

APPENDIX



Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

Understanding the broader environmental, social, and political context of an infrastructure-based project is an important component of selecting effective public participation tactics and informing the project messaging. The goal was to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations were consistently understood and considered. The project team strove to balance the priorities of the MTPO and project stakeholders; however, final decision-making authority resides with the planning organization.

Community engagement goals for the project include:

- Provide all stakeholders with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.
- Ensure outreach tactics are easily accessible to all stakeholder groups and ensure equitable opportunities through community partnerships and resources.
- Improve relationships between private and public sector groups and promote cooperative working groups.

The team used several different methods to gather community input and feedback throughout the project including but not limited to:

- Public meetings
- Key stakeholder engagement
- Public Survey
- ArcGIS StoryMap/project website <https://arcg.is/0jHOqX1>
- Pop-up events

Stakeholder Groups

In addition to resident and community member engagement, the project team engaged the following key stakeholder groups to solicit input for the plan update:

- Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)
- Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA)
- Shawnee County Public Works
- City of Topeka Public Works
- Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA)
- Topeka Citizen Advisory Council (CAC)
- Topeka Independent Living Resources
- Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging
- Shawnee County Community Developmental Disability Organization (CDDO)
- Greater Topeka Partnership (GTP); Topeka Chamber, Downtown Topeka Inc. (DTI), GO Topeka, Visit Topeka, and East Topeka Council
- Bring Back the Boulevard
- USD 501 students (Highland Park High School)

Public Meetings and Events

Public and stakeholder meetings were held virtually and in person. Below is a list of public engagements held during the project:

- October 4, 2021, 6p.m. – 8p.m. virtual public meeting via Zoom
- October 7, 2021, 11a.m. – 1p.m. virtual public meeting via Zoom
- November 3, 2021, 6:45p.m. Citizen Advisory Council Meeting via Zoom
- December 21, 2021, 3:30p.m. – 5:30p.m. pop-up engagement Topeka Shawnee County Public Library
- May 4, 2022, 6:45p.m. Citizen Advisory Council Meeting, 620 SE Madison St., Topeka, KS (*feedback on draft Futures2045 Plan*)
- May 25, 2022, 4:00p.m. – 6:00p.m. Public Open House Topeka Shawnee County Public Library (*feedback on draft Futures2045 Plan*)

Plan Goals and Objectives

Stakeholders were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
- Improve Mobility and Access
- Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic Development

Below is a summary of the feedback provided for the discussion questions asked of the groups.

Are the proposed Goals appropriate for the region?

- Different modes need to work together as a system – needs to be synergy
- Modernize the transportation system as we maintain it – not just maintain
- Involve the NIAs early in the process of developing a project or program
- Good communication and follow-through
- Safety – what are the issues for each mode
- Quality of Life – mode choice
- Look for cost-effective ways to maintain infrastructure

What should the region's future transportation and mobility system look like between now and the year 2045?

- Enhanced transit system with more north-south routes
- Means of mobility should decrease the dependency on gasoline powered vehicles and result in a cleaner environment
- Transportation should incorporate new technologies
- Need more charging stations for electric vehicles
- Should be located near apartment buildings
- Charging stations should be provided at transit stops to charge scooters and electric wheelchairs

- Need more passenger rail service between Topeka, Lawrence, and Kansas City – for commuting, shopping, entertainment destinations
- Need an east-west transit route that doesn't go through the hub
- Make Lift service more affordable

General feedback received

- Need better connectivity between north-south and east-west transit routes
- Make sure expansion projects are really needed
- Need solutions to transportation for those who don't own cars

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Greater Topeka Partnership/Go Topeka Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives of the Greater Topeka Partnership (GTP) on November 1, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045. Stakeholder representatives included Molley Howey, President of Economic Development, Go Topeka.

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
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Below is a summary of the feedback provided for each goal.

Feedback received

- Biggest transportation issue – workforce transportation – getting workers to distribution centers
 - Transit is important
 - Shift change schedules – transit can get workers to the jobs, but is not available at the end of their shift
- Partnership is shifting focus to now attract more white-collar businesses – for example in animal health – high wage/high skill jobs
- Concur with the proposed Goals for the plan
- Partnership is focused on in-fill development
- Great Streets – gateways to city are important
- Need to leverage the new runway at Forbes Field airport – should be positive impact on Forbes Industrial Park
- Potential for air service to Forbes
- Access to highways is adequate for businesses – not an issue
- On-demand transit would benefit the distribution centers
- There was a pilot project for taxi service to the distribution centers – Metro has the data
- They will share the survey link with members

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

City of Topeka, KS Citizens Advisory Council Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives from City of Topeka's Citizens Advisory Council on November 3, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045. The Citizens Advisory Council is made up of representatives from 22 low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in Topeka, KS. –Carlton Scroggins, MTPO Transportation Planning Manager introduced the plan update project and JEO staff to the CAC.

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
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Below is a summary of the feedback provided for the discussion questions asked of the group.

What should the region's future transportation and mobility system look like between now and the year 2045?

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- Need more passenger rail service between Topeka, Lawrence, and Kansas City – for commuting, shopping, entertainment destinations
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Are the proposed Goals appropriate for the region?

- Different modes need to work together as a system – needs to be synergy
- Modernize the transportation system as we maintain it – not just maintain
- Involve the NIAs early in the process of developing a project or program
- Good communication and follow-through
- Safety – what are the issues for each mode
- Quality of Life – mode choice
- Look for cost-effective ways to maintain infrastructure

General feedback received

- Need better connectivity between north-south and east-west transit routes
- Make sure expansion projects are really needed
- Need solutions to transportation for those who don't own cars

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Greater Topeka Partnership/East Topeka Council Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives of the Greater Topeka Partnership (GTP) on November 11, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045. Stakeholder representatives included Glenda Washington, GTP Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer, Michelle Cuevas Stubblefield, Sr. Vice President of Strategy and East Topeka Council Representatives Joseph Ledbetter and Mary Thomas.

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
- Improve Mobility and Access
- Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic Development

Below is a summary of the feedback provided for each goal.

Maintain Existing Infrastructure

All areas of Topeka/Shawnee County transportation network have various condition issues. Priority needs to remain on maintaining the existing infrastructure in the network. However, 'transportation equity' should be considered in reference to 'transportation deserts' and how they are connected to 'food deserts' and 'childcare deserts' that exist in the community.

Improve Mobility and Access

Consideration should be given in the plan update to the consolidation of the regions' paratransit system and the unintended consequences of the consolidation. A major concern regarding the consolidation is that fuel costs for the service program are borne by the local service providers and nonprofits operating the system in NE Kansas. Many or most cannot afford to continue to bear the fuel costs of transporting paratransit clients to and from needed services in the region. Additionally, the local agencies are struggling to identify employees to provide the transit services needed. Many current employees are aging out of employment and into retirement and agencies are struggling to hire new employees to fill emerging vacancies. New employees coming into the system in the Topeka area are struggling to find needed childcare that enables them to work outside the home and provide the transit service. Many local daycare providers closed doors during the recent pandemic.

Another issue expressed was the gap in public transportation for second and third shift employees in the Topeka Metropolitan region. In addition to public transit being available during peak travel times for shift workers in well-paying distribution and manufacturing jobs, childcare outside of normal business hours is also a needed service that is unavailable outside of an employees' family and social network. Consideration should be given to a micro-transportation system to accommodate the need for public transit for second and third shift employees. Pilot SOTO

program developed by Topeka Metro and South Topeka/Shawnee County employers was unsuccessful in permanently filling the transportation need. Employers may be hesitant to fund a micro-transportation program when paying \$18-\$20/hr per FTE. The workforce demand for manufacturing and distribution centers in Topeka/Shawnee County is 24/7 and the public transportation system has operation hours from approximately 6a – 6p. Entry level employees and one car households are primarily affected by these hours of operation and may not be able to access some of these high paying positions for lack of reliable transportation and childcare systems that meet the needs of second and third shift employees schedule needs. Priority on filling these transportation gaps should be given to Southwest, Northwest and Southeast areas of the Topeka Metropolitan area and Shawnee County. In summary, keep the goal/objective of Maintaining Existing Infrastructure but give focus to improving mobility options and access to the public transportation system especially for second and third shift employers and employees.

In regard to Access, equal access should be given to all sides of Topeka to the Kansas Turnpike. Lack of a southeast interchange (SE 29th St. and SE California Ave. area) is negatively impacting economic development in the area.

Access to the pedestrian and bike system varies by area of the community as does the desire for connectivity. Pedestrian Masterplan is a good tool but needs more funding. Be sure to gauge desire for access to pedestrian and bike systems. Some neighborhoods don't want sidewalks and other areas, especially low to moderate income areas want and need access to the hike/bike system.

Access in and out of Topeka/Shawnee County region should also remain a priority in order to provide efficient and safe transportation routes into the region for employees who live elsewhere.

Multimodal transportation connectivity to all area of the community for employment, food and shopping needs, medical care etc. should remain a priority in order to support population growth to the area.

Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation

Keep this priority/goal for the updated plan and continue to provide funding for safety updates to the entire transportation system. Continue making Polk/Quincy viaduct replacement a safety improvement.

Enhance Quality of Life

Bicycle riders want to use the trail system and ride in the park system rather than riding on streets in a bike lane. Connectivity to the trail system would benefit the bicycle transportation system and increase safety for users of the system.

A solution for second and third shift employees to access the public transportation system will improve quality of life for this sector of the population. Transportation connectivity to employment centers, food centers and childcare providers will increase quality of life for this sector as well.

The transportation system should focus on innovation improvement to enhance quality of life for the young professional and white-collar sector of the community.

Promote Economic Development

Innovation and technology should play a role in the future development of the metropolitan transportation system. Development of the electric charging system is needed for future economic development and population growth.

Traffic light synchronization should continue to be a priority on arterial systems.

Drones and autonomous delivery systems may run into privacy and private property issues as the sector continues to emerge in the region. Largest perceived priority would be securing packages/deliveries against damage in an autonomous delivery system.

If the region wants to become or develop a 'creative class', then we need to be open to emerging technology like autonomous vehicles. Another focus should be on developing a public transportation system that can partially replace private vehicle transportation dependence. It is too soon to tell how many cars will be coming back 'post pandemic' – how many employees will remain working remotely and have less need for daily transportation to work?

Light rail or train system should be considered for transportation to KC Metro and Kansas City International Airport. If population growth occurs there will be a greater need for public/mass transportation and getting individual/private vehicles off the road system. This will require making mass transportation affordable for connections to employment centers, food and retail centers and travel centers such as KCI.

People who chose bicycle transportation need an alternative during inclement weather – ensure that public transit system can accommodate bicycles going forward. Additionally, a fully connected bicycle transportation system will continue to attract 'creative class' that is desired to continue economic development efforts.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

City of Topeka, KS and Shawnee County, KS Public Works Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives from Shawnee County Public Works and City of Topeka Public Works on November 22, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045. Stakeholder representatives included James Jackson, City of Topeka Public Works Director, Robert Bidwell, City of Topeka Interim City Engineer and Curt Niehaus, Shawnee County Public Works Director.

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
- Improve Mobility and Access
- Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic Development

Below is a summary of the feedback provided for each goal.

Maintain Existing Infrastructure

All areas of Topeka/Shawnee County transportation network have various condition issues. Priority needs to remain on maintaining the existing infrastructure in the network. SNCO has an informal pavement management system in place but continues to make condition improvements a priority regarding system maintenance.

City of Topeka projects still have maintenance of the existing system as a top priority and will continue to do so – pavement condition index etc. In addition, components of the system are being prioritized, with arterial systems being top priority, collector systems being the next priority and residential systems being the last priority for maintaining the current system. Funding continues to be dedicated to maintaining and improving the conditions of the existing system.

Improve Mobility and Access

Shawnee County rural projects may not consider pedestrian connectivity due to the rural nature of the transportation systems in place. However urban SNCO projects still take maintaining the existing infrastructure, including pedestrian and bike systems into consideration. Shawnee County will be prioritizing another Kansas River crossing in the southwest quadrant of the county – possibly an Auburn Rd, improvement to cross river and connect to Hwy 24. Additionally, priority will be given to modernizing intersections such as Urish Rd. and Indian Hills Rd to improve access and mobility in the area.

City of Topeka will be focusing on connectivity in southeast Topeka and prioritizing a SE interchange on the Kansas Turnpike to provide more access and economic development opportunities. Mobility will also be prioritized by focusing on improving rural 2 lane sections of

road with open ditches to 3 lane modern sections with curb and guttering and multimodal transportation systems with hike/bike paths etc.

