KANSAS TRANSIT REPORTER

WINTER 2026

IN THIS EDITION:

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE
By Kara Cox, Kansas RTAP

Hello and happy new year!

I hope 2026 is treating you well so far. The Kansas RTAP team has jumped into the year with some new projects to look out for.

We recently held a Lunch and Learn webinar to discuss the results of the transit technology survey that KS RTAP conducted. If you weren't able to join in, we have provided a breakdown of the results in one of the articles of this newsletter.

Looking ahead, we will be hosting a special webinar at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, that focuses on the new WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance requirements. These new requirements apply to all transit agency websites and mobile apps, so you are encouraged to attend and bring questions so that we may better understand how we can assist and support through this process. Be sure to register for the webinar at https://kansas.zoom.us/meeting/register/cCy5gpt7QueQdkHfQu_pdA

Additionally, we encourage you all to attend a special edition of our LTAP webinar series, The Roundabout, where KDOT will join in to discuss the Safe System Approach. The Safe System Approach (SSA) is widely recognized for its potential to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries, but U.S. transportation agencies have not fully institutionalized its principles within planning and programming. A recently developed toolkit features actionable strategies and real-world examples to help agencies build readiness and integrate SSA across all aspects of their work programs. This webinar will share information on a handful of the tools relevant in Kansas. This webinar is being presented by Kansas LTAP in partnership with the statewide Drive To Zero Coalition. This webinar will take place at 11 a.m. on Friday, February 13th. Registration is required: https://kansas.zoom.us/meeting/register/ZYF9VhxGS4Cx81T6ejQp8Q

We also encourage you to take a few minutes and consider participating in the Road Safety Assessment training we have partnered with KDOT on. As

individuals with key roles in transportation, you witness areas in your community that need to be updated for pedestrian safety. This training can help you identify these areas and take the steps needed to see improvements made. This is a free, self-paced course. More details are provided later in this newsletter.

As always, if there is anything Kansas RTAP can do for you, please let us know!

ROAD SAFETY ASSESSMENT TRAINING

The 2026 Road Safety Assessment (RSA) training is now open! These trainings are open to all transit professionals and provide valuable insights into identifying potential roadway safety issues before they lead to crashes. By learning how to assess roads, intersections, and pedestrian environments through a safety-focused lens, transit professionals can better advocate for safer routes, contribute to local safety planning efforts, and enhance the overall safety of the communities they serve. Learn more at: https://www.ksdot.gov/programs/training-education-programs/road-safety-assessment-training

Kansas Active Transportation

2026 ROAD SAFETY ASSESMENT TRAINING

RSA Online Training

Register and complete the self-paced training starting January 15th!

RSA Applications

Apply for a location to be considered for a field visit during Round 4.

RSA Field training

Half-day hands-on training will be conducted at up to six locations to allow participants to assess real-world road safety issues.

CONTACT US! KUTC: kutc_training@ku.edu
KDOT - MATT MESSINA: Matthew.Messina@ks.gov OR JENNY KRAMER: Jenny.Kramer@ks.gov

LTAP
KANSAS LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

NEW WCAG DIGITAL COMPLIANCE REGULATIONS: WHAT KANSAS TRANSIT AGENCIES NEED TO KNOW

By Kara Cox, Kansas RTAP

As digital services become essential to how transit riders access information and services, ensuring accessibility isn't just good practice; it is federal law for public entities. In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) finalized an update to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that sets technical accessibility standards for state and local government websites and mobile apps. This regulation has major implications for transit agencies across Kansas. This article will look at how transit agencies should comply with these new regulations, as well as some resources to help ensure that compliance is achieved.

WHAT THE NEW RULE REQUIRES

Under the new ADA Title II rule, all digital platforms that state or local governments use to deliver services must conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA. These are recognized standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) that define how to make web content perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust for users with disabilities. This includes:

- Websites
- Mobile applications
- PDFs and online documents
- Videos and multimedia content
- Online forms and interactive features
- Public records, service information, and schedules

This means that Kansas transit agencies' websites and mobile apps must be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including people who use screen readers, keyboard navigation, magnification, or voice technology to access digital content. The rule also applies when agencies contract with vendors to produce content or manage website platforms. Agencies are responsible for ensuring compliance even when an outside contractor builds or runs the website or mobile app.

COMPLIANCE DEADLINES

By April 24, 2026 the state of Kansas must be in compliance with this rule.

KEY ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To comply, transit agencies must ensure:

1. **Web content is accessible** — All information on transit websites (e.g., route maps, schedules, fare information) must be coded so users with disabilities can access it.
2. **Mobile apps meet standards** — Transit apps that provide schedules, real-time tracking, trip planning, or fare payment must be designed or updated to conform to WCAG 2.1 AA.
3. **Documents and media follow accessibility practices** — PDFs, videos, and downloadable documents used for rider information must include features like text alternatives, captions, and readable structures.

EXCEPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are limited exceptions where certain older or rarely used content doesn't have to meet WCAG AA immediately,

such as archived pages or preexisting documents that are not in active use.

According to ADA.gov, state or local government's web content that meets all four of the following points would not need to meet WCAG 2.1, Level AA:

- The content was created before the date your government must comply with this rule, or reproduces paper documents or the contents of other physical media (audiotapes, film negatives, and CD-ROMs for example) that were created before your government must comply with this rule, AND
- The content is kept only for reference, research, or recordkeeping, AND
- The content is kept in a special area for archived content, AND
- The content has not been changed since it was archived.

However, agencies still must provide accessible alternatives upon request.

RESOURCES TO HELP TRANSIT AGENCIES COMPLY

To support compliance efforts, Kansas transit agencies can utilize a range of resources:

Federal and Official Guidance

- ADA Factsheet—A guide that explains the new accessibility rule for state/local web content and apps.
- ADA Small Entity Compliance Guide — A more in-depth guide on the new accessibility rule with examples for special circumstances.

Guidelines and Technical Standards

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA documents from the W3C — The definitive standard agencies must meet.
- Introduction to Website Accessibility — A general introduction to understanding web accessibility by W3C.

State of Kansas IT and Accessibility Support

- Kansas Office of Information Technology Services – ADA Title II Web & Mobile Resource Page — State-compiled resources and links to compliance tools and checklists.
- Kansas Office of Information Technology Services – Guidance for Web Developers— Technical guidance and support materials for implementing accessibility standards.

Tools and Community Resources

- Automated accessibility scanners (e.g., WAVE) – Wave is a free tool to test the accessibility of your website. Enter your web address into the box on the main Wave webpage for an in-depth analysis and breakdown of accessibility issues on your website. The scan only takes a few seconds, and once completed, you can click through the report to see specific updates that need to be addressed on your website.
- National RTAP Website Accessibility Training – a combination of resources, including tools to assist with checking accessibility and training videos to better understand what to look for when it comes to accessibility.

STEPS FOR TRANSIT AGENCIES TO GET STARTED

1. **Audit Existing Websites and Mobile Apps**
   a. Use automated tools (such as WAVE) and manual testing to identify accessibility gaps in websites and mobile apps.
2. **Manually Check for Accessibility Issues**
   a. While automated scanners are a great tool for analyzing content errors, they don't catch everything. Conducting a manual check can help ensure that all issues are identified. KS RTAP has created a checklist for manual checks that can be found at the end of this article.
3. **Develop an Accessibility Roadmap**
   a. Once errors and gaps in accessibility have been identified, prioritize significant updates to be made while also creating a plan for phased continued improvement.
4. **Recheck Websites & Mobile Apps**
   a. After corrections and adjustments have been made to address accessibility issues, recheck your website for issues that may have been missed.
5. **Create Feedback Opportunities**
   a. Make it easy for riders to report accessibility issues and request accommodations.

CONCLUSION

Ensuring digital accessibility is more than a legal requirement—it's a commitment to equity and inclusion. For Kansas transit agencies, meeting the WCAG 2.1 Level AA standard will ensure riders of all abilities can fully access transit services online and through mobile apps, fostering a more inclusive and connected community across the state.

Kansas RTAP will host a webinar at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2026 to provide an overview of the WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance requirements and examine tools to assist transit agencies with their accessibility checks. This will also be a time for agencies to ask questions so that we better understand the concerns and roadblocks agencies are facing with these updates. **Registration** is required!

RESOURCES

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131–12165 (Title II).
Kansas Office of Information Technology Services. (n.d.). ADA Title II web and mobile application accessibility rule resources. State of Kansas. https://www.ebit.ks.gov/resources/governance/it-executive-council/kpat/resources/ada-title-ii-web-mobile-application-accessibility-rule
Kansas Office of Information Technology Services. (n.d.). Guidance for web developers. State of Kansas. https://www.ebit.ks.gov/resources/governance/it-executive-council/kpat/resources/guidance-for-web-developers
U.S. Department of Justice. (2024). Fact sheet: New rule on accessibility of web content and mobile apps provided by state and local governments. https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/
U.S. Department of Justice. (2024). Small entity compliance guide: Accessibility of state and local government websites and mobile applications. https://www.ada.gov/resources/small-entity-compliance-guide/
U.S. General Services Administration. (n.d.). Section 508 standards for electronic and information technology. https://www.section508.gov/
World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). (2018). Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/

Let's Connect
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WCAG 2.1 LEVEL AA ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST FOR TRANSIT AGENCIES

Use this checklist to manually review websites, web content, and mobile applications for accessibility compliance under the ADA Title II digital accessibility rule.

