



2026

# SFRP

State  
Freight & Rail  
Plan

Missouri River Runner  
Economic Impact Study



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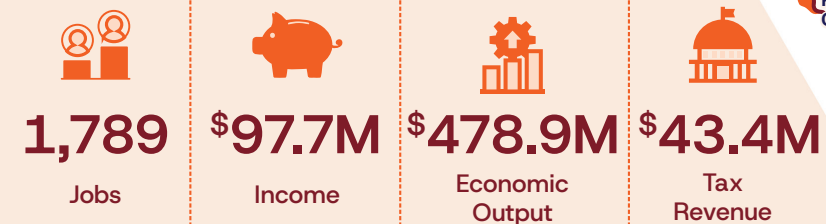
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# Executive Summary

## Missouri River Runner by the Numbers

Total Annual Economic Impacts Generated by the Missouri River Runner:

Runner:



Passenger rail service provides an option for connecting rural communities and smaller cities to major economic centers and promotes commerce and economic development, particularly in the areas surrounding stations.

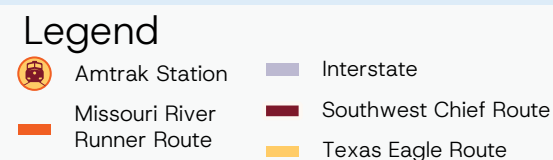
The Missouri River Runner Amtrak passenger train route operates two round trips per day across 283 miles of track between the Gateway Transportation Center in St. Louis and Union Station in Kansas City, providing connection to the Lincoln Service, Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle routes. The Missouri River Runner provides an alternative travel mode along the heavily traveled I-70 corridor between St. Louis and Kansas City.



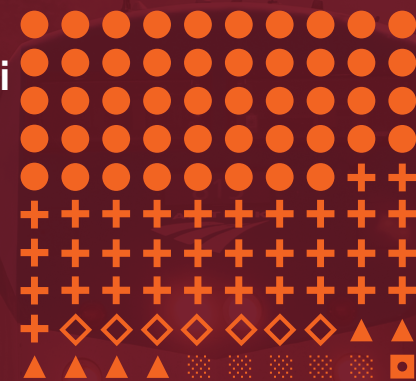
## Missouri River Runner Service Supports Missourians

**Missouri River Runner provides access to a broad range of visitors and entertainment attractions.**

<b>Kansas City</b>	National WWI Museum, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum & Kauffman Stadium
<b>Independence</b>	Truman Library, Truman Home and Historic Independence Square
<b>Lee's Summit</b>	Historic Downtown Lee's Summit for shopping & fine dining
<b>Warrensburg</b>	University of Central Missouri and Whiteman Air Force Base, Downtown Shopping and Events
<b>Sedalia</b>	Missouri State Fair, Ragtime Festival, a vibrant downtown and/or largest campground in the US
<b>Jefferson City</b>	Missouri State Capitol, Missouri State Penitentiary, Lincoln University and State Technical College of Missouri
<b>Hermann</b>	Historic Museums and Downtown, Missouri Wine Country, Distilleries & Breweries, Wurstfest, Maifest and Oktoberfest
<b>Washington</b>	Art Fair and Winefest, Fall Festival of Arts and Crafts and Corn Cob Pipe Factory
<b>Kirkwood</b>	The Magic House, Kirkwood Performing Arts Center, Kirkwood Farmers Market, Route 66 Festival—Cars & Guitars, shopping and events
<b>St. Louis</b>	Cardinals baseball, Blues hockey, St. Louis City Soccer, St. Louis Gateway Arch, National Blues Museum and the St. Louis Zoo and other Forest Park attraction



### Why Do People Ride the Missouri River Runner?



## Missouri River Runner Riders



In FY 2024, Amtrak procured goods and services valued at \$152.2 million from Missouri's construction landscaping, railroad, engineering and technology businesses.

At the end of FY 2024, Amtrak employed 116 Missouri residents. In FY 2023, Missouri residents earned \$10,681,950 in labor income.

Each year, Missouri River Runner riders contribute to Missouri's economy giving rise to significant benefits through travel/transportation, reduced energy consumption, safety and tourism.