Congestion remains a non-issue for the region with only minor congestion issues occurring during peak travel times at locations such as on I70 between the Wanamaker Rd exit and I470 exit as well as on US 75 North from I70 interchange to north of the river. These areas only experience minor congestion during peak travel times and congestion clears rapidly. The existing system is adequate to carry to amount of traffic that exists in the region.

In regard to Access, equal access should be given to all sides of Topeka to the Kansas Turnpike. Lack of a southeast interchange (SE 29th St. and SE California Ave. area) is negatively impacting economic development in the area.

Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation

Keep this priority/goal for the updated plan and continue to provide funding for safety updates to the entire transportation system. Shawnee County will be focusing on areas such as 29th St. south and Auburn Rd. which has a high crash incidence rate due to the high number of daily trips in this area. Shawnee County is working with Kansas Department of Transportation to create a traffic safety plan in the areas outside of the corporate city limits and will continue to prioritize safety. Shawnee County will focus on modernizing intersections with high crash incidences to include 3 lane sections and in some areas 4 lane sections that experience high daily car trips. In addition, SNCO continues to prioritize bridge structure safety as it relates to the condition of the bridge structure. Finally, sections of state highways will be prioritized for safety improvements based on high incidents of crashes in the area. Section of NE K4 Hwy and US 75 Hwy in the SE sector are examples of state highways being prioritized. State highway K4 in NE Shawnee County has a higher crashing rating than others similar highways in the state and that is leading to safety prioritization.

City of Topeka will also be prioritizing bridge structure condition and safety through its Bridge Safety and Bridge Asset Management programs. Cities and Counties may become responsible for ensuring that bridge structures are properly maintained to bear the weight loads of emergency response vehicles.

Enhance Quality of Life

The hike/bike trail system will remain the public works focus for Quality-of-Life improvements related to transportation. In addition, safe and efficient transportation network systems will remain a priority for the City of Topeka and Shawnee County Public Works departments.

Promote Economic Development

Safe and efficient transportation systems will be the priority for both City of Topeka and Shawnee County Public Works departments as it relates to economic development. Neither agency felt that emerging technologies such as autonomous vehicles were 'on the radar' at this point. City of Topeka Public Works will look to develop the electric car charging system in Topeka to accommodate need as growth in the area continues.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Kansas Department of Transportation Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) on November 29, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045.

KDOT representatives present included:

- Michael Moriarty, Matthew Messina, Kristi Wilson, Steve Baalman, Tod Salfrank, Vanessa Spartan, Leroy Koehn, David Schwartz, Scott King, Debbie Tanking, Brian Gower, and Sara Peters

MTPO representatives included:

- Carlton Scroggins and Taylor Wolfe

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
- Improve Mobility and Access
- Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic Development

Below is a summary of the feedback provided for each goal.

Are the current goals and objectives appropriate?

- Seem reasonable
- Aligns with KDOT goals
- Aligns with KDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Safety is a primary goal – should be listed first
- Consistent with other MPOs and what was heard during the Local Consult meetings

Transit needs discussion feedback

- Micro mobility needs to be part of the plan
- Micro transit needs to be part of the plan

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan(s) feedback

- Topeka Metro did a safety plan in 2019 – identified areas with safety concerns
- Topeka Boulevard over the Kansas River is not part of the bike system
- When I-70 Polk-Quincy Corridor is built – will impact the bike network
- Safety plan has been completed
- Sidewalk vs. Multi-use facilities – city considered both during the development of the pedestrian plan
- School areas have a higher priority

Freight Flow/Facilities and Emergency Technologies feedback

- Good access to highway system
- Electric vehicle charging stations
 - Will be important by 2045
 - Supports Quality of Life and Economic Development
- State will be receiving federal funding for charging station infrastructure
 - No details yet for where they may be located

Additional feedback received

- Have any emissions performance measures been discussed – not at this time. Area is in attainment
- Need to be proactive regarding congestion areas – planning for improvements takes time
- Highway system discussion
 - I-70, I-470 to MacVicar
 - Weaving traffic between Wanamaker and I-470 ramps – compounded by incidents
 - Has not come up in Local Consult
 - KDOT is aware of the levels of congestion
 - I-70 Polk-Quincy Corridor
 - West project is a go
 - East project will likely be addressed
 - Pavement condition issues
 - Reasonable to assume that it will have been completed by 2045
 - Between now and 2045
 - I-70 and I-470 pavement replacements will need to happen within the next 20 years
 - US-24 pavement replacement within next 20 years
 - US-24 Kansas Av east is programmed for replacement
 - Bridges
 - Next 10 to 20 years – significant number of bridges approaching end of life
 - SB river crossing on US-75
 - I-70 & I-470 bridges, also bridges over the highways in next 10 to 20 years
 - US-24 bridges, Goodyear Road, old US-75 interchange
 - Other potential projects
 - US-24 and Topeka Boulevard interchange
 - A project is needed to improve geometry, traffic operation, traffic safety issues
 - K-4 north of US-24 is starting to gain some traction from the recent round of Local Consultation
 - Finish at least to 46th Street
 - Plans have been developed to RW stage
 - No discussion of 4 lanes south of US-24
 - US-75 and 62nd Street
 - No current discussion
 - Has been studied, but no low-cost solutions
 - I-470 & Wanamaker interchange improvements

- I-470 & 21st Street interchange improvements
- I-470 & 29th/Fairlawn interchange improvements
 - Significant development in the area

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Bring Back the Boulevard Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with representatives of the Bring Back the Boulevard volunteer group, which focuses on improving Topeka Blvd., on December 14, 2021, to solicit input on the update to the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045.

Bring Back the Boulevard representatives present included:

- Kent Lammers and Chuck Engel

Attendees were asked to consider the five primary goals and objectives from the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and provide feedback regarding including these same goals in the plan update or revising the goals and objectives:

- Maintain Existing Infrastructure
- Improve Mobility and Access
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- Enhance Quality of Life
- Promote Economic Development

Below is a summary of the feedback provided by the Bring Back the Boulevard representatives:

- Benefits now and in the future
- Great Streets concept needs to be in the Futures2045 Plan
- Topeka Boulevard is 11 miles long and many ties to Topeka's history
- Only N-S corridor that goes throughout the city
- People who work in the distribution centers in southern quadrant of City:
 - Many walk or bike to work
 - No sidewalk or bicycle facilities or safety enhancements such as retaining wall along S. Topeka Blvd – there is a need for these types of facilities
- Like the hike/bike improvements along 29th Street near Lake Shawnee and 45th Street south of the lake
 - Bike trails are important
- A gateway to the city – stretch from 45th to 37th is the busiest in the city
 - A poor “first impression” for those who come to the city via Forbes Field – economic development
- Let's look at landscaping along boulevard
- We are the Capital city – need to look like it
- Kansas Avenue connection is also a route into downtown needs work
- BBB group willing to raise private funds for landscaping features, etc.
- Maintaining our pavement is very important
- Would like to see an overall plan for Topeka Boulevard – begin at south end
- Three phases for pavement upgrades – 21st to 37th, 37th to 45th
- Slope issues near RR overpass
- BBB Group wants to work in harmony with the City
- Welcome to Topeka signs at gateways – Washburn University has an interest – like Welcome to Eudora sign on K-10

- In general – more frequent mill & overlays
- In general – more landscaping along major streets, better mowing along highway entrances and exits in City
- In general – make us look like the Capital city
- Good looking streets are a benefit in attracting new businesses
- Bus service to the distribution centers is important
- Need another funding source landscaping enhancement/streetscaping for these types of efforts
- Every “green team” is interested in beautifying easements
- Get rid of blight
- A lot of redevelopment occurring along Topeka Boulevard

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Highland Park High School Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff met with students from Highland Park High School on January 14, 2022, to solicit input on the existing transportation system in the Topeka metro area and what should be included in the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045.

Attendees were asked to consider the following questions and the feedback included below:

- How important will emerging technology like electric car charging stations be for the transportation system for the next 25 years?
 - Technology for electric vehicles will be more important over the next 25 years. Charging station technology will be necessary in the public domain as well as in private homes if electric vehicles/renewable transportation options are to become more mainstream.
- What about autonomous vehicles? Should we be considering making space in our area transportation systems to accommodate autonomous vehicles for deliveries etc.?
 - Autonomous vehicles are inevitable but a lot more research and technology advancement need to happen before they become mainstream and part of the transportation system.
 - Biggest concern is how autonomous vehicles will safely navigate the transportation network safely with unpredictable human drivers and pedestrians all around them. Safety needs to be number one priority of this advancing technology.
- Who do you think is responsible for funding or providing a public transit system?
 - Raising local taxes to support the expansion of public transit system isn't the right answer. Federal and State governments should be responsible for funding public transit system.
- How can we encourage more usage of the public transit/bus system in Topeka?
 - Engage younger generations in the use of the metro system. They are more likely to view it as a main source of transportation.
 - Offer free rides to get people to see how convenient it is to use the system.
 - Improve system to get bus stops closer to where people live so they can take advantage of it conveniently.
- How long does it take to get to a bus stop?
 - About 30-45 minutes walking.
- How long is your bus ride?
 - One hour.
- How can we encourage more use of bicycles for transportation, not just recreation?
 - Engage younger generations, older generations view bicycles as fitness related activity rather than transportation option.
 - Put bike share bikes in the parks where people are more likely to use them.
 - PSA campaign to educate the community on the benefits of biking for transportation.

- What is one thing regarding the region's systems of transportation that you'd like to see improved?
 - Safety and condition of local streets – condition issues cause traffic safety concerns.
- What is most important to you regarding transportation?
 - Keep developing the 10 ft hike/bike paths in the community.
 - Improve/develop the sidewalk and pedestrian system in residential areas where there are none. Safety concerns for neighborhood children who are literally in the street because there is no sidewalk available. Not a good system currently.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

City of Topeka, KS Citizen Advisory Council Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Overview

JEO staff attended the City of Topeka's Citizen Advisory Council on May 4, 2022, to present on the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Futures2045. The Citizen Advisory Council is made up of representatives from 22 low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in Topeka, KS. Attendance included 15 representatives from area neighborhoods, with 10 attending in person and five attending via Zoom.

James Tobaben (JEO) presented on the draft Futures2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Review of the Topeka Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)
- Results from the community survey conducted as part of the plan update
- Key themes of the Futures2045 plan
 - Continue Progress
 - Strengthen Performance Management
 - Prepare for Transportation Innovations
- Overview of Plan sections including:
 - Roadways – existing conditions and recommendations
 - Pavement & bridge conditions
 - Commuting patterns in the MPA
 - Traffic congestion projections
 - Roadway safety trends and patterns
 - Transit service and recommendations
 - Gaps in existing routes and service hours
 - Provide extended hours and Sunday service
 - Consolidate existing routes and right-size fleet
 - Long term recommendations
 - Transition to electric fleet
 - Explore micromobility options and additions to services
 - Improve frequency of route pick-up schedules
 - Active Transportation – pedestrian and bicycle facilities
 - Additions to sidewalk and bikeways and trail system
 - Bicycle and pedestrian safety trends and patterns
 - Recommendations for both systems
 - Implement Fast Track network in Bike Master Plan
 - Revisit long-term vision for networks every 7-8 years
 - Continue to use Complete Streets Guidelines in system development
 - Continue implementation of 2016 Pedestrian Master Plan recommendations
 - Improve pedestrian crossings at key intersections
 - Continue funding 50/50 sidewalk grant program
 - Review of upcoming Public Open House for introduction of draft Futures2045 Plan planned for May 25, 4p – 6p at the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library

Attendees were asked to provide the top three traffic safety concerns for their neighborhoods. Neighborhood representatives provided the following concerns:

Oakland

- Drivers ignoring yield and stop signs
- Speeding through neighborhood streets
- ATV and dirt bikes being driven on neighborhood streets
- Neighborhood streets not being cleared of snow accumulation

Tennessee Town

- Mid-block street lighting
- Wheelchair access on the sidewalk system

Historic North Topeka East

- Bicycles with no head and taillights and riders not wearing reflective clothing at night
- Bicycle riders not following traffic rules
- ATVs being ridden on neighborhood streets

Central Park

- Signage on off-set streets isn't correct
- Dead end streets not indicated properly for drivers
- Wrong signs in the wrong places – stop, yield and dead-end indications

Highland Crest

- Metro service isn't sufficient in a neighborhood with high need for public transportation
- Pedestrians walking in the street even though sidewalks are present – at night is more dangerous
- Not enough stop signs

North Topeka West

- Unregulated intersections where stop or yield signs would be beneficial
- No sidewalks on major streets traveled frequently by pedestrians
- No lighting and shelters at metro bus stops

Historic Old Town

- Hospital staff and others not slowing down at intersections or ignoring stop signs at intersections
- Neighborhood streets being used as cut-through routes by drivers
- Dangerous intersection near 10th Avenue and MacVicar Avenue

Highland Acres

- Safety concerns at metro bus stops – no lighting, benches, or shelters and some without sidewalk connections
- Inadequate street lighting as a safety concern

The group also commented on safety concerns regarding e-scooters and other general safety concerns:

- Random 'parking' of scooters in the middle of sidewalks, streets etc.
- Inadequate street lighting on I-470 especially at interchanges
- I-470 road markings are inadequate/not reflective enough and difficult to see
- 'Purple' streetlights are difficult to see and don't provide adequate street lighting
- Many trail system intersections are at grade on major thoroughfares – below or over grade would be a safer alternative

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Futures2045 Spring 2022 Open House Summary

Overview

The project team held a public open house on May 25, 2022, at the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Street, Topeka, KS from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. The open house was intended to inform the community of the completion of the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Futures2045; announce the commencement of the 30-day public-comment period; and solicit input from the public on plan updates. Project team attendees at the open house included Carlton Scroggins and Taylor Wolfe from the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and Jim Tobaben and Sasha Haehn from JEO Consulting Group.