A. General Accessibility Foundations
☐ Accessibility is included in agency policies, procedures, or digital governance
☐ WCAG 2.1 Level AA is referenced in vendor contracts and procurement language
☐ An accessibility contact or feedback method is clearly posted on the website/app
☐ Staff responsible for digital content have received basic accessibility training

B. Keyboard Accessibility
☐ Entire website can be navigated using a keyboard only
☐ Logical and consistent tab order is present
☐ All buttons, links, menus, and form fields are reachable via keyboard
☐ A visible focus indicator appears when navigating with the keyboard
☐ No keyboard "traps" exist (user can move freely through content)

C. Screen Reader Compatibility
☐ Headings follow a logical structure (H1, H2, H3, etc.)
☐ All images have meaningful alternative (alt) text
☐ Decorative images are marked appropriately (empty alt text)
☐ Buttons and links have descriptive labels (not "click here")
☐ Form fields are properly labeled and announced
☐ Dynamic content (alerts, updates) is announced to screen readers

D. Color, Contrast, and Visual Design
☐ Text meets minimum color contrast requirements
☐ Important information is not conveyed by color alone
☐ Text remains readable when zoomed to 200%
☐ Layout does not break or overlap when text is resized

E. Forms and Interactive Elements
☐ All form fields have visible and programmatic labels
☐ Required fields are clearly identified using text
☐ Error messages are descriptive and easy to understand
☐ Users can correct errors without losing entered information
☐ Forms are usable with keyboard and screen readers

F. Documents and Downloadable Content
☐ PDFs and documents are screen-reader accessible
☐ Documents use proper headings, lists, and table structure
☐ Reading order is logical
☐ Scanned PDFs are converted to searchable text
☐ Accessible alternatives are available when remediation is not feasible

G. Multimedia (Video and Audio)
□ Videos include accurate, synchronized captions
□ Audio-only content has a text transcript
□ Visual-only information is described in audio or accompanying text
□ Media players are keyboard accessible

H. Mobile App Accessibility
□ App works with screen readers (VoiceOver, TalkBack)
□ Text can be resized without loss of functionality
□ Touch targets are large enough and spaced appropriately
□ App supports both portrait and landscape orientation
□ Gestures have accessible alternatives

I. Automated & Manual Testing
□ Automated accessibility scan completed (e.g., WAVE)
□ Manual keyboard testing completed
□ Screen reader testing performed on desktop and mobile
□ Issues are documented and prioritized for remediation

J. Documentation & Continuous Improvement
□ Accessibility issues and fixes are documented
□ High-impact rider services prioritized (schedules, trip planning, fares)
□ Regular accessibility reviews scheduled
□ Process exists for responding to accessibility complaints or requests

Tip for Agencies
Automated tools alone are not sufficient for compliance. Combining automated scans with manual testing and user feedback demonstrates good-faith efforts and significantly reduces risk.

READY FOR WINTER? HOW KANSAS TRANSIT AGENCIES CAN HELP RIDERS PREPARE

By Nikhila Gunda, Kansas RTAP

Winter weather can significantly impact how people access and use public transportation, making preparation and clear communication essential for safe and reliable travel—especially in Kansas, where winter conditions are highly variable. Snow, ice storms, freezing rain, strong winds, sudden temperature drops, and reduced daylight can all impact bus operations, boarding conditions, and rider comfort, particularly for those who rely on transit daily. Blowing snow and icy road surfaces can reduce visibility and slow service, while extreme cold and wind chill increase safety and comfort concerns for riders waiting at stops. These challenges vary widely across the state, from open, wind-exposed rural corridors to urban streets influenced by traffic and plowing priorities.

Public transit agencies and providers play a critical role in helping riders navigate winter conditions by providing timely information, safety guidance, and practical resources. By proactively educating riders and adapting services during winter weather, agencies can improve safety, reduce disruptions, and ensure vehicles remain as a dependable mobility option throughout the winter season. This comprehensive factsheet highlights practical, proven strategies that transit providers currently use and recommends helping riders prepare for winter conditions and navigate public transit safely and confidently throughout the winter season.

A look to the west on a sidewalk near 23rd and Tennessee streets on Wednesday, Jan. 15 shows snow still covering the sidewalk and piled in some places.
Tricia Masenthin | Lawrence Times

ADVANCE COMMUNICATION & REAL-TIME INFORMATION

Winter conditions can slow service or necessitate snow routes, so giving riders current information helps them adapt their plans safely. It is crucial that transit providers keep riders informed before and after winter weather events. Below are some of the ways providers can use to make sure their riders receive advanced communications.

