

Why is there a need for a significant increase in non-recurring and recurring TDOT funding?

Inflation has significantly increased the cost of materials and labor, while revenues from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees have plateaued. To address the growing backlog of maintenance and new construction needs, additional funding is essential to maintain service levels and safety. The longer we wait, the more expensive repairs will become.

What will the new budget money be used for?

The funds TDOT requested will be used to address various transportation infrastructure needs across the state. This includes projects such as repairing and maintaining roads and bridges, improve safety, and build new infrastructure to accommodate growth.

Is this going to increase sales tax or gas tax? Why doesn't TDOT use other measures as a funding source?

Tennessee prides itself as a "pay-as-you-go" funding model to remain financially responsible to Tennesseans. This conservative approach ensures predictable funding but can limit the state's ability to accelerate major projects. No tax adjustments are planned, we plan to use general fund dollars to supplement the gas tax revenue.

Why does TDOT need additional funding this year?

TDOT is requesting additional funding this year to address growing infrastructure needs that cannot be met through existing revenue sources like the gas tax. The request is also made to proactively invest in long-term infrastructure improvements to support economic development and growth in Tennessee.

How will the state benefit from these funds?

The state will see an improvement in safety, efficiency, and reliability of Tennessee's transportation infrastructure. These funds will support economic growth by attracting new business, create jobs, and facilitate smoother transportation for the motoring public.

Why doesn't TDOT use the gas tax funds for improvements?

TDOT cannot rely solely on gas tax funding for these improvements due to tax revenue not keeping pace with increasing costs of transportation infrastructure. Factors such as inflation, aging infrastructure, and expanding infrastructure demands have reduced the effectiveness of gas tax as TDOT's primary funding source.

What is the timeline for the projects that will be funded with these funds?

The timeline for the projects will vary depending on the nature and scope of each project. Some funding, pavement preservation, for example will be employed across the state immediately. Other projects such as bridge repair, will take more time to properly design and plan.

How does this funding request align with the departments long-term goals?

This funding request aligns with TDOT's long-term goals of maintaining and modernizing Tennessee's transportation infrastructure to support safety and economic growth. By addressing critical infrastructure needs and planning for future demands, the funding ensures the state's transportation system remains efficient and resilient for years to come.

Are these funds intended to address immediate needs or long-term infrastructure needs?

Both. These funds are intended to address immediate and long-term infrastructure needs. While some projects will focus on urgent repairs and safety improvements, others will involve strategic investments in infrastructure across Tennessee.

How will the money be allocated across different programs and geographic areas?

The funds will be allocated based on TDOT's project prioritization process, which considers factors like infrastructure condition, traffic volume, and safety concerns. Distribution will aim to balance the needs of all four regions to ensure equitable improvements across the state.

Is this funding meant to supplement or replace other funding sources such as federal grants or gas tax revenue?

This funding will act as a supplement with proposed one-time "non-recurring" requests, and annual "recurring" requests. Gas taxes are flatlining and TDOT needs additional revenue to fund maintenance, construction, new projects. TDOT continues to make full use of Federal Grant "matching" dollars, however this money is not keeping up with the increasing cost requirements often caused by inflation.

What measurable outcomes are expected if the funding is approved?

Measurable outcomes will include number of roads resurfaced or treated, new life expectancy of infrastructure assets, and new transportation related safety measures and services.

How will the proposed projects impact rural areas in Tennessee?

The funding will help improve connectivity, accessibility, and safety in our rural communities. It will also support economic development by maintaining vital infrastructure for businesses and industries in rural areas of the state. We are proud to announce this funding will expand our HELP program to rural Tennessee. Our new Rural Service Patrol (RSP) will patrol rural portions of our interstate system to help assist with collisions, incidents, and vehicle maintenance issues. HELP has been a widely successful program in the urban areas of our state, and we are excited to expand it.

What steps are being taken to ensure these funds benefit Tennesseans equitably?

TDOT prides itself on our transparency and commitment to doing what we say we will. We plan on advancing projects ahead of schedule in our 10-Year Plan and engaging with local stakeholders to help address and fix regional concerns.

What specific projects are included in the proposed non-recurring requests?

The non-recurring funding includes funding for pavement improvements and bridge repairs while expediting 10-year plan projects, adding projects to the 10-year plan and increasing statewide partnership program (SPP) projects. This money will additionally focus on spot safety projects and our newly formed state infrastructure bank to financially support local government projects.

What measures are being taken to address the declining pavement quality on our roads?

TDOT has implemented a Pavement Quality Index system to evaluate and prioritize road maintenance. The \$25M recurring and \$100M non-recurring requests will help stabilize and improve PQI scores, particularly for state routes and interstates falling below acceptable standards.