



Senate Will Follow Its Own Timeline On Road Funding, Says Transportation Budget Chair

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The Senate is going to "follow its own timeline" when it comes to creating a long-term road funding plan, says Sen. [Veronica KLINEFELT \(D-Eastpointe\)](#), chair of the Senate Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee.

This afternoon, the Senate panel moved [SB 174](#), a proposed \$6.9 billion state transportation budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. It features \$25 million in grants to local governments and businesses impacted negatively by lengthy state construction projects, \$7.7 million to study possible per-mile road user fees and \$2 million for "wrong way" deterrence devices on highways.

But what wasn't included in [SB 174](#) was money for a line-item to authorize the deployment of a road funding plan if a deal is reached. In March, the Republican-led House approved a \$3.1 billion road funding plan, directing all state taxes paid by motorists at the gas pump to go toward road projects.

Specifically, it removes the state's sales tax on fuel, turning it into a 51-cents-per-gallon gas tax. However, by doing so, the plan will need to backfill missing dollars in the School Aid Fund (SAF) and local government revenue-sharing payments that rely – as instructed by the state's constitution – on sales tax revenue.

"That is not a guarantee that there will be a road funding (package), or if there is one, that there will be \$3 billion in it. It is our indication that we are working towards that direction and that we hope to achieve a road funding package," Klinefelt said.

While speaking to the media, Klinefelt explained that appropriations really focus on supporting local roads, outside those overseen by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), will be more a part of a future road funding plan separate from SB 174.

"I think the focus on local roads is going to be more related to if we can get a road package," she said. "I think everybody agrees that there should be an emphasis on local roads because they didn't reap the benefits of the money that has been spent over the last couple of years."

She said her budget doesn't come with a lot of extra money for different things. In comparison to the current MDOT budget, [SB 174](#) would represent a 1.5 percent funding increase.

Gov. [Gretchen WHITMER](#) gave the plan a thumb's up – "For years, Michigan drivers have called for a sustainable, long-term road funding solution that fixes the roads with the right mix and materials. I thank Senator Klinefelt for her commitment of a \$3 billion comprehensive infrastructure plan supporting state and local roads, transit, and freight in her budget. I will work with anyone to fix the damn roads. I am ready to get to the negotiating table until we reach a bipartisan agreement. Let's get it done."

House Speaker [Matt HALL \(R-Richland Township\)](#) criticized Senate Majority Leader [Winnie BRINKS \(D-Grand Rapids\)](#) this week for needing to put a road plan up for a vote and to "at least empower" the Governor if she's unable to do so.

"We may be getting a lot done behind the scenes and not be putting it all out there in press conferences, but that's just because we don't do things the way that Matt Hall does things," Klinefelt said. "We're not going to get caught up in this 'he said, she said' thing in the press. We're just going to keep going."

She said the federal government is being watched and discussions are continuing.