- Rider alerts and service notifications: Agencies encourage riders to sign up for text/email alerts or use transit apps, so they're notified about delays, detours, snow routes, cancellations, or route changes due to snow/ice (Sound Transit. (n.d.).
- Multiple channels: Use agency websites, social media, apps, and phone lines to broadcast timely updates (KC Mobility, 2024).
- Real-time tracking: Promote tools that show bus locations/schedules in real time, which helps riders plan arrival at stops closely (reducing cold exposure) (Bay Area Transportation Authority, n.d.).

RIDER EDUCATION FOR WINTER TRAVEL

Education helps decrease winter-related injuries and improves rider confidence. It is beneficial to educate riders on how to stay safe and comfortable in winter conditions. Most transit agencies often publish or circulate winter riding tips, such as:

Before you ride:
- Plan ahead and allow extra time
- Check schedules and alternatives
- Stay updated on the weather

At the Stop & Onboard:
- Dress appropriately
- Be cautious on slippery surfaces
- Keep bus floors dry/safe

CLEAR & ACCESSIBLE BUS STOPS

Snow-blocked or icy stops can be dangerous and are a major barrier to safe boarding. It is important to ensure that riders can get to bus stops safely.
- Snow removal practices: While agencies may clear snow at transit hubs and prioritize high ridership stops for clearing, it would be good to have an option for riders to report uncleared stops (Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, n.d.).
- Alternate boarding sites: If a stop is blocked by snow or unsafe, agencies are advised to notify riders beforehand about the nearest cleared safe areas or stops (Rochester Transit Service, n.d.).

SERVICE MODIFICATIONS DURING SEVERE WEATHER

It is advised to make operational changes that prioritize safety for both riders and operators, even if that means less frequent service. So, it is crucial to adapt to routes and operations for safety and reliability during severe weather conditions.
- Snow routes and detours: In heavy snow, transit agencies can reroute buses to safer roads or detour around steep/unsafe segments (METRO, n.d.).
- Reduced or suspended service: During blizzards or extreme conditions, it is better to consider limited or suspended service for safety reasons (Metropolitan Transportation Authority, n.d.).

SUPPORTIVE POLICIES DURING COLD WEATHER

Policies that reduce barriers or provide support during extreme cold are an important tool for protecting riders' safety and advancing equity. In severe winter conditions, some transit agencies implement fare policies such as zero-fare rides to warming centers or cold-weather shelters, helping vulnerable riders reach safe, heated spaces when they need them most. By removing cost barriers during dangerous weather, these policies support community well-being, reduce exposure risks, and ensure transit remains a lifeline for essential travel on cold winter nights (KC Mobility, 2024).

INTERNAL PREPARATIONS WITH RIDER FOCUS

A winter-ready fleet and trained operators support dependable service. Transit agencies and providers who prepare their fleets and staff for winter indirectly benefiting riders:
- Pre-winter maintenance: Agencies can ensure heaters, defrosters, and buses are winter-ready (Chicago Transit Authority, n.d.).
- Training operations staff: Drivers and dispatchers are trained for snow/ice conditions, which helps safety and reliability.

LET YOUR RIDER KNOW!

- *Sign up for alerts and check schedules before leaving.*
- *Wear warm, visible, and appropriate winter clothes and footwear*
- *Plan for extra travel time.*
- *Stand safely back from the curb and use handrails*
- *Await buses at safe, cleared areas if snow blocks bus stops.*

CONCLUSION

Winter travel presents unique challenges for public transit riders and providers alike, particularly in a state like Kansas, where weather conditions can change quickly and dramatically. By combining proactive communication, rider education, safe and accessible infrastructure, operational flexibility, supportive policies, and strong internal preparedness, transit agencies can significantly reduce risks and improve the winter travel experience. Clear, timely information and practical guidance empower riders to make informed decisions. At the same time, thoughtful service adaptations and equity-focused policies ensure transit remains a safe, reliable, and essential mobility option during cold weather. Through continued planning, coordination, and rider-focused strategies, public transit can remain a dependable lifeline for communities throughout the winter season.