The open house was announced with a press release from the City of Topeka and was advertised via City of Topeka and partnering agency social media posts, information posted on the project storymap and MTPO website, and email invitations to stakeholder groups.

Display boards with information on the plan update were placed in the rotunda of the entrance to the public library and were arranged in a counterclockwise format for attendees to sequentially visit stations and ask questions of the project team. Display boards included information on submission of public comment through the storymap URL, and a QR code was provided for attendees to view the draft Futures2045 MTP and complete the public comment section on the storymap. Display boards are included in the Appendix.

A total of 21 people visited the project information display stations and engaged with project team members. One attendee completed a public comment form during the event. The completed form is included in the Appendix. A summary of the public comments received is provided below:

- Concerns regarding the condition of city street pavement
- More funding should be dedicated to preservation of existing streets
- There is a desire for Sunday transit service
- Concerns for traffic safety on city streets
- Funds that are being spent on projects like the 12th Street reconstruction should instead be spent on street repairs
- There is a need to fund and replace brick sidewalks in neighborhoods that have brick sidewalks; do not mix in concrete sidewalks just because they're cheaper
- Do not put sidewalks wider than 5 feet in neighborhoods
- Consult neighborhood before giving them sidewalks that they will have to maintain and that they do not want
- Do not utilize reverse parking anywhere
- Acknowledge and address what public comment were given, and how was it considered in the final design of streets and sidewalks (mainly 12th Street, but looking forward to the Huntoon redesign)
- I bike with my kids and would be more comfortable with protected bike lanes
- Direct more street maintenance money towards residential streets
- Address street flooding on Lane Street and Washburn Avenue south of the library – they flood every time we have a heavy rain and there are no storm drains to convey the water away from the streets

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO) is developing a regional transportation plan update to reduce vehicle congestion, facilitate public transit service, provide for non-motorized travel, accommodate freight movement, and improve safety for travelers using all modes of transportation. The Futures2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) will serve as the blueprint for future transportation projects.

THEMES

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Continue Progress</p> | <p>Continued focus on projects that preserve the existing transportation system and expand transportation choices</p> |
| <p>2 Strengthen Performance Management</p> | <p>Increased emphasis on transportation system performance</p> |
| <p>3 Prepare for Transportation Innovations</p> | <p>Monitor technology innovations and ensure transportation system is responsive future technology</p> |

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

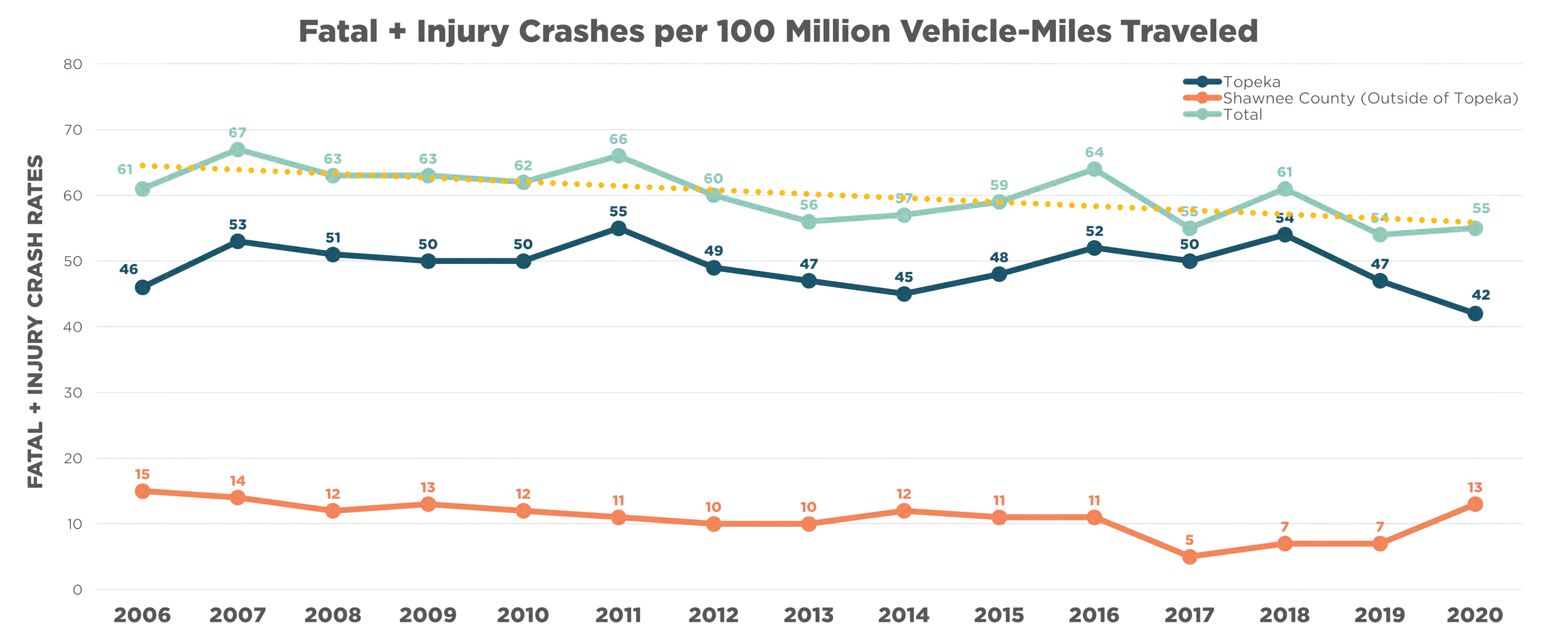
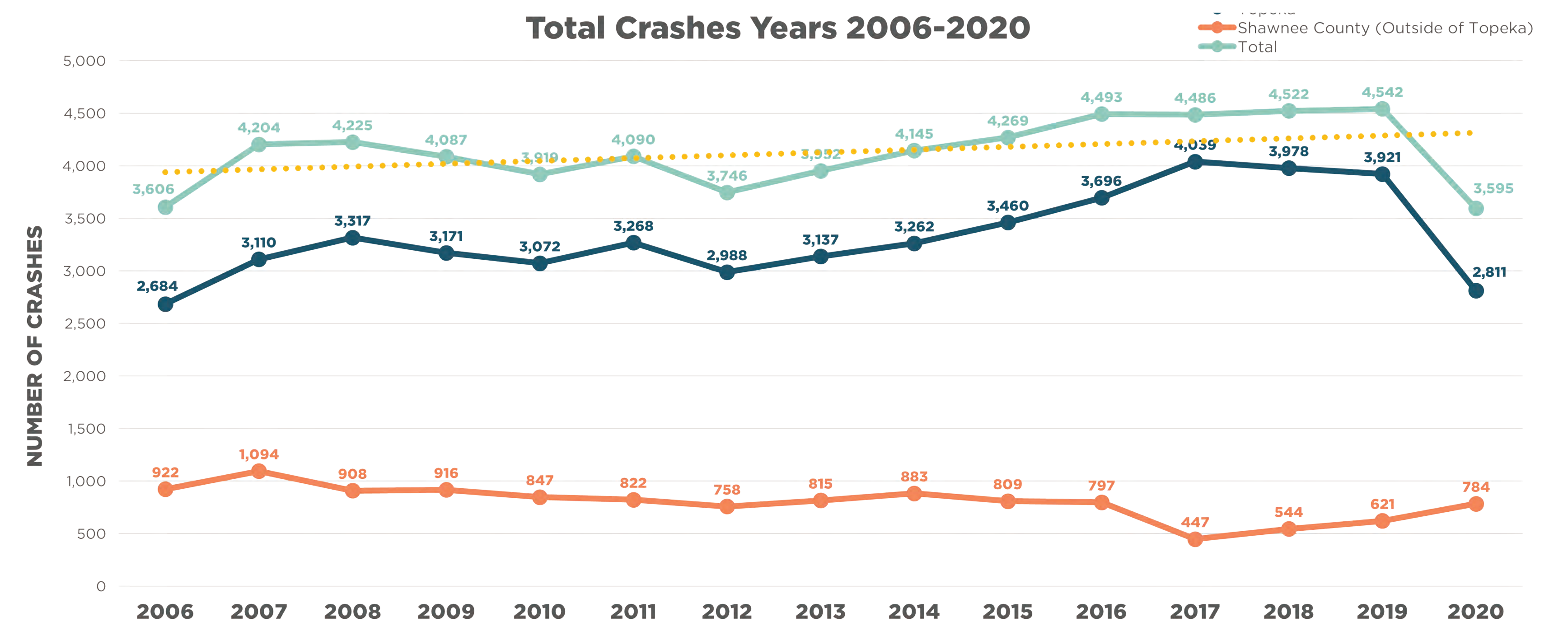
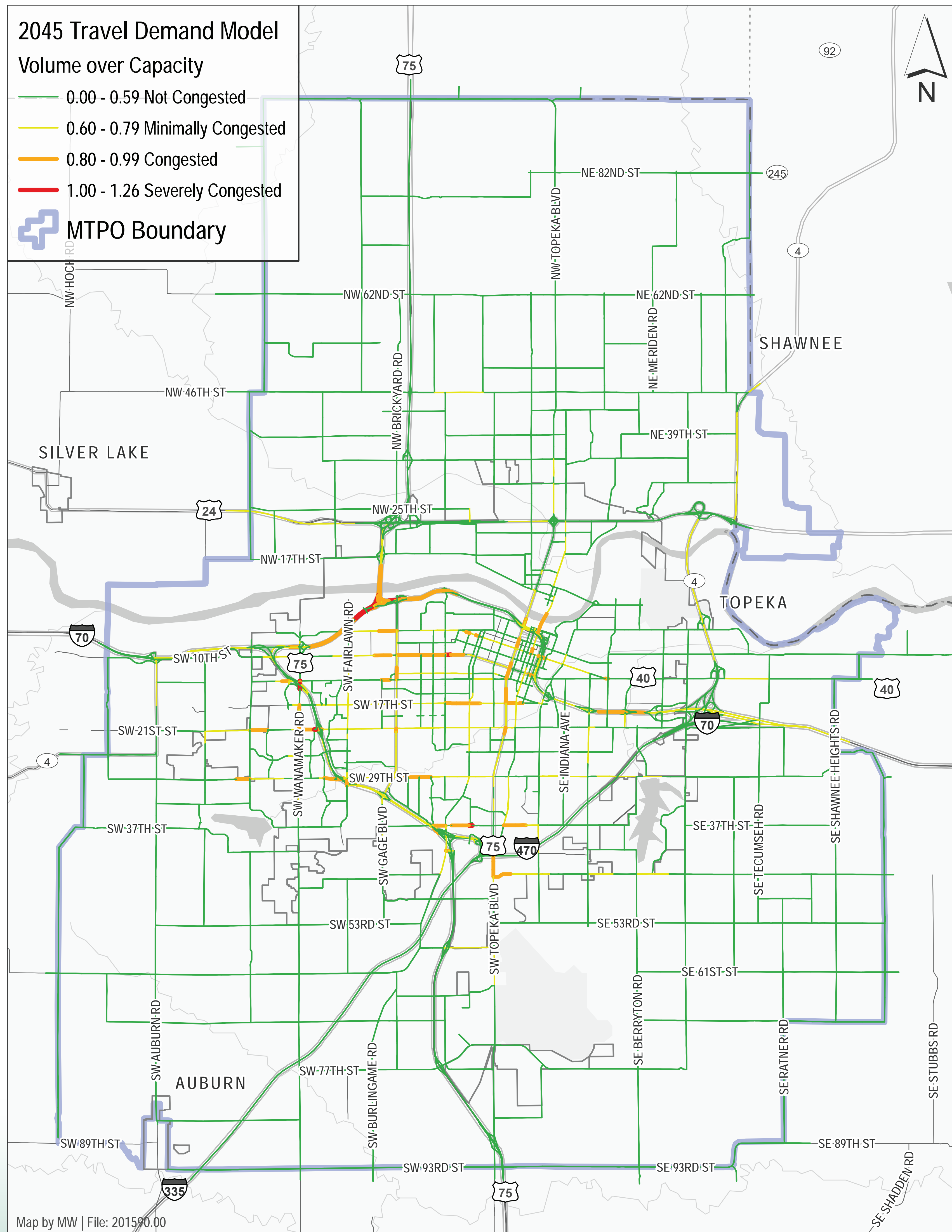
GOALS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p> Sustainability</p> | <p>Maintain Existing Infrastructure</p> |
| <p> Health & Wellness</p> | <p>Increase Safety for All Modes of Transportation</p> |
| <p> Livability</p> | <p>Enhance Quality of Life Equity and Access for All</p> |
| <p> Transportation Land-Use Connection</p> | <p>Leverage Transportation System to Support Economic Development Efforts</p> |



For more information on the Futures2045 Plan update visit the interactive project storymap by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera (or visiting <https://arcg.is/OjHOqX1>), or view the full document on the MTPO website at www.TopekaMPO.org.

