

City of  
**Bel Aire**



December 8, 2023

Kansas Department of Transportation  
Secretary Calvin Reed  
Dwight D Eisenhower State Office Building  
700 S.W. Harrison Street  
Topeka, KS 66603-3745

Dear Secretary Reed,

First, I want to congratulate you on your permanent appointment as KDOT Secretary. I also appreciate you taking the time to meet with myself and our City Manager on May 8<sup>th</sup> of this year. There is no doubt you are dedicated to Kansas and making our road system the best in the country.


Unfortunately, this letter is a request for assistance on a City of Bel Aire road project, specifically Woodlawn Street (KDOT Project #087 N-0678-01), funded through WAMPO. The Bel Aire City Council asked me to contact you and request your leadership in getting this failed road project completed. As I am sure you are aware, cities in the Wichita metro are required to go through WAMPO for federal funding of local arterials. Most smaller communities do not have the staff to oversee federally funded projects and thus rely on KDOT to take the lead. On May 8, 2018, Bel Aire and KDOT entered into an agreement whereby The Secretary agreed to act as Bel Aire's agent in all respects for the administration of the construction project that is Woodlawn Street. The City, as required in the agreement, hired MKEC as the design engineers, Garver as the inspection engineers, and the construction contract was awarded to Pearson.

In the spring of this year, staff noticed the road, not yet completed, was failing. Bel Aire met with Garver, MKEC, Pearson and KDOT to identify the causes and determine a solution. Unfortunately, none of the parties offered any assistance nor took any responsibility. We are saddened by the millions we have spent on professional companies who would allow a new road to fail before it was even completed and then not step up to help us get it fixed. To make matters worse, KDOT, as the city's agent, has taken no action to solve the issue but rather suggested this is the city's responsibility.

As you can imagine, not only is the Governing Body and staff unhappy, our citizens are beyond frustrated. Due to a lack of cooperation from all parties, the City hired Neil Gosch with Triplett Woolf Garretson to represent the city to try and bring the parties together to find a solution. Sadly, Neil has struggled not only with the private businesses but also getting any communication or assistance from KDOT. Therefore, I am sending this letter to you and requesting your intervention to bring an end to this nightmare for our community.

I look forward to hearing from you and having an onsite meeting at your convenience. Please contact our City Manager, Ty Lasher, when you are in the area so that we can meet and discuss the problems.

Sincerely,



Jim Benage, Mayor