RESOURCES

- Bay Area Transportation Authority. (n.d.). Seasonal tips – How to prepare for weather changes. https://www.bata.net/how-to-ride/seasonal-tips-how-to-prepare-for-weather-changes.html
- Chicago Transit Authority. (n.d.). How we prepare for winter. https://www.transitchicago.com/winterprep/ (transitchicago.com)
- KCMobility. (2024, November 21). Winter 2025 preparedness. https://www.kcmobility.org/winter-2025-preparedness
- METRO. (n.d.). Winter riding tips. https://www.ometro.com/rider-guide/winter-riding-tips/
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority. (n.d.). Winter weather service guide. https://www.mta.info/guides/weather-service-guide/winter-weather
- Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. (n.d.). Winter weather preparedness. https://www.ripta.com/winterweather
- Rochester Transit Service. (n.d.). Winter riding tips for a safe and comfortable journey with RTS. https://www.myrts.com/blog/Article/394/Winter-Riding-Tips-for-a-Safe-and-Comfortable-Journey-with-RTS
- Sound Transit. (n.d.). Riding transit in winter: Prepare for winter travel. Sound Transit. https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/riding-transit-winter

KANSAS RURAL TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY: SURVEY FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By Nikhila Gunda & Kara Cox, Kansas RTAP

In January 2026, Kansas RTAP hosted a Lunch and Learn webinar highlighting the current state of technology use among rural and specialized transit agencies across Kansas. Presented by Nikhila Gunda of Kansas RTAP, the webinar summarized findings from a statewide technology survey and outlined opportunities to strengthen transit operations through targeted technology adoption, training, and technical assistance.
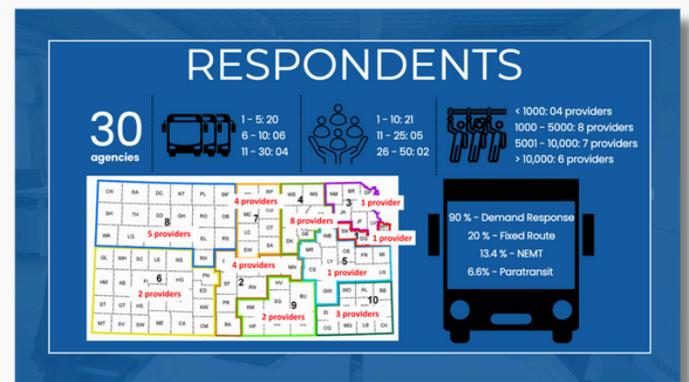

PURPOSE OF THE TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

The RTAP Technology Survey was designed to:
- Identify current technology needs, interests, and challenges among Kansas transportation providers.
- Understand agencies' attitudes, knowledge, and readiness to implement transit technologies that enhance service for Kansans.
- Inform public transportation officials and decision-makers as they work toward a shared vision for technology adoption across both rural and urban Kansas.

PURPOSE OF THE TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

A total of 30 transit agencies responded to the survey, representing a wide range of agency sizes and service areas. Agencies varied by number of vehicles, ridership levels, and population served, with respondents serving communities of fewer than 1,000 residents to those serving populations greater than 10,000. This diversity provided a broad snapshot of how technology is currently used across rural Kansas transit systems.

CURRENT METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Survey results show that many agencies continue to rely on traditional tools and mixed technology approaches for daily operations:
- **Dispatching and Scheduling:** Common methods include TripMaster, Microsoft tools, phones, RideSheet,

REVEAL, ParaPlan, radios, Routing Box, Google tools, and pen-and-paper processes. Dispatching and scheduling technologies are among the most widely used, with more than half of agencies reporting technology use in these areas.

- **Fare Collection:** Most agencies rely on cash, checks, paper tickets, fare boxes, voucher programs, and donations, with limited use of mobile or automated fare technologies.
- **Marketing:** Agencies primarily use Facebook, printed materials, radio, newspapers, Canva, websites, and, in some cases, Yellow Pages.

Use of advanced mobile apps and software remains limited, with only an estimated 3–5% of agencies using platforms such as Transit, Swiftly, ParaPlan, or Reveal for customer-facing or operational functions.

VEHICLE-ENHANCING TECHNOLOGIES

Adoption of vehicle-based technologies varies across agencies:

- Tablets or data terminals are the most common vehicle technology in use.
- Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL/GPS) and safety and security technologies are used by a smaller but notable share of agencies.
- Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), fleet management systems, reporting technologies, and electric vehicles are present at relatively low levels statewide.

KEY CHALLENGES FACING AGENCIES

Agencies reported several ongoing challenges that impact both operations and technology adoption:

- Maintenance concerns and vehicle upkeep
- Lack of drivers and staff
- Funding limitations
- Procurement barriers
- Marketing difficulties and low ridership
- Limited technical skills and challenges making data-driven decisions

Maintenance and workforce shortages were cited most frequently, underscoring operational pressures that can limit capacity to adopt new tools.