ROADWAY SYSTEM

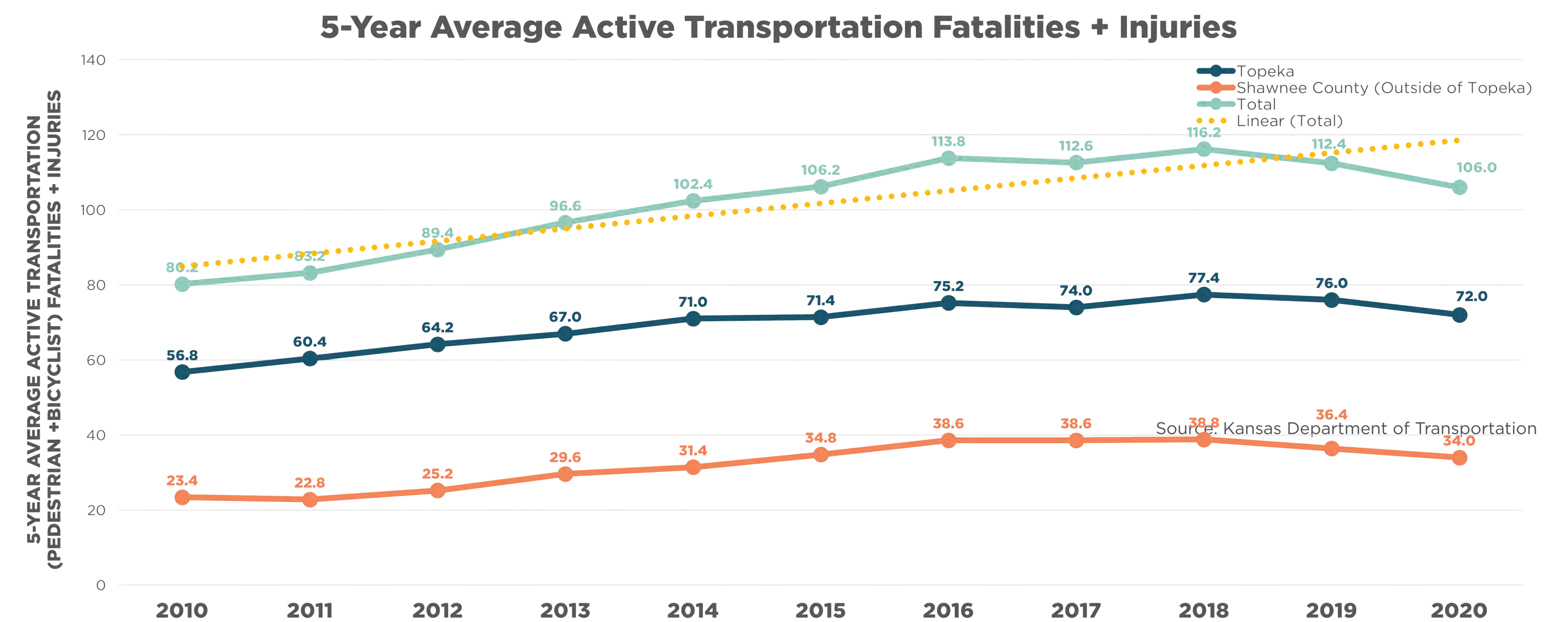
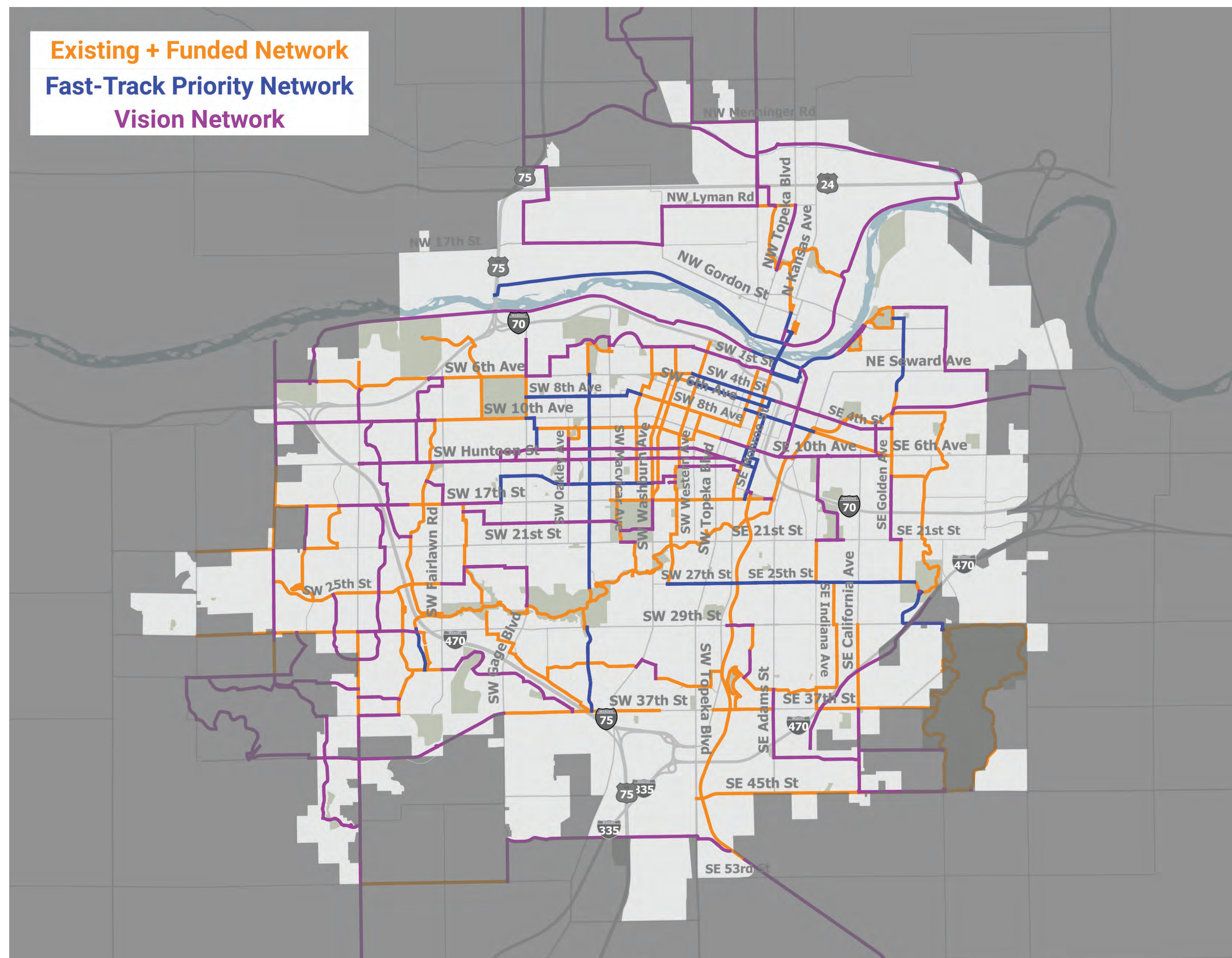


Source: Kansas Department of Transportation

The MTPO Transportation Safety Plan Recommended:

Review high crash areas against current CIP projects: compare the list of high crash intersections and roadway segments with current CIP projects. Include the appropriate safety countermeasures within those projects that will directly address specific identified crash patterns.

BIKE SYSTEM

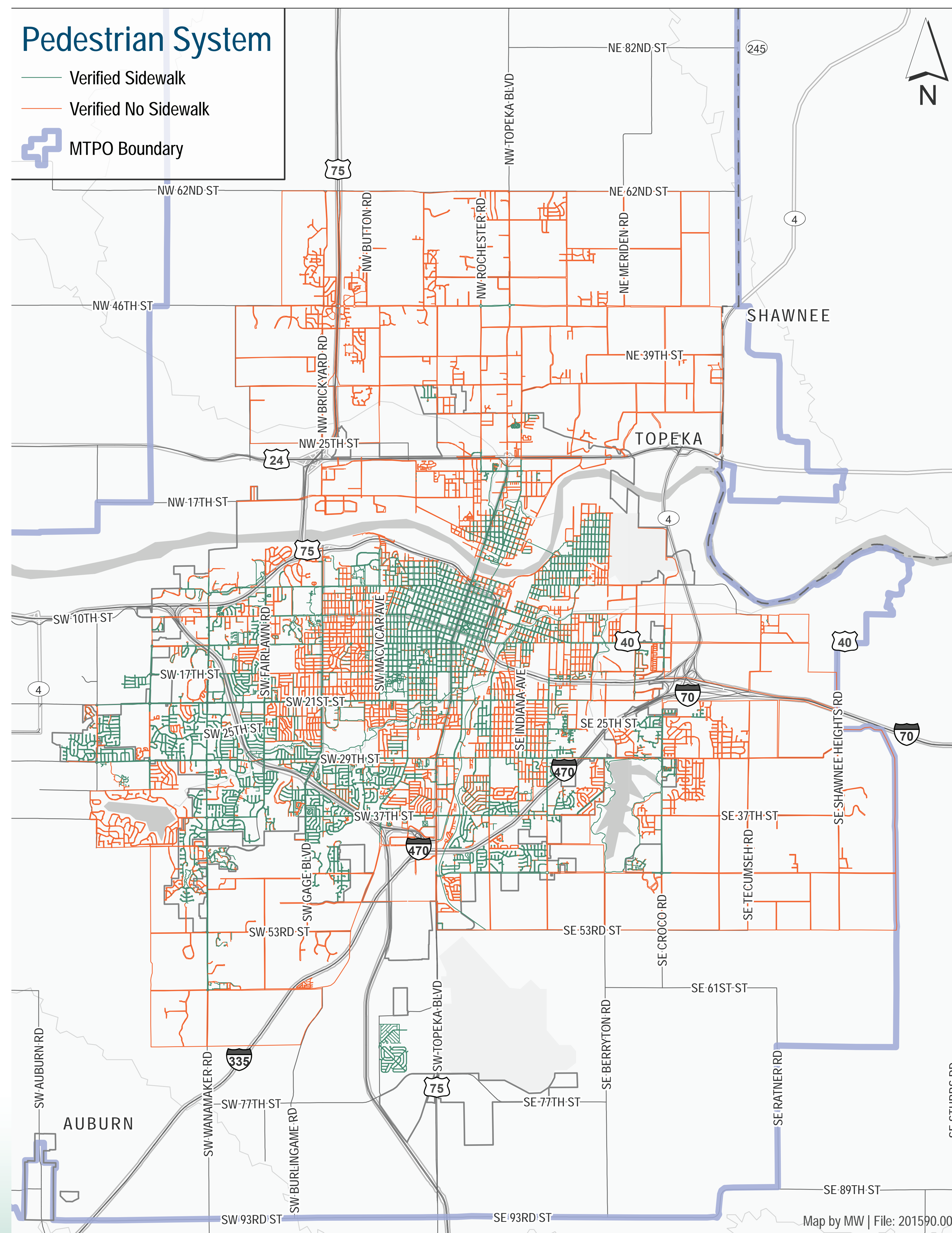


The above chart shows combined data for bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and injuries, and emphasizes the need to continue focus on safety for all modes of transportation in the region, including active transportation modes.

