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Transportation Commission Approves MDOT 5-Year Spending Plan, With Projects Dropping Sharply After 2025

The [State Transportation Commission](#) approved on Thursday a proposed five-year program for the Department of Transportation that plans for \$15.5 billion to be spent by 2029, but the investments drop off quickly after the 2025 fiscal year.

The approved program, which will now be transmitted to legislative leadership and the State Budget Office for consideration in future budgets, allocates spending for the state's trunkline highway program, public transit and aeronautical projects. Of that \$15.5 billion pie, the highway program will require about \$10.8 billion, analysts told the commission.

MDOT specialist Michael Case outlined the details of the highway program spending to the commissioners, which the department projects spending roughly \$2.9 billion on in the 2025-26 fiscal year.

"That \$10.8 billion here, we've got about \$6.7 billion between repairing and rebuilding roads, bridges and trunk line modernization. There is also routine maintenance, \$2.6 billion, that's activities such as pothole filling, snow plowing and covering facilities, vehicles and equipment necessary for those activities," Case said. "We've got just under \$888 million for system safety operations and management, covering signage, pavement markings, traffic signals and operational improvements. There is \$56 million for roadside facilities and additional state and federally funded programs at \$520 million, that's programs such as transportation, alternatives, recreational trails, program development and scoping."

After that next fiscal year, though, highway spending is projected to drop to \$2.2 billion in the following year and will ultimately finish the five-year period at \$1.7 billion in 2029. For the department's overall projections on anticipated project obligations, the decrease in spending appears to be due to a large decrease in highway projects – the 228 anticipated projects that will be underway in the 2025-26 fiscal year will drop to just 47 in 2029.

"It is an exciting time for transportation, MDOT and the state of Michigan. Our state is on the front lines of innovative new projects, including the installation of the first public in-road charging system in the United States and electric vehicle testing in southeast Michigan," MDOT Director Brad Wieferich said in the planning documents. "In the spirit of innovation across the department, MDOT is in the beginning stages of implementing a new approach to program development ... to support this new mission and make progress toward the long-range vision, MDOT is updating its strategic plan and capital planning processes to be better prepared for funding uncertainty and to mitigate risk in program development and delivery."

Outside of the highway program, the spending plan includes projections for major public transportation projects, like \$163 million in 2025 for improvements along the Kalamazoo-Dearborn rail corridor and \$240 million for airport upgrades.

"We covered a lot of territory this year, from program process updates and enhancements to expanding from a five-year program looking farther out to eight to 10 years," Case said. "Our focus areas are transportation equity and inclusion, transportation resiliency and complete streets mobility and as always, connecting the decisions that are made about investments and projects with the policy direction set in the Michigan Mobility 2045 state long-range transportation plan."

MDOT also updated the commission on the status of the ongoing Gordie Howe Bridge construction between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, which is set to open in fall 2025.

– By Lily Guiney

[Back to top](#)



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