TECHNOLOGY COMFORT AND TIME DEMANDS

Many respondents noted varying levels of comfort with technology, identifying certain systems as time-consuming to implement or manage. This reinforces the need for user-friendly, cost-effective, and well-supported solutions.

TECHNOLOGIES WITH THE GREATEST POSITIVE IMPACT

Agencies identified several technology types as having the greatest positive impact on operations:

- Operational Technologies: Dispatching systems, scheduling tools, driver tablets, and trip planning technologies ranked highest. Marketing tools, mobile apps, fare collection technologies, and GTFS were also noted, though to a lesser extent.
- Vehicle-Enhancing Technologies: Tablets/data terminals, AVL/GPS, safety and security systems, reporting technology, and fleet management tools were reported to deliver the most operational benefits.
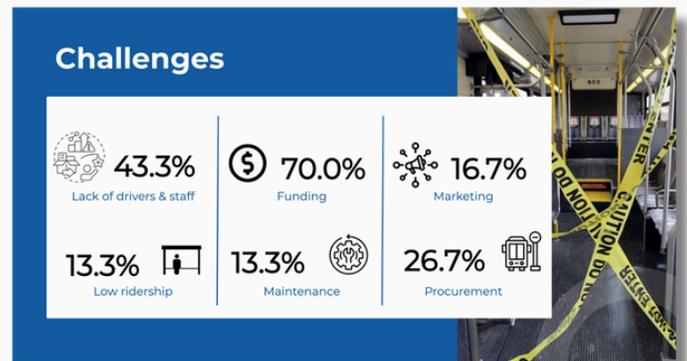
CONDITIONS THAT SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

Respondents emphasized that successful technology adoption depends on several factors, including:

- Adequate budget and cost-effective solutions
- Increased awareness of available technologies
- Access to training and technical assistance
- Compatibility with existing systems

- Partnerships and coordination among agencies
- Easy-to-use tools supported by reliable resources

Survey results show that most agencies are open to technology adoption:
- Nearly half are interested in new technology if presented with the right solution.
- A smaller share are actively evaluating and implementing new tools.
- Some agencies are not currently interested but could be in the future with adequate resources and support.
- Only a small percentage do not envision adopting new technologies at all.

The survey results highlight both opportunities and challenges for advancing transit technology in rural Kansas. While many agencies continue to rely on traditional methods, there is clear interest in adopting technologies that improve dispatching, scheduling, vehicle tracking, safety, and data-driven decision-making.

EVALUATION OF SAFETY PERFORMANCE OF RURAL ROUNDABOUTS

By Steve Schrock, Kansas RTAP

Even though roundabouts have been becoming more common in Kansas and nationally, we still get asked questions such as, "Why are they building roundabouts in my community?" or just general statements like "I don't like roundabouts." That is not surprising, as many of us learned to drive before roundabouts became common, and in many areas of rural Kansas, they remain rare. Like many 'tools' in our transportation safety 'toolbox,' it can be hard to understand why one countermeasure is chosen over another. In the case of roundabouts, they can improve traffic flow by limiting unnecessary stops and improve safety by reducing the likelihood of high-speed right-angle crashes.

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) was an early adopter of rural roundabouts - especially at locations where two existing intersections were very close together or in places where an intersection with more than four approach legs existed. When the Kansas highway network was first developed, people did not understand the safety problems associated with closely spaced intersections or intersections with five or more approach legs. As vehicle speeds increased during the 20th Century and crashes increased at these locations, KDOT looked for ways to improve safety. Roundabouts offered a variety of

advantages compared to other 'tools.' For example, they do not need electricity like traffic signals, they virtually eliminate the possibility of right-angle crashes, and they make sure that all traffic slows down as it enters the intersection, which helps reduce crash severity. By the early 2000s, KDOT was regularly using roundabouts as a safety improvement strategy.
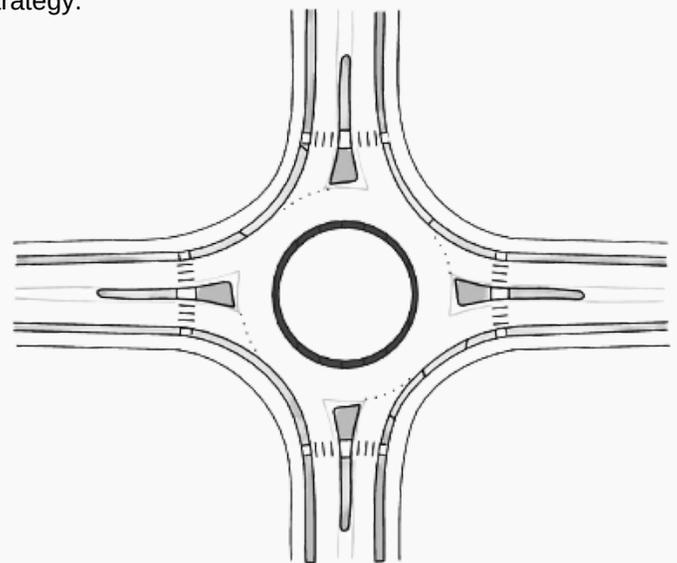