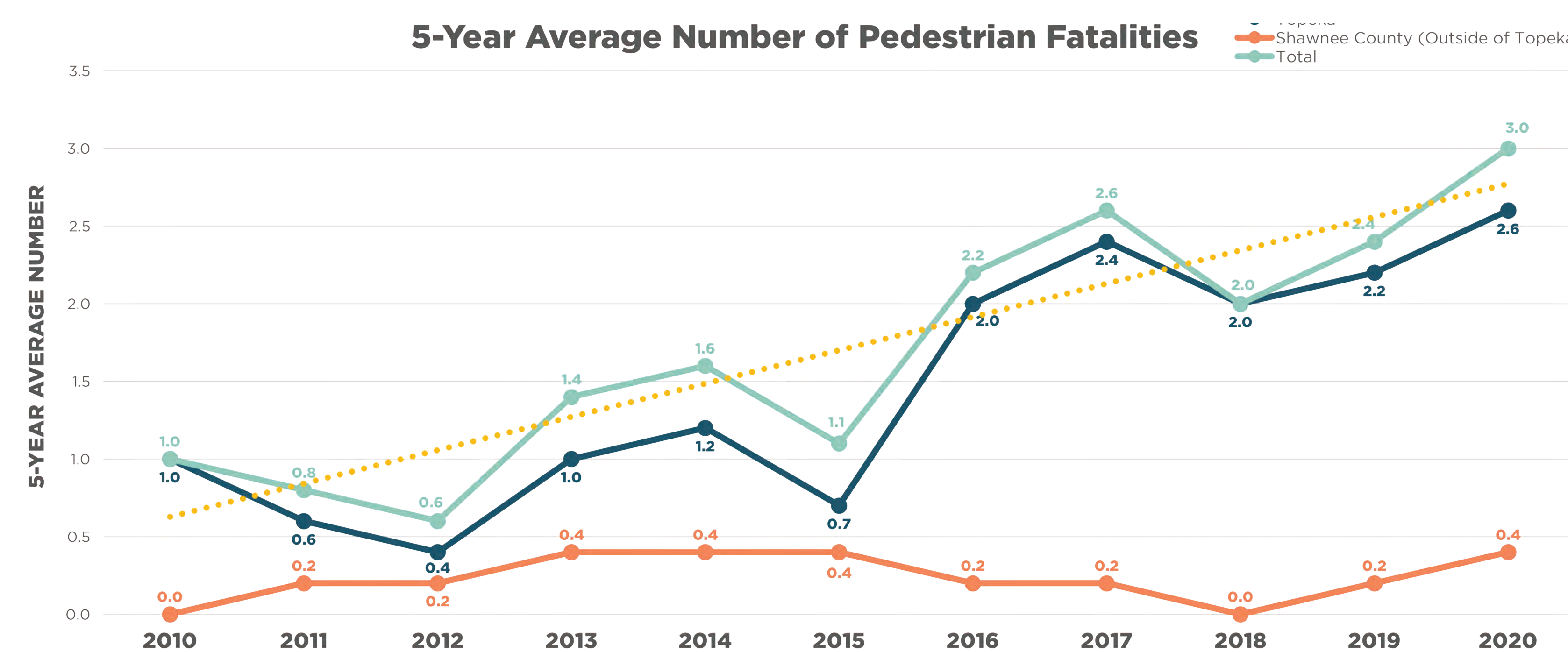
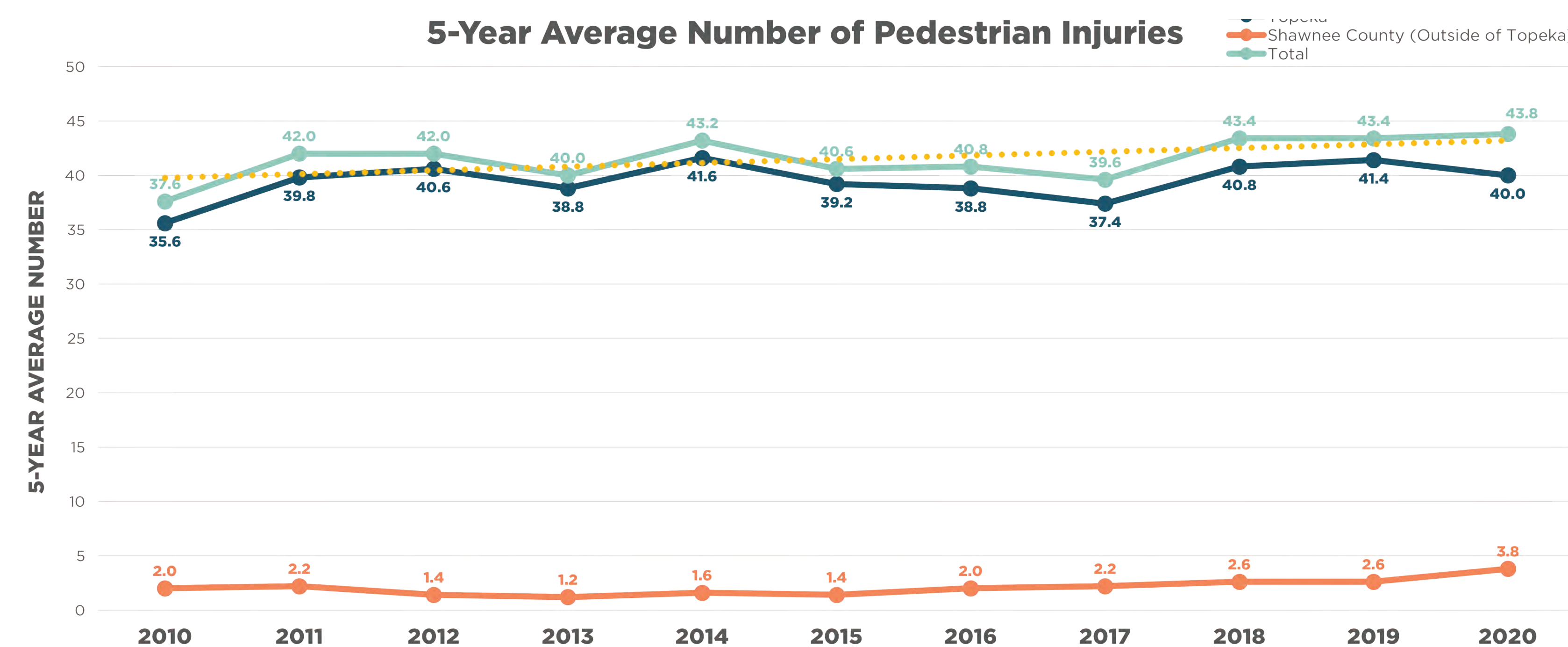
Key Recommendations

- Implement the remaining phases of the Topeka Bicycle Master Plan and Fast Tracks Plan.
- Maximize potential ridership and safety by designing high-quality bike facilities in line with the latest best practices.
- Improve bicycle access to key community destinations.
- Formally adopt a safe systems approach to understanding safety issues and implementing safety improvements.
- Improve access to the city's pathway system by connection to trails and neighborhoods.

PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM



The above map shows existing sidewalks within Topeka as well as areas needing the addition of sidewalks



Source: Kansas Department of Transportation

Key Recommendations

- Continue to follow the recommendations and prioritization method outlined in the 2016 Pedestrian Master Plan to fill sidewalk gaps and provide safer crossings, curb ramps and other Improvements.
- Improve pedestrian crossings at key intersections throughout Topeka.
- Prepare for update of Pedestrian Plan in 2025. The current plan will need to be updated and will provide an opportunity to refresh prioritization criteria for future pedestrian investments.

METRO SYSTEM

Policy Recommendations

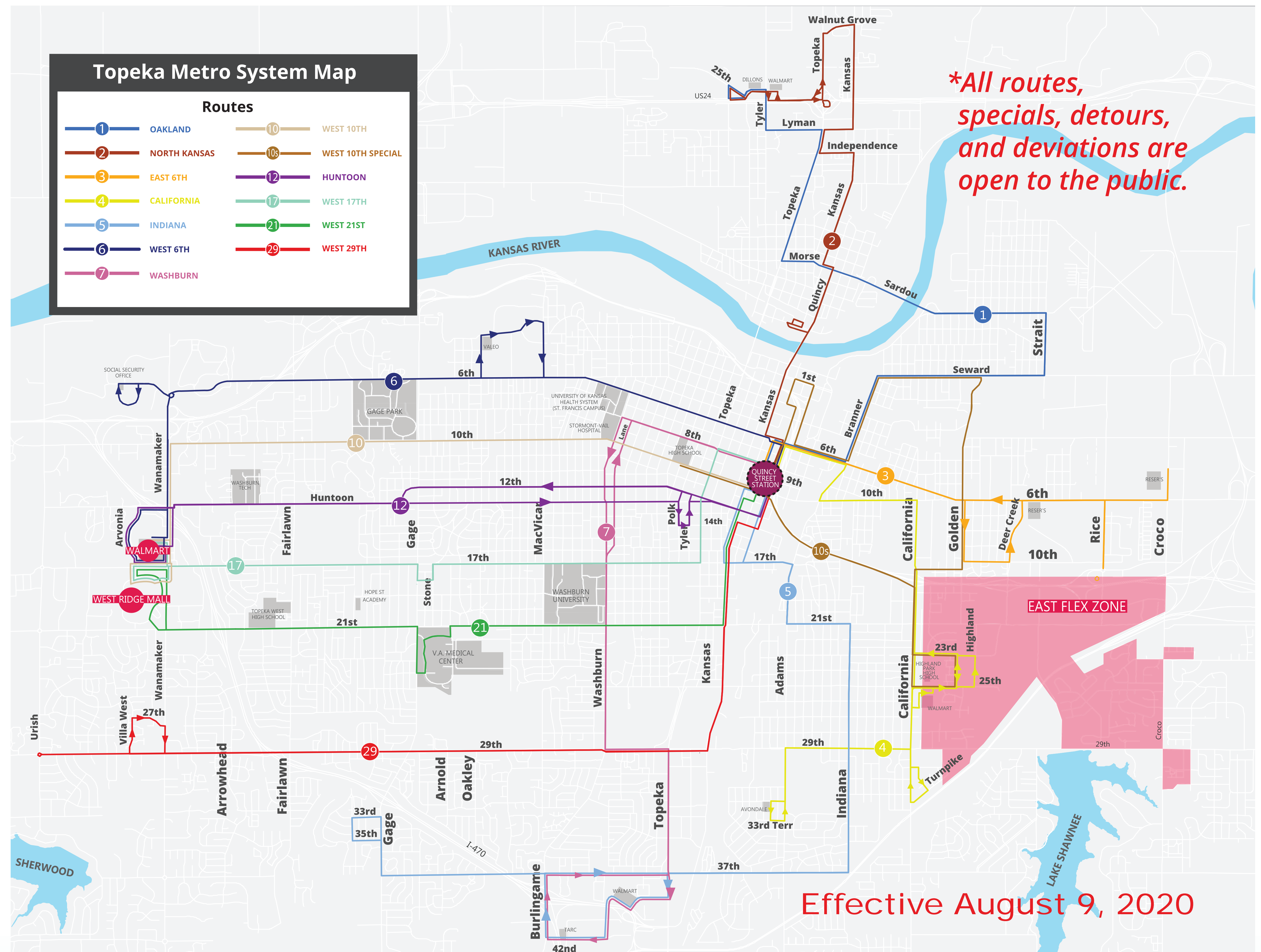
IMPROVED COORDINATION WITH CITY OF TOPEKA

- Continue collaboration with the City to coordinate planning and development efforts and better integrate public transit needs into future plans and new development or reconstruction projects
- Coordinate with City to construct connections between sidewalks and transit stops as street projects are conducted

Transit Recommendations

SHORT TERM (1-4 YEARS)

- Consolidate existing routes and right-size the transit fleet to provide more efficient service on the most frequented routes, and provide more frequent and reliable service to its core ridership
- Provide evening and Sunday service to better serve riders with non-traditional work hours, and riders who want to use the system in the evening and on Sundays



KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

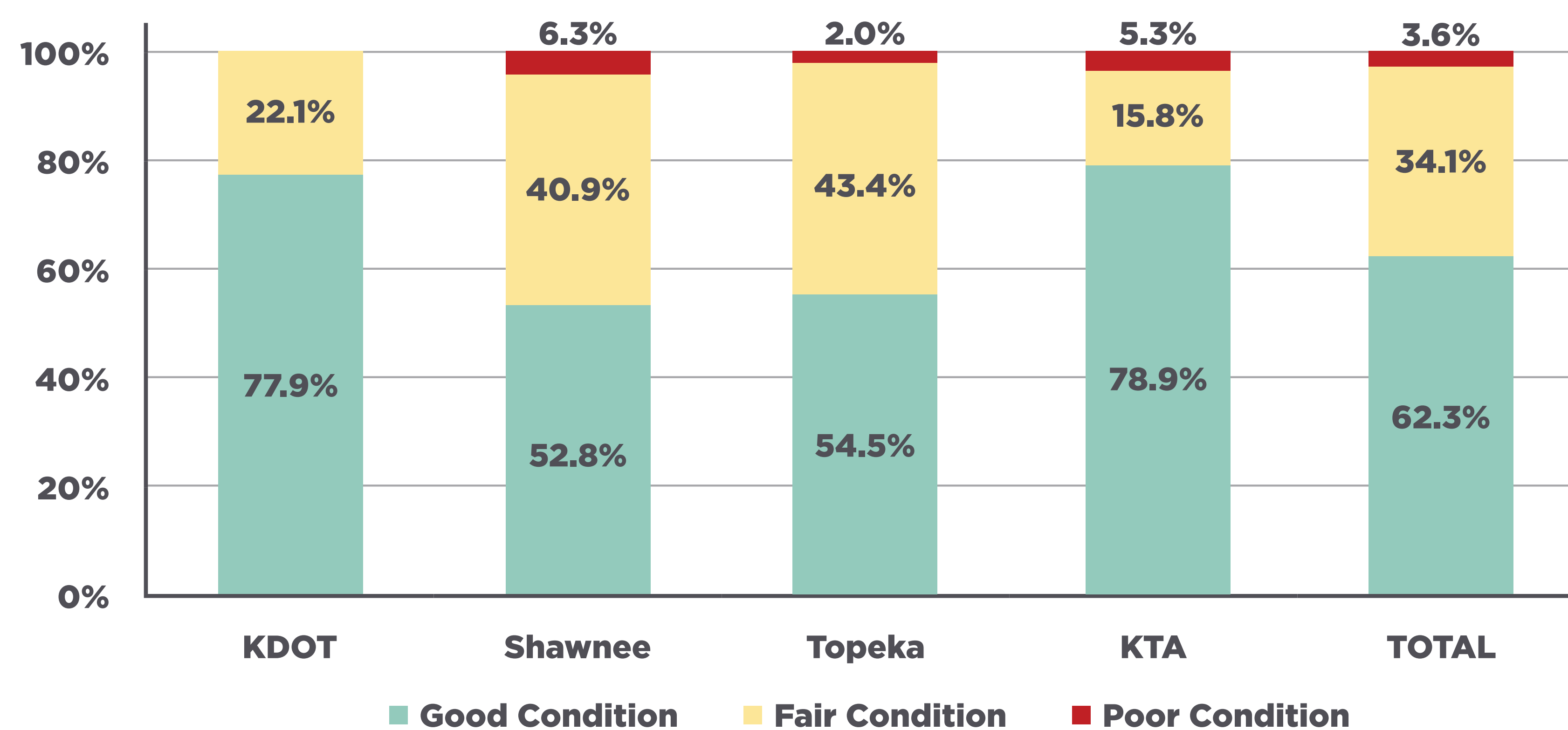
The MTPO has adopted performance measures and begun the process of performance management. The following are highlights of adopted performance measures.

Bridge Condition

The performance goal for all bridges in the Metropolitan Planning Area(MPA) is for 65% of bridges to be rated good and no more than 3% of bridges to be in poor condition based on the results of the biennial bridge inspection. Based on the FY2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program:

- 62.3% of total bridges are in Good Condition
- 34.1% are in Fair Condition
- 3.6% are in Poor Condition

Percentage of Bridges in Good, Fair, and Poor Condition



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Pavement Condition

CITY OF TOPEKA

- Topeka has a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) target of 60 with an aspirational goal of 70
- The City has improved from a PCI of 55 in 2016 to a PCI of 64 in 2022

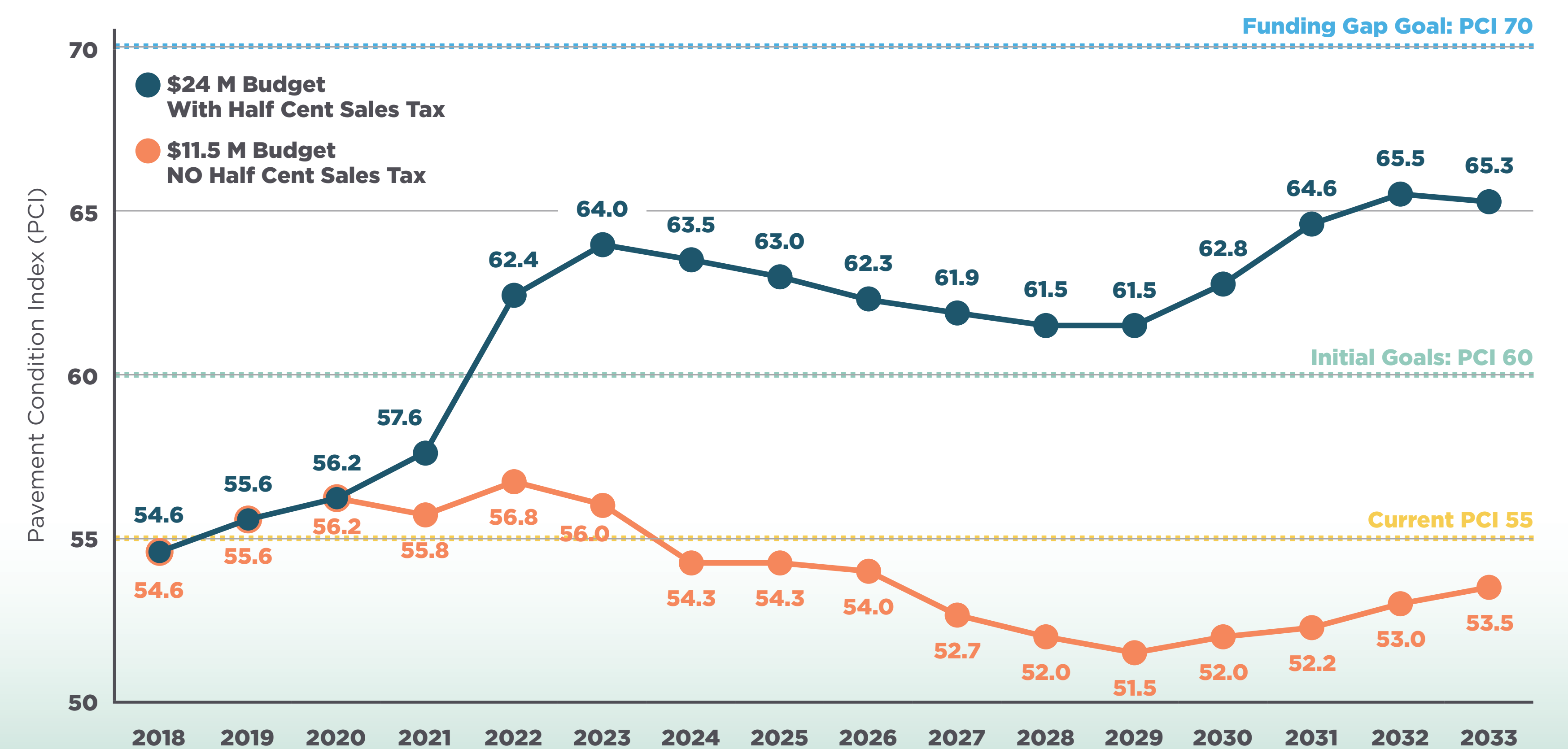
SHAWNEE COUNTY

- Shawnee County uses the PASER scale to rate conditions of roads which ranges from 1 - 10 with 1 indicating total reconstruction needed and 10 being a new road
- The County's goal for roads is to maintain roads to a rating of at least 6 for 90% of the County network

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (KDOT)

- Key performance measure is interstate highways 65% in good condition and non-interstate highways 55% in good condition
- The baseline for State Fiscal Year 2018 was 66.7% for interstate highways and 62.7% for non-interstate highways

Modeled Pavement Condition for City Streets (\$11M budget vs \$24M budget)



KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The MTPO recognizes the need to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries within the MPO area. The following are highlights of the Safety Performance Measures adopted by the MTPO.

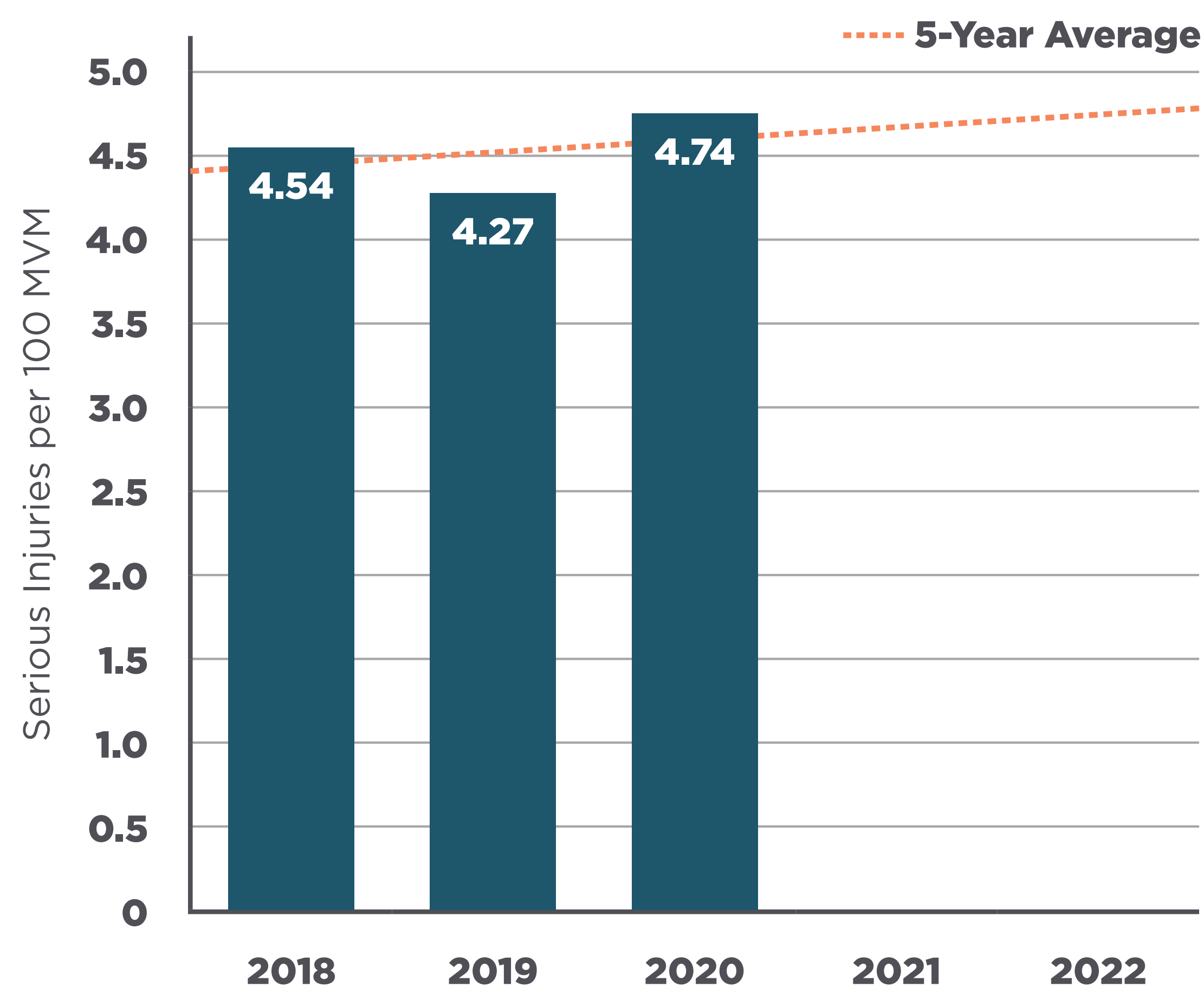
Safety Performance

The MTPO recognizes the need to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries and has adopted a Transportation Safety Plan in 2019. The purpose of the Plan is to identify locations and corridors that may benefit from systemic, low-cost safety improvements and to provide direction in the prioritization of local transportation safety needs within the MTPO region. The plan focuses on four safety emphasis areas:

