



2023

MODOT  
**YEAR IN  
REVIEW**



Missouri Department  
of Transportation

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# 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

## Record FY2024-2028 STIP approved

In July, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the FY2024-2028 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The program lists transportation projects planned by state and regional planning agencies, spanning July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2028. The \$14 billion investment is the largest program to date with more than 1,500 projects, and includes \$3 billion in General Revenue funds for several projects, including improving I-70, fixing low-volume minor roads and upgrading railroad safety crossings.

The \$14 billion is made up of federal and state revenues and includes \$10.4 billion in contractor awards for road and bridge construction, averaging \$2.1 billion per year. Because the STIP is not immune to the markets, this program also begins to account for \$1.2 billion to handle the impacts of inflation on previously funded projects. The impact adjusts the timing of the projects and will reduce the ability of new projects for several years. Maintenance improvements, upgrades to corridors and safety features to Missouri's nearly 34,000 miles of roads and 10,400 bridges are all detailed in the program, which was released for public review in June.

MoDOT also worked with regional planning partners statewide to develop this year's High-Priority Unfunded Needs list, totaling \$4.7 billion in road and bridge needs and \$1 billion in multimodal needs. The list is part of a broader, long-term unfunded needs list totaling \$11 billion in unfunded needs over 10 years.

## General Revenue funds historic I-70 expansion program

In 2023, MoDOT embarked on an endeavor to enhance one of the state's key economic corridors: Interstate 70. Spanning 250 miles across Missouri, I-70 serves as a major conduit for commerce, connecting St. Louis on the eastern border to Kansas City on the western edge.

The Improve I-70 Program, a multi-phase initiative, aims to address critical infrastructure needs, improve safety, and enhance transportation efficiency.

Missouri's FY2024 budget from the General Assembly signed into law by Gov. Mike Parson provides \$2.8 billion in General Revenue for the costs to plan, design, construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate and repair three lanes in each direction on approximately 200 miles of I-70 from Blue Springs to Wentzville.

The program goals include providing a third lane of travel, improving the interstate while modernizing existing pavement and bridges, and increasing the efficiency of freight movements along the corridor. The program also aims to minimize construction impacts with a focus on work zone safety, communications, and construction staging, as well as expand a diverse workforce through the creation of jobs.

Scheduling for this program is three-fold: updating environmental documents, project development and construction. The first construction project from Columbia to Kingdom City will improve the 20-mile stretch of I-70 between U.S. Routes 63 and 54. The contract should be awarded in early 2024 with construction beginning in summer 2024.

To learn more about the Improve I-70 Program, visit [www.modot.org/improvei70](http://www.modot.org/improvei70).



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## Missouri invests in railroad safety improvements

After completing its first State Action Plan for Highway/Railroad Crossings last year, the Missouri Department of Transportation identified the need for additional funding to improve rail crossings. In June 2023, Gov. Mike Parson signed House Bill 4 appropriating \$50 million for rail safety improvements.

The improvement of safety at the 47 passive public railroad crossings on Missouri's three passenger rail lines is the first priority of these funds. MoDOT hired consultant firms to complete independent studies on the passenger rail lines of the Southwest Chief, Missouri River Runner and Texas Eagle to make recommendations on potential improvements. The funding also allowed MoDOT to launch a program with the goal of improving advance warning signs for railroad crossings.



## Hands-free becomes law in Missouri

Distracted driving has continued to be a leading cause of crashes in Missouri. Between 2012 and 2021, there have been over 200,000 distracted driving-related crashes in Missouri, resulting in at least 801 fatalities.

After two years in a row of more than 1,000 fatalities on Missouri's roadways, Gov. Mike Parson signed the Siddens Bening Hands-Free Law in June, prohibiting all drivers from using a handheld electronic communication device while driving. With the law in effect as of August 2023, drivers are prohibited from physically holding or supporting a cell phone with any part of their body; manually typing, writing, sending, or reading text-based messages; recording, posting, sending or broadcasting video, including video calls and social media posts; and watching a video or movie.

In addition to the new secondary law, MoDOT's Buckle Up Phone Down (BUPD) program was also recognized as a "First Mover" in the U.S. DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy, released in February 2023. The strategy is a new, comprehensive approach to reversing the rise in traffic fatalities nationwide. MoDOT's Call to Action challenges Missourians to do their part in making Missouri's roads safer by using their seat belt and putting down, or turning off, their phone while driving.

MoDOT initiated the BUPD program in 2017, and it has spread steadily across Missouri and nearly two dozen other states. More than 35,000 individuals and 700 businesses in Missouri have taken the pledge to BUPD as of July 2023.