Figure 1.1: Single-Lane Roundabout
Source: Researchgate.net

In 2025, researchers at the University of Kansas Transportation Center completed a study for KDOT to estimate the safety performance at 12 intersections that were converted from existing intersections to roundabouts between 2006 and 2020. Specifically, KDOT was interested in knowing if these projects reduced the number of crashes and if the estimated cost of these avoided crashes was higher than the actual construction costs.

Crash data from 2000 to 2022 were collected from KDOT crash records, including crash date, crash severity, and location. Data were analyzed for each location, comparing three years before the construction of each roundabout and three years after the opening (we did not include the construction year). We also compared 24 nearby intersections that did not have any improvements to make sure that there was no regional effect on crash rates (we called this the comparison group).

The results showed that although the number of fatal and injury crashes generally remained unchanged for the comparison group (10 fatal crashes before to 9 after, and 46 injury crashes before to 43 after), the roundabout locations had a 62 percent reduction in fatal crashes (8 to 3) and a 53 percent reduction in injury crashes (56 to 26). We used a statistical process called "before-and-after study using comparison groups" to estimate how many crashes would have occurred if the roundabouts had never been installed. We estimated that these 12 roundabouts were responsible for preventing 26.3 injury crashes and 4.2 fatal crashes for the three years after each roundabout was installed.

When estimating the value of a crash that is avoided, KDOT uses the following values.

Crash Costs by Crash Severity Level	Cost per Crash (in 2024 USD)
Fatal	$13,999,597
Injury	$214,173
PDO	$240,505

Assuming these crash reductions would continue, we estimated that over a 20-year period, the value of the crashes avoided exceeded $429 million. Compared to the $45 million in construction costs, societal benefits outweigh the costs by a ratio of over 9.41 to 1. Although the effectiveness of roundabouts may vary based on design, road characteristics, and traffic behavior, the results of this study confirm the role of roundabouts in reducing fatal and injury crashes while providing a benefit that far outweighs the construction costs. We should expect to see roundabouts at more locations in the future due to their strong safety record.

If you're interested in learning more about the work that was conducted for this research project, you can find the full report on the KDOT Research Library. Go to http://kdotapp.ksdot.org/kdotlib/kdotlib2.aspx and search for Report KU-23-4, Evaluation of Safety Performance of Rural Roundabouts.
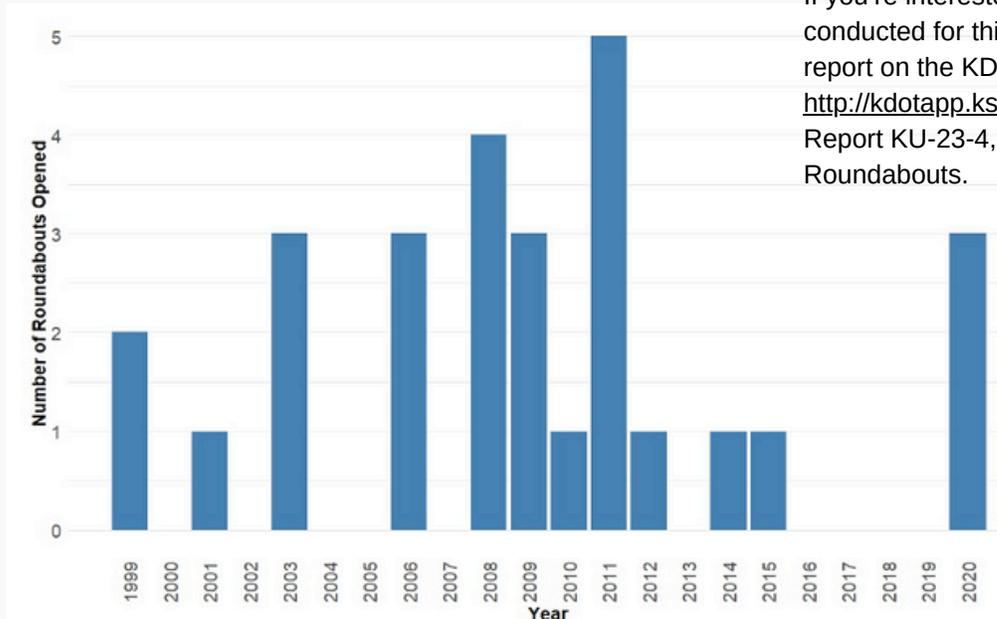
Figure 1.2: Rural Roundabouts Opened in Kansas