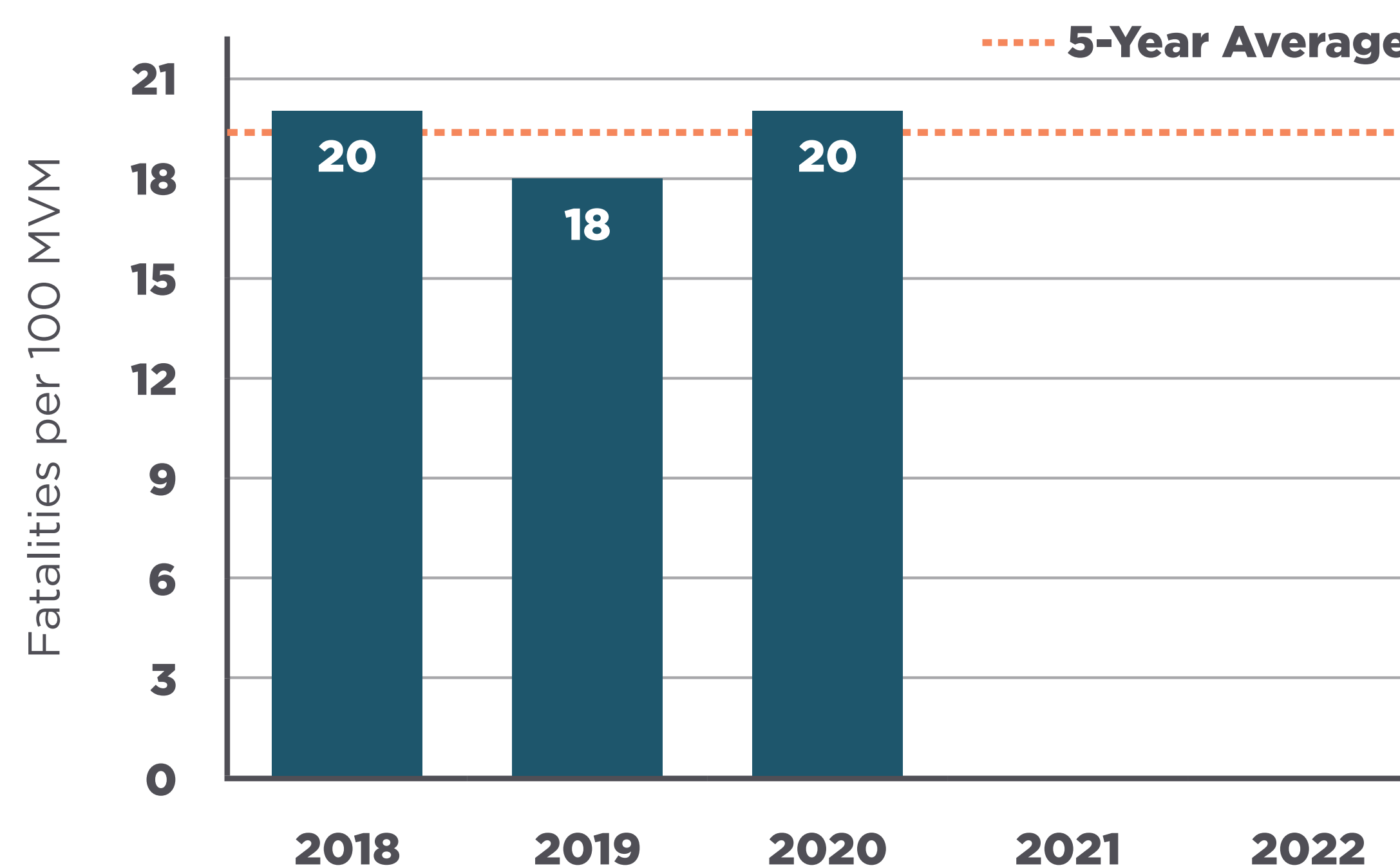
- Intersections
- Pedestrians and bicyclists
- Speed
- Distracted driving

Safety data shown represents all of Shawnee County including Topeka. Data was not available for the MPO region.

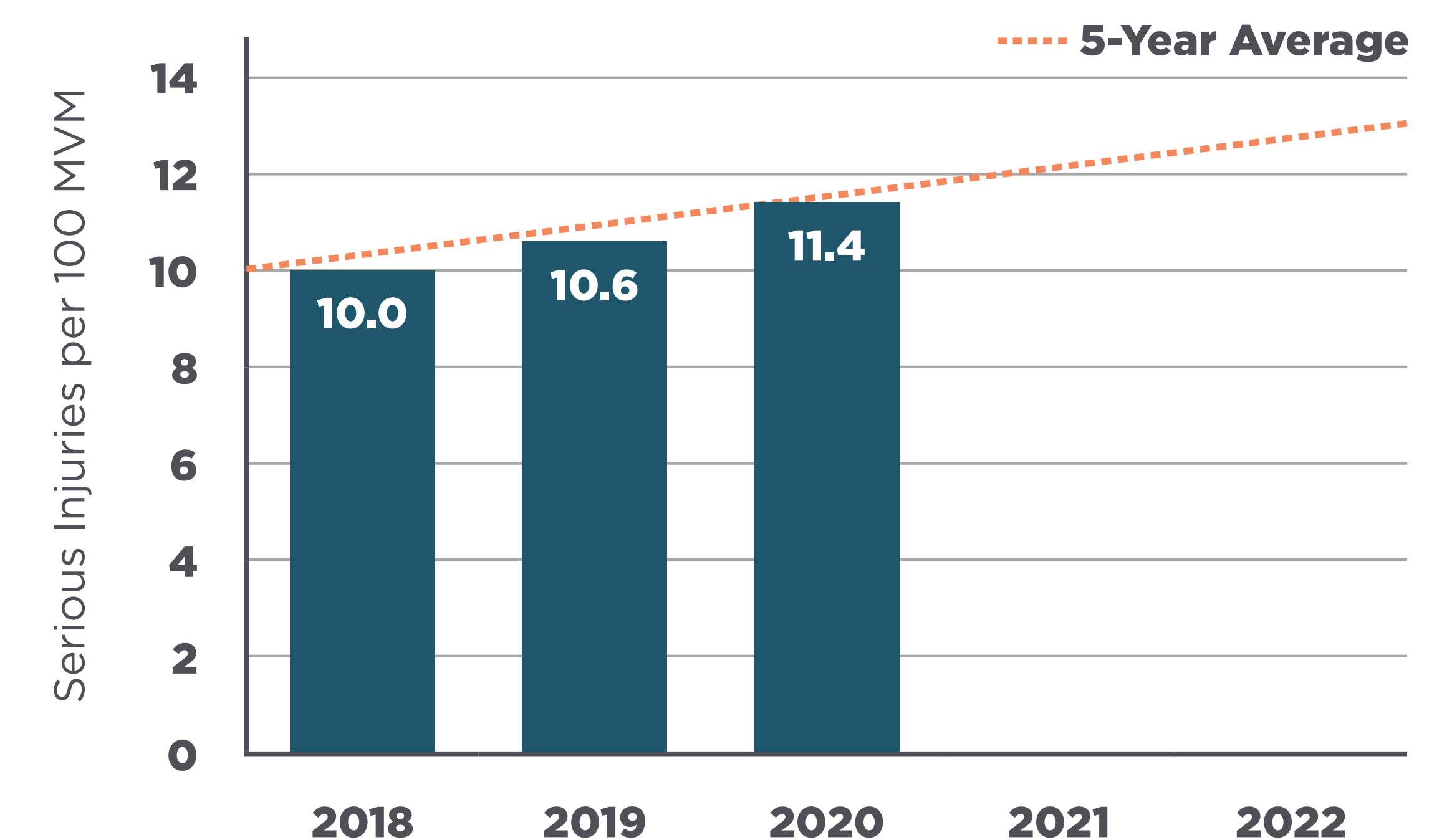
Shawnee County 5-Year Average Serious Injury Rate



Shawnee County 5-Year Average Number of Fatalities



Shawnee County Bicycle & Pedestrian Fatalities + Serious Injuries

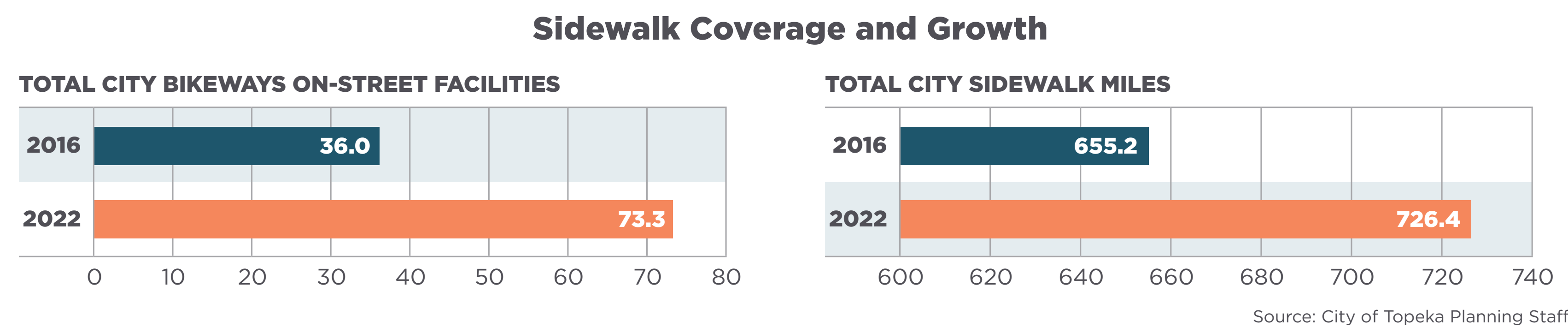


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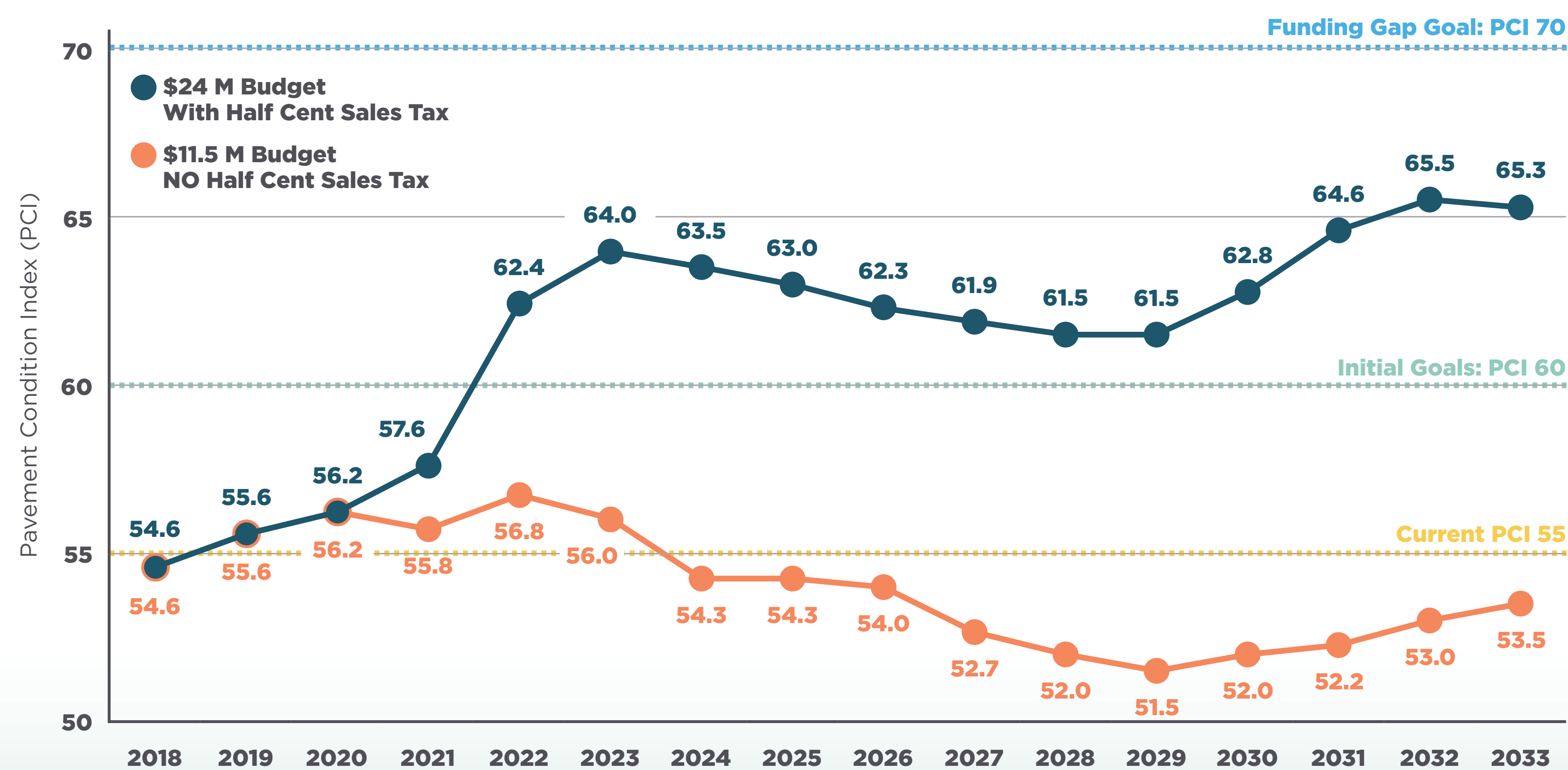
RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue Progress

This plan recommends a continued focus on projects that preserve the existing transportation system, while also expanding facilities for active transportation. Active transportation activities have increased, and the network has expanded. The region has adopted complete street guidelines, updated the bike plan, and built more sidewalks, trails and bike facilities.