## Missouri hosts national work zone safety event

April 17-21 marked National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW), and Missouri was selected to host the national kickoff event on April 18. MoDOT shared its message of "Work with Us: You play a role in work zone safety" nationwide to promote safe driving habits that protect drivers and those they share the road with, including highway workers. MoDOT, in cooperation with the American Traffic Safety



**Caption: Federal Highway Administration Executive Director Gloria Shepherd speaks at the 2023 National Work Zone Awareness Week kickoff event in Rocheport.**

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Services Association and the Federal Highway Administration, hosted the NWZAW kickoff event on April 18 at the construction site for the new LCpl. Leon Deraps I-70 Missouri River Bridge near Rocheport. Speakers included Federal Highway Administration Executive Director Gloria Shepherd, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman Terry Ecker, MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna, Missouri Associated General Contractors President Len Toenjes and Missouri State Highway Patrol Lt. Eric Brown. Personal testimonials were given from MoDOT Central District Senior Bridge Maintenance Worker Eric Bybee and Nicole and Kelby Herbel, the daughter and granddaughter of fallen MoDOT worker Lyndon Ebker.

## **MCTI marks three years of research and innovation**

The Missouri Center for Transportation Innovation celebrated its third anniversary in November 2022. MCTI is a partnership composed of the four University of Missouri campuses, the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, among others. MCTI partners share resources to research and develop new transportation technologies. To date, MCTI has secured federal transportation research funding totaling more than \$13.4 million. Projects from this partnership include the real-world testing of recycled plastics in asphalt on a four-mile stretch of Stadium Blvd in Columbia. Another project aimed to design a concrete bridge barrier reinforced with glass-fiber-reinforced polymer materials. Physical testing of this design is underway.

## **MoDOT mourns loss of fallen worker**

On July 24, 2023, MoDOT tragically lost one of its own. Charles Eugene "Charlie" Toler, a senior equipment technician in the Southwest District, was performing mechanical work when he was



**Charlie Toler with his wife, Terron, and three children, Charleigh, Keith and Blake.**

killed in a vehicle incident near Mount Vernon. He had been with the department for more than 15 years.

Charlie was a dedicated husband, father, employee and community member. In addition to his service with MoDOT, he was an assistant fire chief and held many other roles within his community – a coach, farmer, leader and friend. Charlie was a friend to everyone he met and did whatever it took to make sure his MoDOT team had what they needed to get their jobs done. He reflects the best of MoDOT and will be missed by all who knew him.

MoDOT has lost 139 employees in the line of duty since 1932.

## **I-70 Missouri River bridge near Rocheport meets project milestones**

Work on the LCpl. Leon Deraps I-70 Missouri River Bridge near Rocheport continued in 2023, which saw the new westbound bridge opened to traffic in July. On the morning of September 10, 2023, the old Missouri River bridge was demolished by a controlled blast that dropped six million pounds of steel into the river but left the new bridge unharmed. The area around

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**Controlled blasts demolish the old I-70 Missouri River bridge at Rocheport.**

the demolition, including the new bridge, was secured and closed to traffic until crews could clear any debris. The new westbound bridge was then reopened to two-way traffic while construction of the new eastbound bridge is underway. The project is expected to be completed in December 2024 with both new bridges open to traffic.

## **FARM Bridge Design-Build completed ahead of schedule**

The Fixing Access to Rural Missouri (FARM) Bridge Design Build project was completed in October 2023, three weeks before its scheduled end date. The project, which included the rehabilitation or replacement of 31 critical access bridges in 17 counties across northern Missouri, was accomplished through a \$20.7 million federal grant paired with \$5.2 million in state road funds. The rehabilitated bridges had been labeled as weight-restricted, in poor condition, on timber pile or are one-lane but carrying two-way traffic. MoDOT, along with the project team of Lehman Construction and Wilson & Company, used increased construction speed coupled with flexible scheduling to minimize impact to the public while the project was ongoing.



## **I-270 North corridor project nears completion**

MoDOT's \$278 million I-270 North Project is moving closer to its December 2023 construction completion date. The project broke ground in April 2020 and addressed aging infrastructure, including bridges and pavement constructed during the 1960s, high traffic volumes, limited pedestrian facilities, and a need to improve how people, vehicles and goods move through the interstate and outer road system.

To date, the project boasts eight reconstructed interchanges, seven new bridges, new pavement throughout the corridor, multi-use paths on both sides of the interstate, additional driving lanes eastbound and westbound, a redesigned and updated outer road system, and signal updates and replacements.

These updates will provide a safe, connective and accessible transportation refresh that improves both local and regional travel.

## **Chester Bridge replacement project awarded**

In March, the Missouri Highways & Transportation Commission selected The Ames Team as the Design-Build contractor to replace the Chester Bridge. This bridge spans the Mississippi River between Perryville, Missouri and Chester, Illinois

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via Missouri Route 51/Illinois Route 150. The existing bridge has two 11-foot lanes that carry 7,000 vehicles per day. The new structure will be a three-tower, cable-stayed bridge and will cost approximately \$284 million to complete.

