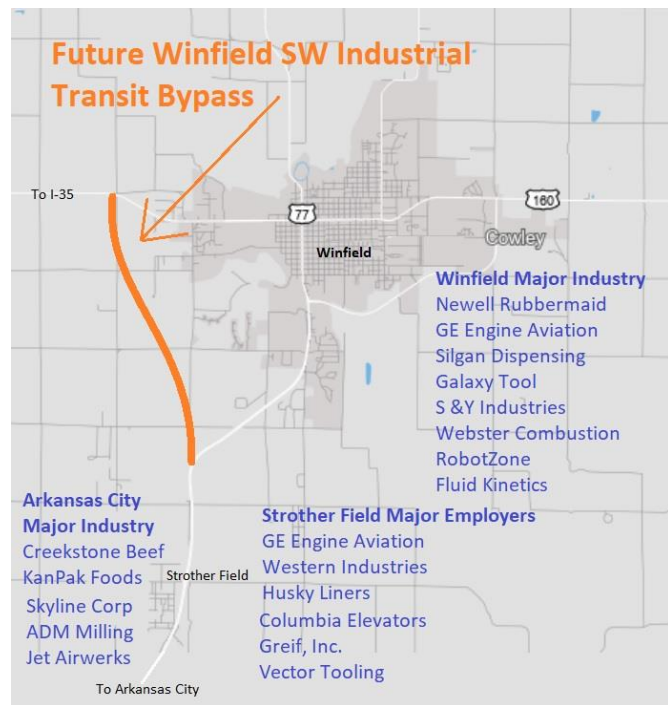
In 2008, the Cities of Arkansas City and Winfield, Cowley County and the Kansas Department of Transportation completed the US-77 Corridor Management Plan for the area from K-360 to the Kansas/OK State Line. The key plan recommendations included:

Completion of an alignment study for a future West Winfield Bypass to connect US-77 to US-160 and US-77 north of Winfield.

We have been up front that we understand funds are limited and need is great across the state. **As such, we support the reduction in scope of this project to include only the southwest corner of our community, in lieu of the entire western portion.**

The time is now to complete a FORWARD alignment study for the SW Winfield Bypass.

Without the study, local urban sprawl will make future improvements very costly and more politically unpopular.





This Southwest Bypass would support industrial transit movement and employee growth. Currently, over 3,000 persons work at the Strother Field Industrial Park, a jointly owned airport/industrial park between Winfield and Arkansas City and the Winfield Industrial Parks, all located on state highways. Another 1,500 work in Arkansas City at two major employers, Creekstone and Kan Pak.

From an industrial transit standpoint, getting product to market is vital and this route would create a clear path to do that and would **encourage future economic growth along the new corridor** which is not located in the floodplain and has very little in the way of topography obstacles.

Alternative Forms of Transportation

Enhanced funding for alternative forms of transportation including aviation, rail and pedestrian travel would allow us to tie more projects together, improving safety, the environment, and the health of our neighbors.

Arkansas City and Winfield jointly own and operate the Strother Field airport. The airport is important for many of our businesses, including GE Engine Services (the largest aviation engine repair facility in North America).

We support the FORWARD's investment in aviation, rail and pedestrian trail/pathway enhancements.

Short-line rail services are vital to the plastic industry that is clustered in Winfield. We have over 1,800 persons employed within the plastic industry, including industrial giants such as Newell Rubbermaid and Silgan Dispensing. If we were to lose short-line rail, we would be at-risk to lose two major industries.

Local pedestrian trails and pathways continue to grow louder as a constituent desire. Our citizens wish to have safe pedestrian routes on which to move by bicycle or walk to and from major services such as groceries and to the places in which they work. We are currently completing a master plan to establish desired routes for pedestrians and will complete that effort in 2020. **Our current pedestrian system is lacking and in need of comprehensive corridors to support the movement of the labor force from the places they live to the places they work. KDOT funding for these projects is imperative.**

Again, thank you for your attention and we wish you success in shaping the future of Kansas transportation. We appreciate the opportunity today to provide testimony in support of FORWARD.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Taggart Wall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Taggart Wall
City Manager