

Missouri  
Department of  
Transportation



**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**

# MODOT YEAR IN REVIEW

**2020**

# 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

## OVERVIEW

2020 was a challenging year for everyone. The entire planet has been affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting economic downturn that so greatly influenced how the past year played out. The transportation industry in general, and the Missouri Department of Transportation specifically, had to quickly adjust operations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and deal with a significant loss of revenue due to people driving less amidst stay-at-home orders and quarantine mandates.

Despite the challenges and setbacks, MoDOT was able to deliver a robust construction program in 2020. Throughout the busiest months of the construction season, contractor payments ran more than \$100 million ahead of a year ago, and by the end of the year will have exceeded 2019's total. These accomplishments delivered vital transportation projects, kept money flowing into the economy and people working, while improving the condition and safety of the state's roads and bridges.

## COVID-19 Emergency Response

When the coronavirus entered Missouri, MoDOT was quick to act, following the guidance set forth by the Centers for Disease Control, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and Gov. Mike Parson's administration. As a provider of critical services to the public, the department immediately activated its emergency response plan – also known as the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

MoDOT staff also quickly went to work to keep people, goods and services moving, while maintaining the safety and health of employees, partners and the traveling public. One of the department's first actions was to coordinate with Gov. Parson's office, federal agencies and partners in the motor carrier and agricultural industries to enable emergency flow of goods by relaxing the hours of operation for motor carriers and easing restrictions to allow for heavier-than-normal truckloads of supplies and equipment to



travel on Missouri highways. MoDOT also took steps to keep vital highway construction and maintenance programs running, while working to minimize the spread of the coronavirus through social distancing, wearing face coverings and working remotely and virtually.

For the most part, the department was able to continue operating at almost 100% capacity despite the coronavirus pandemic. Bid openings, public meetings and design and construction activities continued either virtually or under the CDC guidance for face coverings and social distancing. MoDOT continues to use a variety of tools and methods to ensure employees who are able to work remotely are able to do so without interruption to service and operations. For those employees unable to work from home, the department has provided guidance and supplies to ensure their continued safety and health while remaining in their normal places of work. As a result, MoDOT has successfully kept employees safely working within its facilities or from remote locations, while also ensuring paid leave options were appropriately and consistently used when in the best interest of employees and the department.



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## Pandemic Impacts Traffic, Revenue

Like so many other individuals and entities, the coronavirus pandemic caused a loss of revenue to state departments of transportation, including MoDOT. Actual state highway-user revenue for motor fuel, motor vehicle sales and motor vehicle and driver's licenses was approximately \$38 million less than projected for state fiscal year 2020.

To address the revenue shortfall early in the pandemic, the department cut back discretionary spending on equipment, materials and supplies and slowed new hiring. From March through June, the department delayed advertisement on \$360 million of construction projects. All of these efforts helped the department manage cash flow to the end of FY20. Since July, we have advertised or scheduled the advertisement for all of the delayed construction projects in FY21.

In addition, about 1,000 MoDOT employees opted to take a 5% pay cut from mid-June to mid-July, while others chose to work reduced hours and participate in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Shared Work Program. The goal of the shared work program was to retain jobs by saving payroll dollars through a reduction in employee hours while enabling eligibility for unemployment and CARES Act benefits. These actions allowed the department to save \$14 million toward the deficit caused by COVID-19.

These actions managed cash in the State Road Fund and enabled MoDOT to lessen the financial impact of the pandemic in the early months.

## Federal Action

At the federal level, the need for funding for state departments of transportation hit hard by COVID-19 remains urgent. On Sept. 30, Congress passed a continuing resolution intended to keep the federal government funded at fiscal 2020 funding levels through Dec. 11. Another continuing resolution has been passed through Dec. 18.