## Continuing our Commitment

Many Missouri residents and visitors depend on non-highway modes of transportation. Enhanced passenger rail service provides important economic development benefits to Missouri communities by improving accessibility, connectivity and travel efficiency for both in-state and out-of-state travelers.

In FY2025, MoDOT received \$16 million in state support for the operation of the Missouri River Runner. Since Missouri has no dedicated funding source for passenger rail, funding is subject to legislative general revenue appropriation each year.

Infrastructure improvements to the St. Louis to Kansas City line have reduced delays and increased reliability. These improvements were funded primarily by federal sources, with contributions from the state and the railroads.

The Missouri River Runner service strengthens communities. It does so by providing connectivity amongst Missouri's cities, serving as an anchor to commercial and residential development and encouraging more efficient mobility options in the community.

888-ASK MoDOT  
(275-6636)  
MoRail@modot.mo.gov  
MoRiverRunner.com

[www.modot.org/lrtp-sfrp](http://www.modot.org/lrtp-sfrp)



# 2026 Economic Impact Study Missouri River Runner Passenger Rail

State Freight  
& Rail Plan



# 1.0 Introduction

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) is developing an updated State Freight and Rail Plan. This initiative aims to identify actionable policies, strategies and investments designed to enhance the state's transportation system. The plan is being formulated in collaboration with stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. By utilizing data-driven and performance-based decision-making tools, MoDOT aims to achieve measurable benefits for the state's transportation infrastructure through its investments.

As part of this initiative, MoDOT conducted an economic assessment of the Missouri River Runner, a passenger rail service that offers a competitive alternative to highway travel along the heavily trafficked I-70 corridor between St. Louis and Kansas City—Missouri's two largest metropolitan areas. Sponsored by the State of Missouri and operated by Amtrak, the Missouri River Runner currently provides two daily round-trip train service along a 283-mile route, primarily on tracks owned by Union Pacific Railroad.

The Missouri River Runner serves as a critical passenger rail connection that supports Missouri's economy by attracting visitors, stimulating tourism and linking major urban centers with smaller communities along the Missouri River corridor. By providing a dependable and scenic alternative to highway travel, the service broadens the state's transportation options and enhances the resilience of the I-70 corridor, one of Missouri's most heavily traveled routes. This diversification reduces reliance on personal vehicles, mitigates congestion and offers travelers an affordable, low-stress option for both leisure and business trips.

The Missouri River Runner also plays a central role in sustaining local economies. Visitors arriving by train contribute to hotels, restaurants, retail shops and entertainment venues, generating ripple effects across the state as businesses purchase supplies and employees spend their earnings. Smaller towns such as Hermann and Washington benefit from tourism drawn to wine country, festivals and historic attractions, while Kansas City, Kirkwood and St. Louis serve as gateways to Missouri's largest cultural and entertainment destinations.



Beyond tourism, the Missouri River Runner reinforces Missouri's connectivity to the national rail network. Stations at Kansas City and St. Louis link passengers to long-distance Amtrak routes, expanding travel choices and making Missouri a more accessible destination for out-of-state visitors. In doing so, the service not only enhances community vitality and accessibility but also positions passenger rail as a long-term contributor to Missouri's economic competitiveness, quality of life and transportation resilience.

This evaluation assesses the economic impact of the Missouri River Runner. Its purpose is to better understand how the service benefits residents, visitors and businesses. The analysis measures the service's contributions to statewide employment, labor income, economic output and state and local tax revenues.

## Key Data Sources

This analysis draws on both public and proprietary datasets to quantify the impact of the Missouri River Runner. It utilizes the most recent data available for each source, so the results reflect current operational and economic conditions. The key data sources include those listed to the right.

**Amtrak:** Includes public and proprietary datasets on Missouri River Runner ridership, covering Fiscal Year 2024 boardings by station, origin-destination patterns, revenue, Amtrak employment and compensation in Missouri, in-state procurement expenditures and passenger survey data for FY 2023-FY 2024. This data encompasses trip purpose and alternative modes of transportation among other insightful information.

