



Budget Basics

Prepared by the North Dakota Legislative Council
Part 11 | November 2024

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is responsible for the construction, maintenance, protection, and control of the highways comprising the state highway system. The DOT statutory authority is in North Dakota Century Code Titles 24 and 39. The state is divided into eight district offices located in Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Valley City, and Williston. Each district has a district engineer responsible for construction and maintenance activities in the district. Each county, city, and township is responsible for the construction, maintenance, protection, and control of roadways in its respective jurisdiction.

The following table provides information regarding the number of miles of roadways in North Dakota for fiscal year 2024.

	Miles
State highway system	7,415
County roads	15,619
Other rural roads	61,052
City streets	4,361
Total	88,447

FUNDING SOURCES

The primary sources of funding available to DOT for road construction, maintenance, other transportation infrastructure needs, transit services, and the operation of the department include the highway tax distribution fund, highway fund, and federal funds.

HIGHWAY TAX DISTRIBUTION FUND

State revenues received from the collection of motor fuels taxes (currently 23 cents per gallon) and motor vehicle registration fees are deposited into the highway tax distribution fund. The Department of Transportation receives 61.3 percent of the funds available for distribution from the highway tax distribution fund, which are deposited in the highway fund. Cities and counties receive 34.5 percent, townships receive 2.7 percent, and the department also receives 1.5 percent of the funds for deposit in the public transportation fund which is granted to transportation providers to establish and maintain public transportation, especially for the elderly and handicapped.

HIGHWAY FUND

In addition to the 61.3 percent of highway tax distribution fund revenues, the highway fund also receives revenues from driver's license, truck regulatory, and other fees. The highway fund is the primary state fund used for defraying the expenses of DOT.

FEDERAL FUNDS

The Department of Transportation receives federal funds for highway construction, highway maintenance, and highway safety programs. The majority of federal funds require matching state funds and are received on a reimbursement basis. Federal highway construction funds are used for interstate and state highway projects. Federal funds pay 90 percent of interstate construction and maintenance costs and generally 80 percent of eligible state highway project costs. Federal funds comprise 53 percent of DOT's 2023-25 biennium appropriation.

**SUMMARY OF THE 2023-25 BIENNIUM
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUDGET**

As approved by the 2023 Legislative Assembly, the 2023-25 biennium DOT budget totals \$2.31 billion. Of this amount, \$307.8 million is provided from the highway tax distribution fund, \$770.1 million is from other special funds, and \$1,219.3 million is from federal funds.

A summary of the approved DOT budget for the 2017-19 biennium through the 2023-25 biennium is shown below.

	2017-19 Biennium	2019-21 Biennium	2021-23 Biennium	2023-25 Biennium
General fund	\$13,000,000 ¹	\$2,500,000 ²	\$0	\$10,375,000
Other funds	1,270,504,868	1,462,245,404	2,384,534,084 ³	2,297,252,645 ⁴
Total	\$1,283,504,868	\$1,464,745,404	\$2,384,534,084	\$2,307,627,645
FTE positions	1,047.00	982.00	982.00	1,001.00

¹The 2017-19 biennium general fund appropriations reflect a 2017-19 biennium supplemental appropriation of \$13 million made in House Bill No. 1012 (2019).

²The 2019-21 legislative appropriations amount reflects \$2.5 million from the general fund for the DOT's short line railroad program.

³The 2021-23 biennium other funds appropriations reflect \$318.6 million of COVID-19 funding, \$70 million of bond proceeds, and \$50 million from a Bank of North Dakota loan to match federal grants.

⁴The 2023-25 biennium appropriations include \$222.5 million for the flexible transportation fund, \$60 million of legacy fund earnings deposited in the highway fund, \$114 million from the strategic investment and improvements fund to match federal funds, and \$50 million for a contingent loan authorization for US Highway 85 projects.