The continuing resolution contains a provision that extends the FAST Act through fiscal year 2021 - a one-year extension. It provides a \$10.4 billion general fund transfer to the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund and a \$3.2 billion general funds transfer to the Mass Transit Account. The act also provides a \$14 billion general fund transfer to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

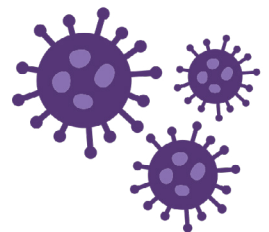
## CARES Act Funding

Missouri transportation did receive some federal aid in the form of funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The state received a \$152.5 million grant, a portion was distributed by MoDOT for 68 state airports and \$61.8 million in aid for operating expenses and capital assistance for 28 Missouri rural transit agencies. In addition, 11 urban areas in Missouri received \$194.5 million in federal transit grants from the CARES Act.

## COVID-19 Sentinel Testing Pilot Program

To help provide critical COVID-19 research, MoDOT volunteered to be the first state agency to participate in sentinel - or randomized - testing for COVID-19. Sentinel testing helps detect potential hotspots and identify trends in disease spread in an effort to contain potential future outbreaks.

MoDOT had 119 employees volunteer to participate in the pilot program. Of those, 108 tests were successfully collected, with no positive results. In addition to a zero-positivity rate, MoDOT was able to provide valuable



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information to ensure a successful roll-out among other state agencies. In October, the Office of Administration began a statewide initiative to test up to 3,000 state employees each month for 18 months. MoDOT continues to participate in this process.

## Strong Construction Season in 2020 Despite COVID-19

The department this year delivered one of its strongest construction programs ever. MoDOT had more payments to its contractors in 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019. Contractor payments were \$821.23 million from Jan. 1 to Nov. 15, 2020, compared to \$662.4 million for 2019.

## Steady Progress on Focus on Bridges Program

Quite a bit of legwork was accomplished in the past year on Gov. Mike Parson's \$351 million Focus on Bridges program, which is repairing or replacing 250 poor bridges across the state.

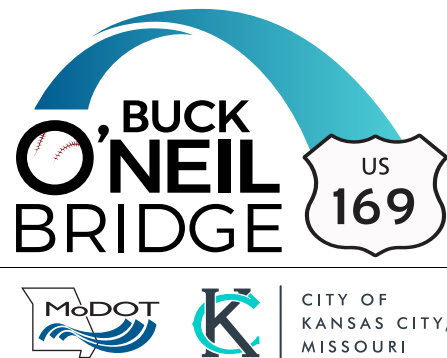
## Current Focus on Bridges Statistics (as of Dec. 11)

- Bridges under contract – 152 (includes Bootheel Bridge Bundle design-build project)
- 10 bridges in the Dec. 18 letting
- Bridges completed – 99
- Bridges under construction – 18



## Fixing Access to Rural Missouri (FARM) Bridge Program Moves Forward

MoDOT has begun the procurement process to identify a design-build team for the FARM Bridge Program, which will replace up to 41 bridges in northern Missouri. This \$26 million design-build project was enabled by receipt in August of 2019 of a \$20.7 million federal grant under the Competitive Highway Bridge Program. The bridges, all located on low-volume routes north of Interstate 70, are in poor condition, weight-restricted, supported by timber pile and one-lane wide, but carry two-way traffic. Proposals are due next April, and the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission is expected to award the project at its May 2021 meeting.



## Buck O'Neil Bridge

In August, the department announced a list of five qualified design-build teams to compete for the contract to build a new U.S. Route 169 Buck O'Neil Bridge in Kansas City. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission will select the winning team at its monthly meeting in February 2021, with construction beginning later that year. The selected team will complete the design and construction at the same time instead of in succession, which saves time and resources.

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This \$247.5 million project will build a new Route 169 bridge over the Missouri River to replace the current bridge which is 64 years old and nearing the end of its service life. The project was made possible by a blend of federal, state and local funds, including a \$25 million federal BUILD Grant.