Project goals include: replacing both structures within the project budget using durable 100-year, low-maintenance structure(s); providing a safe and reliable transportation solution for all modes of transportation; completing the project no later than Dec. 1, 2026 with the least impacts to all modes of transportation; and delivering the project safely while utilizing a diverse workforce.



Chester Bridge rendering.

## Buck O’Neil Bridge progresses

Crews replacing the U.S. 169 John Jordan “Buck” O’Neil Memorial Bridge, formerly the Broadway Bridge, continued their work from 2022 throughout 2023. In February 2023, crews closed southbound U.S. 169 from the Charles Wheeler downtown airport to Fifth Street in downtown Kansas City. This closure is the most impactful of the project and will last until approximately October 2024. The Kansas City area traffic

detoured around this closure as the region saw significant visitor increases due to the Big 12 men’s basketball tournament, NCAA men’s regional basketball games and the NFL draft. The \$220 million dollar project, which will carry an estimated 50,000 vehicles is expected to be completed in Fall 2024.

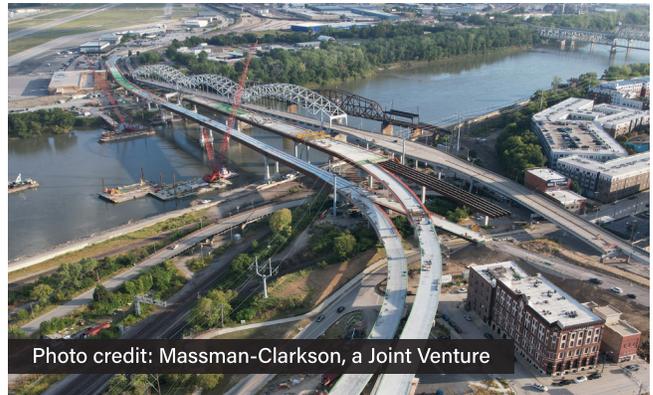


Photo credit: Massman-Clarkson, a Joint Venture

Crews continue work on the new U.S. 169 John Jordan “Buck” O’Neil Memorial Bridge in Kansas City.

## Focus on Bridges: Delivered

The final contracts were awarded in early 2023 as part of Gov. Mike Parson’s Focus on Bridges Program. In all, over \$353 million was invested into 250 bridge repairs and/or replacements across the state since the program was initiated in 2019. All bridges will be completed by the end of 2023.

# 2023 National Performance Report Card



## Project Management

**Current Performance** = Missouri road and bridge projects were delivered within 0.6 percent of the award amount and 95 percent were delivered on-time.

**National Ranking** = Not available.



## Road Conditions

**Current Performance** = 89 percent major highways (5,553 miles) in good condition. 81 percent of minor highways (17,538) in good condition.

**National Ranking** = Missouri's highway system ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation. (*Reason Foundation Annual Highway Report*)



## Administrative Costs

**Current Performance** = \$2,349 cost per mile

**National Ranking** = Missouri has the 14<sup>th</sup> lowest administrative cost per mile.



## Customer Satisfaction

**Current Performance** = 73 percent satisfied customers

**National Ranking** = Missouri trails the highest rated company on the American Customer Satisfaction Index by 12 percent.



## Infrastructure for Business

**Current Performance** = No internal measure

**National Ranking** = A CNBC business study ranks Missouri's infrastructure as the 21<sup>st</sup> best for business.



## Congestion (travel time index)

**Current Performance** = Kansas City: 1.10 St. Louis: 1.08

**National Ranking** = Out of 101 urban areas, Kansas City ranked 29<sup>th</sup> and St. Louis ranked at 44<sup>th</sup> for congested areas in the U.S. (*Urban Mobility Report - 2021*)



## Number of Fatalities

**Current Performance** = 1,057 fatalities

**National Ranking** = Out of 50 states, Missouri ranked 17<sup>th</sup> for rural fatalities and 42<sup>nd</sup> in urban fatalities.



## Bridge Conditions

**Current Performance** = 7 percent of Missouri bridges in poor condition by deck area.

**National Ranking** = Missouri ranked 39<sup>th</sup> for the percent of bridges in poor condition by deck area. (*FHWA Highway Statistics*)



## Employee Turnover

**Current Performance** = 13.97 percent

**National Ranking** = Not available



## Revenue

**Current Performance** = \$73,477 revenue per mile

**National Ranking** = Missouri has the 47<sup>th</sup> lowest revenue per mile. (*FHWA Highway Statistics*)

### RANKINGS

1-10 = A

11-20 = B

21-30 = C

31-40 = D

41-50 = F

**SAFETY**

**Be Safe**

**Be Accountable**

**SERVICE**

**Be Respectful  
Be Inclusive**

**Be Bold**

**Be Better**

**STABILITY**

**Be One Team**

**So we can be a  
great organization**



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