

ADB loan to improve Karshi-Kitab automobile road



ADB approved a USD 198 million loan to upgrade 77 km of Karshi-Shakhrisabz-Kitab highway.

Asian Development Bank has approved a USD 198 million loan on 6 December to help upgrade and widen 77 km of the existing Karshi-Shakhrisabz-Kitab highway in Kashkadarya province, southeast of Uzbekistan, the ADB [press service](#) announced.

"The road upgrade will solidify Uzbekistan's position as a key transit country for trade in Central Asia and the rest of Europe and Asia," principal transport specialist at ADB's Central and West Asia Department Jiangbo Ning said. "The project will also improve road facilities and management through road safety measures, and capacity development for relevant authorities and stakeholders."

In Uzbekistan, which is a member of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), roads and highways receive about 10% of the volume of freight transport from international transit traffic, with 88% of road activity consisting of domestic passenger and short-haul cargo traffic.

The project will upgrade two road sections of the existing highway between the cities of Karshi, Shakhrisabz and Kitab into a 4-lane concrete pavement incorporating road safety and climate change adaptation features.

This upgrade will increase annual average daily traffic on the Karshi-Kitab road to 14,000 vehicles by 2022 from 9,408 vehicles in 2015. More broadly, the project will increase international trade and tourism along the CAREC corridors, and make the roads much safer.

The project will also have a capacity development component to improve management and skills of the Republican Road Fund, as project's executing agency, as well as selected road design institutes in the country to elevate road design and construction standards.

The total cost of the project is USD 266.2 million, with the government of Uzbekistan contributing USD 68.2 million. The expected project completion date is the end of 2021.