## **Bootheel Bridge Bundle**

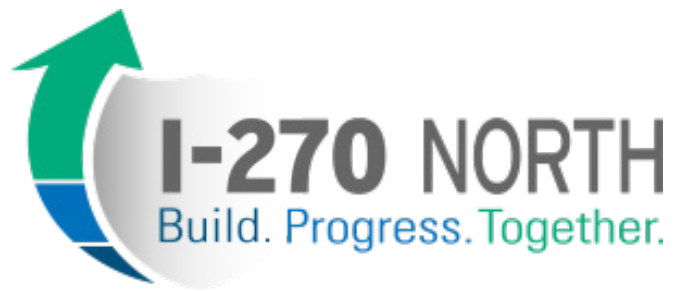
Also in August, the commission selected the Robertson Contractors Team to deliver more than 15 bridge improvement projects in southeast Missouri. This \$21.3 million project has been dubbed the Bootheel Bridge Bundle design-build project. Construction on several bridges will begin in the next few months, with completion of the design-build project expected by Dec. 31, 2023. Thirteen of the bridges in the Bootheel Bridge Bundle are included in Gov. Mike Parson's \$351 million Focus on Bridges program.

## **Climbing Lanes at Mineola Hill**

Work began in June to add a third lane in each direction on Interstate 70 in Montgomery County in the area known as Mineola Hill. The climbing lanes opened in early Nov. The project's primary purpose is to construct eastbound and westbound truck climbing lanes to enable traffic to flow more safely and efficiently and to replace the bridges over the Loutre River, which are within the project limits. Construction on the \$15.8 million project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2021.

## **I-270 North Project**

The I-270 North Project in St. Louis is MoDOT's largest single project in the last decade. The \$278 million project, which runs along I-270 from I-70 on the west to west of Riverview Drive on the east, is replacing aging infrastructure including multiple interchanges and an updated outer road system, enhancing safety and resiliency of the system and



improving mobility for freight and passengers with the addition of driving lanes in each direction, all while creating an economic boost for nearby communities. Work on the project began in the spring and is scheduled to be completed by December of 2023.

## **I-435/I-70 Interchange**

Another exciting accomplishment during the past year was the reconstruction of the I-435 and I-70 partial turbine interchange in Kansas City. The new interchange is the first of its kind in the Kansas City area and will enhance safety and improve movement for the thousands of vehicles that travel it daily. The new interchange removed the former, less traditional left lane exits and provided new exits for increased mobility. The \$47 million construction project began in spring 2019 and was completed in October 2020 – two months early despite a Super Bowl champion season for the Kansas City Chiefs, a global pandemic and quite a bit of rain.

## **Highway Safety Setbacks, Accomplishments**

Highway safety took several hits this year due to the coronavirus pandemic and legislative actions. MoDOT has experienced a 100% increase in vehicles crashing into its truck mounted attenuators – giant crash cushions meant to protect employees and the traveling public.



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In addition, despite the fact that traffic volumes were greatly reduced beginning in the spring, 2020 traffic fatalities are actually on the rise. As of December 10, 2020, there have been 916 traffic fatalities, an increase of 85 more lives lost compared to the same time last year. Of the vehicle occupants killed in Missouri traffic crashes in 2020, 66% were unbuckled. Based on average survival rates, if everyone involved in these crashes had been buckled, more than 240 people who were killed would still be alive today.

The latest Missouri Seat Belt Usage Survey, which has been taken annually since 1998, shows that seat belt use in the state has dropped slightly to 86.1% in 2020. This comes on the heels of 2019, when observed seat belt usage climbed to its highest rate ever, 87.7%. In 1998 that figure was 60%. Missouri has seen a 7% increase in seat belt usage since the launch of the Buckle Up Phone Down campaign in 2017.

## Motorcycle Helmet Law Repealed, Safety Legislation Stalled

Missouri's elected officials approved legislation to repeal the state's mandatory motorcycle helmet law, despite the fact that industry studies suggest that 40 to 45 people will lose their lives each year as a result of this action.