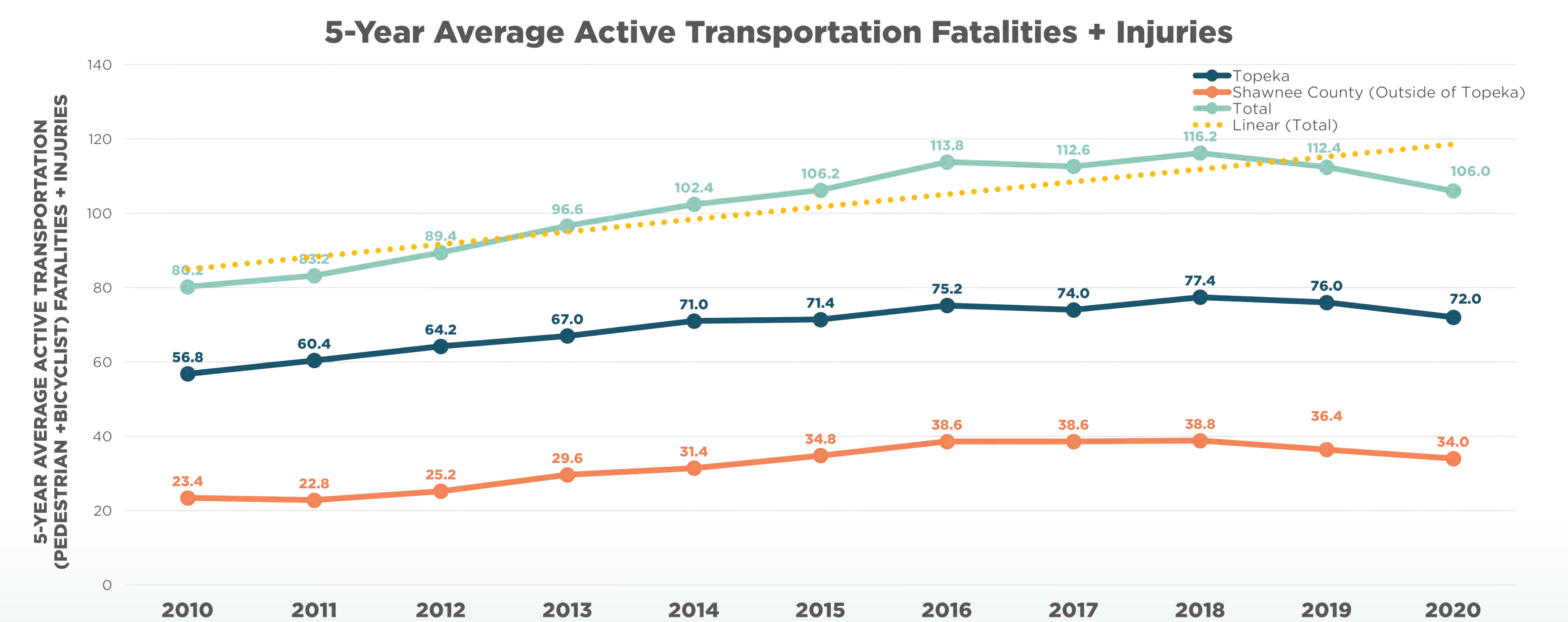
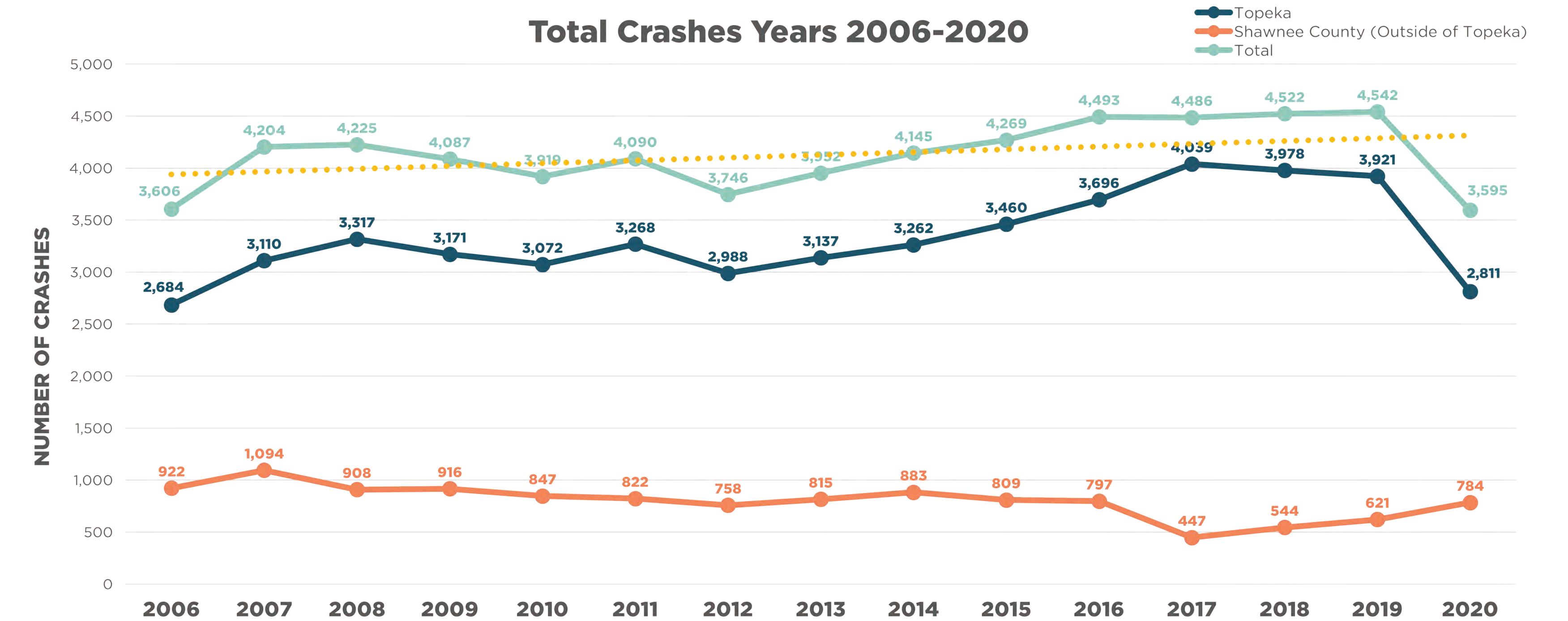


Modeled Pavement Condition for City Streets (\$11M budget vs \$24M budget)



Strengthen Performance Management

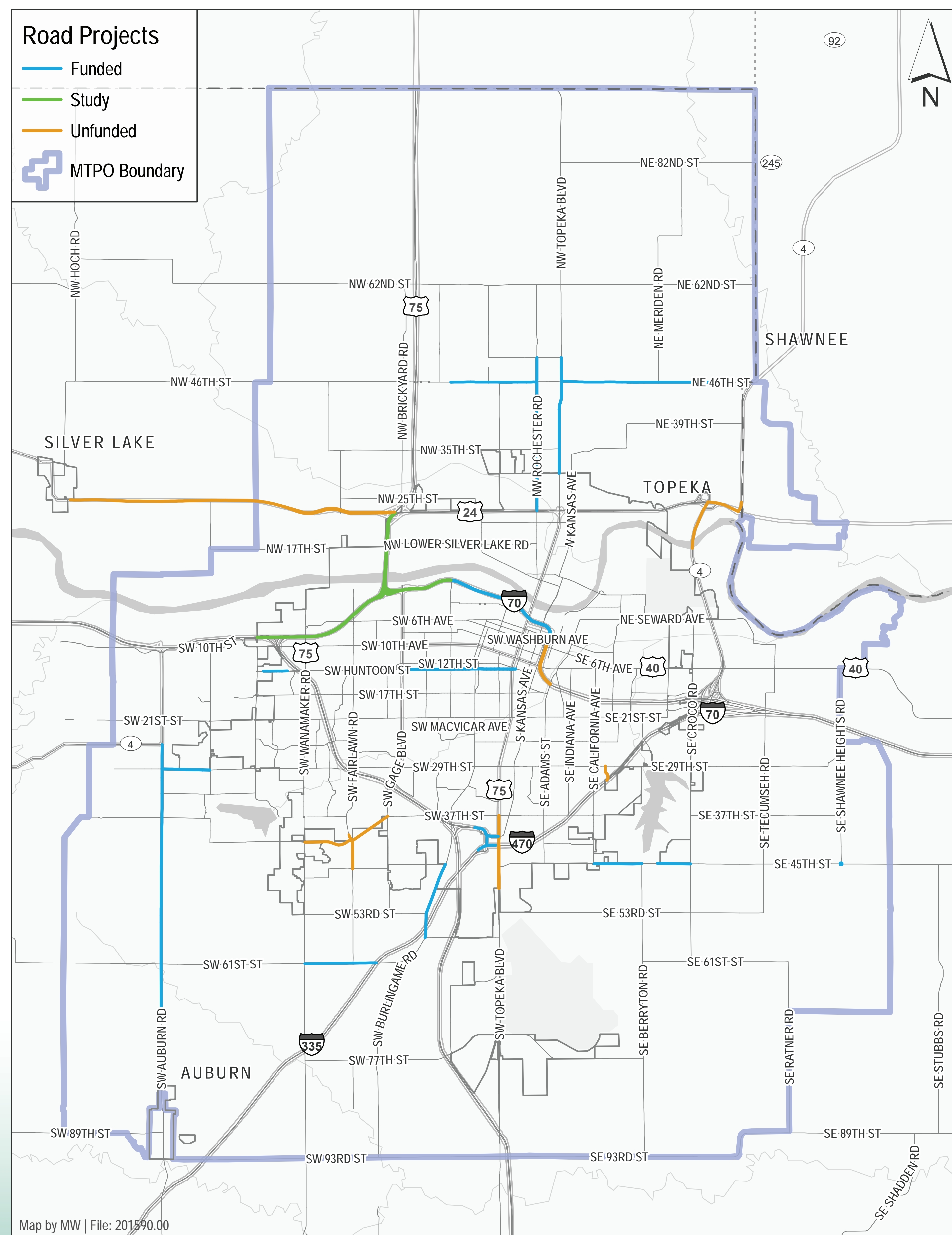
The performance measures for improved safety are trending away from desired performance goals. Intentional efforts should be made to implement recommendations of the MTPO Transportation Safety Plan.



Source: Kansas Department of Transportation

ROADWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the roadway recommendations in the Futures2045 Plan draft are a continued focus on the preservation of existing pavements and bridges, improvements to key roadway corridors, enhancing safety for the traveling public, and following the “Complete Streets” guidelines adopted by the City and County in planning improvements for roadways.



- This plan recommends a continued focus on projects that preserve the existing transportation system, while also addressing roadway capacity improvements at key locations and expanding facilities for active transportation.
- The Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO) has adopted performance measures for the transportation system. Condition targets have been set for pavements and bridges on city streets, county roads, and state highways.
- This plan recommends comparing the list of high crash intersections and road segments identified in the MTPO Transportation Safety Plan when developing projects for future Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs).
- This plan recommends monitoring transportation technology innovations and developing a process for ensuring the transportation system is responsive to future changes.
- The City of Topeka and Shawnee County have adopted “Complete Streets” guidelines to consider the needs of all users in the planning, design, and construction of the transportation system.