**MoDOT:** Includes annual state investment figures from the State Executive Budget (2019-2024) along with Missouri River Runner ridership statistics for CY 2024.

**Missouri Division of Tourism:** Includes visitor expenditure data, traveler profiles, trip purpose statistics and average length-of-stay estimates from the "Economic Impact of Visitors in Missouri – FY 2023" report. In addition, statistics on in-state and out-of-state tourism were obtained from the "FY 2022 Missouri Visitor Profile Report".

### Missouri River Runner Station

**Directors:** Survey responses provide insights into passenger demographics, key tourism attractions served by each station and anticipated local investments.

**IMPLAN:** An input-output modeling platform used to estimate the total statewide economic impacts (direct, indirect and induced) resulting from tourism spending and Amtrak's in-state operations.

Additional data for specific factors—such as travel costs, lodging rates, daily expenditure estimates and inflation adjustments—were sourced from reputable web-based and published documents, as documented in Section 4.0. Updated 2024 tourism spending factors were developed using expenditure profiles from Champion Traveler (which provides travel cost comparisons for estimates of average trip expenses, including lodging, food and activities, for destinations across the United States) for St. Louis and

Washington, Mo and adjusted to constant 2024 dollars using the gross domestic product implicit price deflators, or GDP deflators, from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. GDP deflators are an index published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis that measures changes in the overall price level of goods and services produced in the economy. By applying this adjustment, reported values are expressed in real terms, removing the effects of inflation and allowing for consistent comparison across years.

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## Report Organization

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- **Section 2.0: Overview of the Missouri River Runner** – Provides background on the service’s origins and route, reviews historical ridership and on-time performance trends and discusses the funding environment that shapes the ability to sustain reliable service operations.
- **Section 3.0: Economic Role of the Missouri River Runner** – Examines how the service stimulates Missouri’s economy through visitor spending on lodging, dining, retail and attractions and highlights Amtrak’s statewide economic footprint through payroll, vendor procurement that support jobs, business activity and long-term infrastructure improvements.
- **Section 4.0: Methodology** – Describes the methodology, data sources and model input estimations, including assumptions, passenger demographics and the economic modeling process used to evaluate the economic impacts of the Missouri River Runner.
- **Section 5.0: Economic Impacts** – Summarizes the economic impacts on tourism and visitor spending and Amtrak employment, payroll and vendor expenditures using the IMPLAN economic impact model. The section describes impacts in terms of employment, labor income, Gross State Product (GSP) or value added, output and tax revenue.



# 2.0 Overview of the Missouri River Runner

## 2.1 Background

The Missouri River Runner was launched in 2009 to unify three Amtrak routes—the Ann Rutledge, Kansas City Mule and St. Louis Mule—under a single, more recognizable brand that reflects its alignment along the Missouri River.<sup>1</sup> This consolidation built upon decades of passenger rail history in the state: the Ann Rutledge dates back to 1937 with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and later Amtrak, while the Kansas City Mule and St. Louis Mule, introduced in the early 1980s, became a familiar travel option across Missouri. By rebranding and streamlining these services, Amtrak and MoDOT laid the groundwork for a modern, state-supported corridor service poised for future growth, including potential enhancements in speed and reliability.

Today, the Missouri River Runner continues this legacy as Missouri’s intercity passenger rail service, linking the state’s two largest metropolitan areas—St. Louis and Kansas City—while serving key communities in between. The service operates two daily round-trip trains along a 283-mile route primarily on Union Pacific Railroad tracks, paralleling Interstate 70 and providing a competitive alternative to highway travel. Sponsored by MoDOT and operated by Amtrak, the Missouri River Runner connects urban and rural communities and supports economic development in the areas it serves. **Figure 1** illustrates Missouri’s Amtrak network, highlighting how the Missouri River Runner anchors the state’s passenger rail system while connecting to long-distance routes like the Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle.

**Along its 283-mile route, the Missouri River Runner plays a central role in sustaining local economies throughout the State of Missouri**

<sup>1</sup> Adam Burns. “Amtrak’s ‘Missouri River Runner’ (Train): Map, Schedule, Stops.” American-Rails.com. Last revised February 26, 2025.

