

The 6 Trends Driving Transportation in the 2020s



As state and local governments work to modernize and enhance transportation networks in the coming years, they must answer several key questions. What are the most important goals for transportation in the 2020s? Which ones deserve the most attention? How will technology help achieve those goals? In this Q&A, [Geo George](#), industry strategy and GTM executive at Salesforce, shares his thoughts about the biggest factors that will impact transportation through the rest of the decade.

Which trends are driving transit and transportation in this decade?

We see six key themes emerging:

1 / Equity. Equity is an imperative to eliminate transportation burdens for low-income communities, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. The key focus is connecting communities and access to resources and opportunities.

2 / Resilience and security. Recent floods, storms, fires and hurricanes have disrupted the lives of millions and caused hundreds of billions of dollars in damage. Public officials face the challenge of making highways, bridges, railroads, transit stations, waterways, airports and ports more resilient to climate change and other threats.

3 / Safety. Ninety-five percent of transportation fatalities result from routine highway travel. It will be critical to provide a safe and secure system designed to eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries.

4 / Technology. All around the globe, companies and government organizations are testing automated transportation technologies. These are exciting innovations and elements of transportation. It is critical to look at how technology can help modernize and drive efficiencies for state DOTs, transit authorities, airports and seaports.

5 / Sustainability. Transportation accounts for the largest share of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions – 28.5 percent. Drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are needed in the coming decades.

6 / Infrastructure. Maintaining a high-quality transportation system is important for safety

and economic development. Deteriorating roads and bridges increase travel times. These problems translate into higher costs for businesses to manufacture and distribute goods and provide services.

If you were advising a state department of transportation to tackle a few of these trends, which would you choose?

I'd start with infrastructure and sustainability. That bridge collapse in Pittsburgh on the day President Biden was giving a speech amplifies how critical infrastructure is — highways, roads and bridges; and transit stations, tracks and rails. Sustainability must be incorporated into every investment and decision. Technology cuts across all these elements, providing tools to help drive efficiencies.

What's the No. 1 thing a DOT can do to better manage the ecosystem of agencies, jurisdictions, private contractors and private strategic partners it takes to complete a transportation project?

Implement a collaboration platform for all stakeholders. For example, [New York City's Metropolitan Transit Authority uses Slack](#) to manage incidents internally and share real-time updates with riders and key partners. One MTA leader said that before Slack, incident information was essentially an endless stream of noise that took years to understand. A powerful collaboration platform can drive a lot of efficiencies and increase public participation in the planning process.



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