## New Five-Year Strategic Highway Safety Plan Unveiled

MoDOT and the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety presented the state's new strategic highway safety plan for 2021-2025 at the annual Highway Safety and Traffic Conference, held virtually in September. The new plan, the state's fifth, is titled Show-Me Zero: Driving Missouri Toward Safer Roads and can be found at [www.savemolives.com](http://www.savemolives.com). The federally required plan outlines the primary areas the state should focus on to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Missouri roadways:

occupant protection, speed and distracted, impaired and aggressive driving. The plan notes that to achieve zero fatalities, the state must pursue improvements in enforcement, engineering, emergency services and public policy, awareness and education.



## Buckle Up Phone Down Gains National Attention

MoDOT's Buckle Up Phone Down safety initiative continues to gain momentum at the national level for its success in saving lives. Five other states – Nebraska, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Kansas and Louisiana – have adopted the BUPD program, and seven states have expressed an interest in using the BUPD message and logo.



This past year, the National Association of Development Organizations gave the Buckle Up Phone Down endeavor an Excellence in Regional Transportation Award, which recognizes noteworthy projects and practices that help meet regional needs through various program areas, including safety. In addition, the Toward Zero Deaths consortium selected the Show-Me State's BUPD program as a model case study in improving the state's safety culture and saving lives.

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## Director McKenna Wraps Up Challenging Year as AASHTO President

MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna was elected to a one-year term as president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in October 2019. Focusing on highway safety as a public health crisis and working to obtain reauthorization of a federal surface transportation bill were his two priorities for the year.

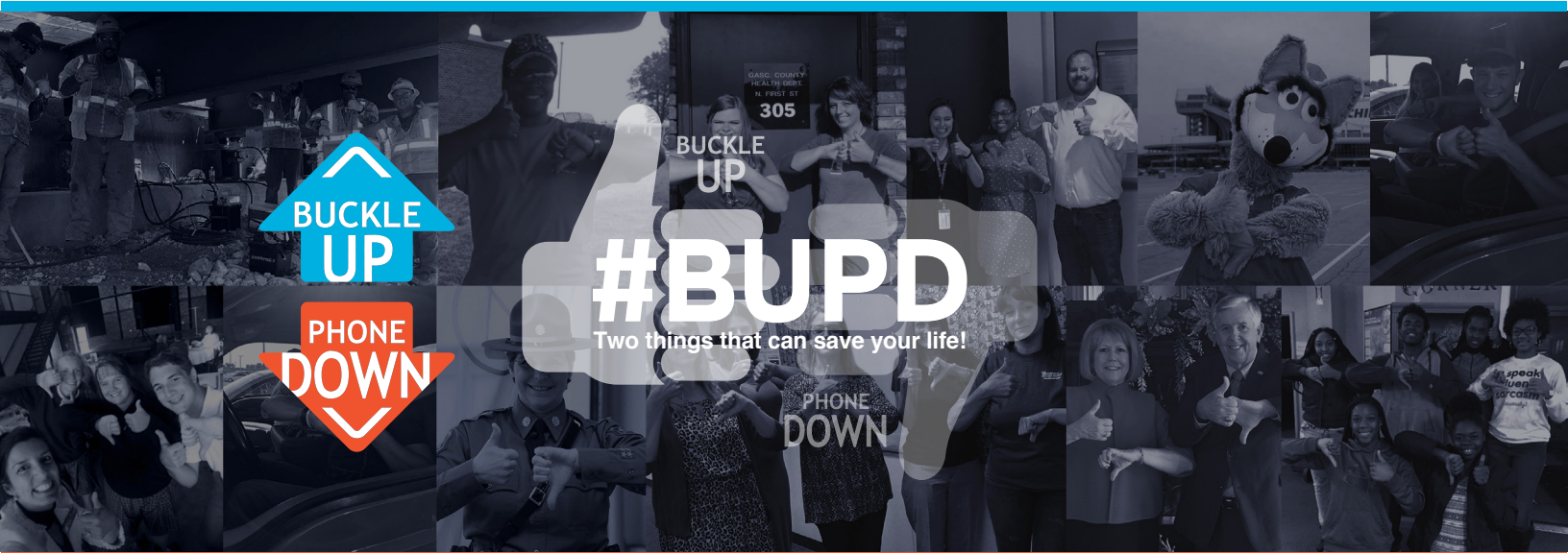
After COVID-19 hit and transportation revenues plummeted abruptly due to stay-at-home orders issued to prevent the spread of the virus, McKenna worked diligently to help Congress better understand how the pandemic was affecting state DOTs and their budgets. He also led a national educational effort stressing the need for a new federal surface transportation authorization.