**Figure 1 – Amtrak Routes in Missouri**



Source: Data from Amtrak, map developed by Hg Consult Inc.

**Figure 2** shows the location of Missouri River Runner stations along the St. Louis–Kansas City corridor, highlighting key attractions and destinations in each community. At the eastern end, the St. Louis Gateway Transportation Center functions as a multi-modal hub, facilitating intercity rail, intercity bus and local bus and light rail transit through the Civic Center Transfer Center, the central transit hub of the St. Louis region. In addition to the Missouri River Runner, the station accommodates Illinois’ Chicago-St. Louis

Lincoln service and Amtrak’s long-distance daily Texas Eagle route, which runs between Chicago, Illinois and San Antonio, Texas, with stops in St. Louis, Poplar Bluff and Arcadia. It also offers a tri-weekly connection to Los Angeles.

On the western end, Kansas City’s Union Station provides access to Amtrak’s daily Southwest Chief, which connects to Los Angeles and Chicago, which stops in La Plata.



Figure 2 – Missouri River Runner Communities



Source: Amtrak, "Missouri River Runner Schedule" accessed December 9, 2025, [https://moriverrunner.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Missouri-River-Runner-communities-guide\\_July-2023-Compressed.pdf](https://moriverrunner.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Missouri-River-Runner-communities-guide_July-2023-Compressed.pdf)

No. of Stations

10

The Missouri River Runner supported approximately 194,300 riders in the 2024 calendar year

Route Miles

283

Operated by Amtrak in Missouri between Gateway Transportation Center in St. Louis and Union Station in Kansas City

Service Frequency

2 Daily Round Trips

Between Kansas City and St. Louis, with one continuing north to Chicago Union Station as a Lincoln Service train

## Missouri River Runner Stations

### 1 KANSAS CITY – UNION STATION

Union Station is the western anchor of the Missouri River Runner, connecting to Amtrak's Southwest Chief, the KC Streetcar and numerous museums and restaurants. The station is a cultural hub and gateway to Kansas City's downtown, arts and entertainment districts.

### 2 INDEPENDENCE

Independence Station offers access to presidential history and heritage tourism. Highlights include the Harry S. Truman Library and Home, the historic Square, the National Frontier Trails Museum and Vaile Mansion.

### 3 LEE'S SUMMIT

Lee's Summit features a vibrant, walkable downtown filled with shops, dining and cultural programming. The community is also home to Paradise Park Family Entertainment Center, Unity Village Retreat and Conference Center and an extensive parks and trails network. Festivals and events reinforce its role as a growing suburban destination.

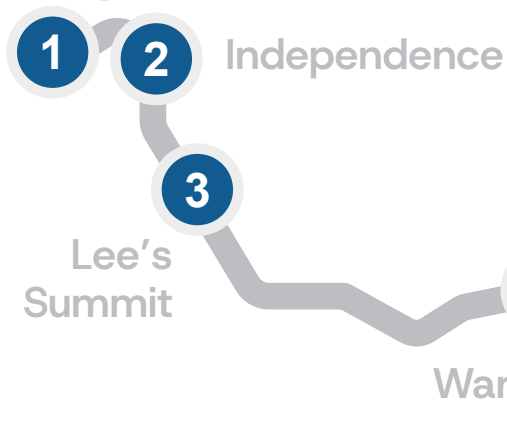
### 4 WARRENSBURG

Warrensburg serves the University of Central Missouri and Whiteman Air Force Base. The community's historic downtown, Old Drum memorial and campus activities make it a center for students, military families and visitors. Events like the Wings Over Whiteman Air Show add to its regional draw.

### 5 SEDALIA

Sedalia provides access to the Missouri State Fairgrounds, Katy Trail State Park and historic downtown districts. The Katy Depot Heritage Site highlights the city's rail legacy, while cultural institutions, festivals and the arts scene sustain its reputation as a regional hub.