KANSAS RTAP TRAINING, TRAINING RESOURCES AND CONFERENCES

By Anne Lowder, Kansas RTAP

Below are training courses available from Kansas RTAP and other sources through October of this year. If you are interested in hosting a training class, I am still scheduling for 2026. Please contact Anne Lowder at alowder@ku.edu if you would like to host a training course at your agency. 2026 Kansas RTAP Trainings can be found at KUTC - RTAP

DEFENSIVE DRIVING AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

02/19/2026 – Salina
03/04/2026 – Osawatomie
03/05/2026 – Osawatomie
03/19/2026 – Troy
03/19/2026 – Salina
04/02/2026 – Chanute
04/23/2026 – Hutchinson
04/23/2026 – Emporia
06/18/2026 – Salina
06/25/2026 – Hutchinson
07/16/2026 – Salina
07/29/2026 – Emporia
07/30/2026 – Emporia
08/05/2026 – Ellsworth
08/20/2026 – Dodge City
08/27/2026 – Hutchinson
10/15/2026 – Salina
10/22/2026 – Hutchinson
11/19/2026 – Salina
12/17/2026 - Hutchinson

DEFENSIVE DRIVING AND PASSENGER ASSISTANCE/ WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT

03/11/2026 – Winfield
03/26/2026 – Hutchinson
03/26/2026 – Onaga
04/01/2026 – Parsons
04/01/2026 – Chanute
04/16/2026 – Alma
04/16/2026 – Salina
04/22/2026 – Osawatomie
05/20/2026 – Dodge City
05/21/2026 – Dodge City
05/21/2026 – Salina
05/27/2026 – Great Bend
05/28/2026 – Hutchinson
05/28/2026 – Ellsworth
06/02/2026 – Wichita
06/11/2026 – Wilson
06/25/2026 – Emporia
07/09/2026 – Wichita
07/24/2026 – Hutchinson
08/20/2026 – Salina
09/10/2026 – Emporia
09/16/2026 – Arkansas City
09/17/2026 – Salina
09/17/2026 – Wellington
09/24/2026 – Hutchinson
10/07/2026 – Emporia
10/14/2026 – Dodge City
10/15/2026 – Dodge City
11/19/2026 – Hutchinson
12/17/2026 - Salina

RESOURCES FOR TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

EasterSeals Project Action Consulting
https://www.projectaction.com/
Easterseals Project Action Consulting provides instruction in a variety of formats to meet your community's needs and budgets.

National RTAP eLearning Transit Resources
https://www.nationalrtap.org/
- Training Modules
- eLearning Courses
- Technology Tolls
- Webinars
- Toolkits
- Topic Guides
- Technical Briefs
- Spotlight Articles

National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)
https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/
Promoting Customer-Centered Mobility strategies that advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community.

Federal Transit Association
De-Escalation Training Resource Directory | FTA (dot.gov)
De-Escalation Training Resource Directory
De-escalation training is one component of a multi-faceted Safety Management System (SMS) that can also include other measures such as mirrors, signage, security cameras, and working with law enforcement.

APTA (American Public Transportation Association) Workforce Summit
Home - American Public Transportation Association
APTA is the only association in North America that represents all modes of public transportation, including bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. More than 90 percent of the people using public transportation in the United States and Canada ride APTA member systems.

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Resources
- Legislative and Federal Policy priorities
- Crime and Human Trafficking Prevention
- Census Issues 2020 Urban Area Determinations
- CT Reader Regular Updates
- Training Calendar

National Center for Applied Technology
https://n-catt.org/
Providing small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies with practical resources for replicable technological solutions and innovations. The site shares case studies, research, technologies, and provides information on technologies that enable solutions that solve problems and enable goals to be reached.

U.S Department of Transportation
'Back to Basics' for Service Agents | US Department of Transportation
The Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance (ODAPC) is introducing a short series of reminders called "Back to Basics" for service agents (e.g., collectors, Medical Review Officers, etc).

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (nadtc)
National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (nadtc.org)
Resources that include Driver Training Videos and Transportation Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA initiative.

WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES

Q'Live Wheelchair Securement Training Webinar
Tuesday, Feb 17, 2026 · 11:00 CST
Q'STRAINT: Training Webinars

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) EXPO 2026
May 10 -13, 2026
Omaha, Nebraska
Community Transportation

Kansas Public Transit Association Annual Meeting and Expo
Sustaining Rural Transit in Kansas
August 10 -12, 2026
Hutchinson, Kansas

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