While traffic throughout the nation continues to recover from the sharp declines experienced in the early days of the pandemic, it will take years before motor fuel taxes and other revenues states rely upon to keep the country's transportation

network functioning get back to normal. Yet despite such fiscal challenges, keeping our transportation systems safe remains an overriding priority. During the pandemic, many states witnessed an uptick in traffic fatalities and injuries even as travel volumes declined – due in no small part to higher instances of excessive speeding.

In the midst of a historic worldwide pandemic, McKenna led a conversation around traffic safety, re-energizing AASHTO's safety efforts on three fronts: (1) rallying state leadership for traffic safety; (2) stepping up support to member transportation departments for the Toward Zero Deaths initiative, especially on safety culture and proven countermeasures; and (3) sustaining the safety effort with committees and partners.

The safety of every person who travels on the national transportation system remains the highest priority for McKenna as he begins his term as immediate past president of AASHTO, an ex-officio position on the organization's executive committee.



# 2020 National Performance Report Card

## RANKINGS

1-10	=	A
11-20	=	B
21-30	=	C
31-40	=	D
41-50	=	F

A

### Road Conditions

**Current Performance** = 91 percent major highways (5,546 miles) in good condition. 81 percent of minor highways (17,334) in good condition.

**National Ranking** = Missouri had the 7th best pavements on the National Highway System. (FHWA Highway Statistics)

A

### Customer Satisfaction

**Current Performance** = 77 percent satisfied customers

**National Ranking** = Missouri trails the highest rated company on the American Customer Satisfaction Index by only 7 percent.

A

### Administrative Costs

**Current Performance** = \$2,340 cost per mile

**National Ranking** = Missouri has the 4th lowest administrative cost per mile.

A

### Project Management

**Current Performance** = Missouri road and bridge projects were delivered within 0.7 percent of the award amount and 88 percent were delivered on-time.

**National Ranking** = Not available.

C

### Infrastructure for Business

**Current Performance** = No internal measure

**National Ranking** = A CNBC business study ranks Missouri's infrastructure as the 24th best for business.

C

### Congestion (travel time index)

**Current Performance** = Kansas City - 1.15 St. Louis - 1.15

**National Ranking** = Out of 101 urban areas, Kansas City and St. Louis both ranked at 23rd as some of the least congested areas in the U.S. (Texas Transportation Institute)

D

### Number of Fatalities

**Current Performance** = 880 fatalities

**National Ranking** = Only 18 states experienced more motor vehicle deaths ranking Missouri 32<sup>nd</sup>.

F

### Bridge Conditions

**Current Performance** = 9 percent of Missouri bridges in poor condition by deck area.

**National Ranking** = Missouri ranked 41st for the percent of bridges in poor condition by deck area. (FHWA Highway Statistics)

F

### Revenue

**Current Performance** = \$57,151 revenue per mile

**National Ranking** = Missouri has the 45th lowest revenue per mile. (FHWA Highway Statistics)

F

### Employee Turnover

**Current Performance** = 12.57 percent

**National Ranking** = Not available; However, **Stretch Target** = 6 percent. (Price Waterhouse Cooper's Saratoga Institute benchmark data)