Kansas City



## 6 JEFFERSON CITY

Missouri's capital city offers direct access to the State Capitol, Governor's Mansion and Missouri State Penitentiary tours. Civic institutions, scenic riverfront views and cultural attractions make Jefferson City both a government center and a visitor destination.

## 7 HERMANN

Hermann is renowned for its German heritage and wine country. The community features wineries, Oktoberfest celebrations, boutique lodging and historic architecture. Its riverfront location and festivals make it a standout stop for leisure travelers.

## 8 WASHINGTON

Washington blends small-town charm with a strong festival culture. Its riverfront downtown offers shopping, dining and the Iron Spike Train Museum. Annual events like Art Fair and Winefest and the Town & Country Fair make Washington a popular day-trip destination.

## 8 KIRKWOOD

Kirkwood's historic depot anchors a lively downtown with shops, restaurants and community events. Attractions include the Magic House Children's Museum, the Museum of Transportation and the Kirkwood Farmers Market. The city's festivals and easy access to St. Louis sports and cultural venues make it a favored boarding point.

## 10 ST. LOUIS – GATEWAY TRANSPORTATION CENTER

The Gateway Transportation Center is a multimodal hub connecting Amtrak's Texas Eagle and Lincoln Service routes, intercity buses and MetroLink light rail. Passengers can easily access downtown St. Louis attractions, including the Gateway Arch, Busch Stadium, the National Blues Museum and the City Museum.



## 2.2 Historical Ridership & On-time Performance

Ridership is a crucial indicator of the long-term sustainability of passenger rail service and on-time performance (OTP) is a significant factor that influences whether passengers choose to ride regularly. Over the past decade, the Missouri River Runner has faced both growth and substantial challenges. From 2008 to 2011, targeted infrastructure investments were made, including the construction of additional passing sidings financed by federal grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program, as well as contributions from Union Pacific Railroad (UP).<sup>2</sup> These improvements enhanced operational reliability along the heavily trafficked freight corridor. By 2013, the Missouri River Runner achieved an all-time ridership record of approximately 197,000 passengers, with OTP close to 90 percent.

Following the 2013 peak, ridership entered a period of gradual decline, dropping from roughly 176,900 passengers in 2015 to about 152,700 in 2019, a 14 percent decrease, despite stable service levels. OTP during this period slipped into the mid-80 percent range, in part due to capacity constraints on the

single-track section of the route and ongoing freight demands.<sup>3</sup> External factors also played a role. In spring 2019, historic Missouri River flooding severely disrupted operations, forcing multi-day cancellations and delaying trains by hours when service did run.<sup>4</sup> The result was a pronounced drop in FY 2019 ridership compared to FY 2018.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented collapse in travel demand. Beginning in March 2020, MoDOT and Amtrak reduced service from two daily round-trip trains to one, a schedule that persisted for over a year. Combined with public health restrictions, this cut drove ridership down to 86,400 in 2020 and 77,200 in 2021, which was barely half of pre-pandemic levels and the lowest in the modern history of the service. Recovery began in 2022 as pandemic restrictions eased and service was incrementally restored. A second daily trip returned in July 2021 but was again suspended in early 2022 due to a state budget shortfall, before being reinstated permanently in December 2022 with full funding. This stability, coupled with pent-up demand, elevated gasoline prices and

<sup>2</sup> State-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee (S4PRC). State-Supported Intercity Passenger Rail Success Stories. February 2022. Accessed December 8, 2025. [https://s4prc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/S4PRC\\_Success\\_Stories\\_v1.pdf](https://s4prc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/S4PRC_Success_Stories_v1.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Gaines, Jim. "Why Is Amtrak's Missouri River Runner Struggling?" Worcester Telegram & Gazette, September 14, 2019. Accessed December 8, 2025. <https://www.telegram.com/story/news/2019/09/14/why-is-amtrak-s-missouri/2634731007/>.

<sup>4</sup> Rivas, Rachel Lippmann. "Amtrak Riders Adjust Travel Plans after a Reduction in the Missouri River Runner Train Service." St. Louis Public Radio, January 9, 2022. Accessed December 8, 2025.

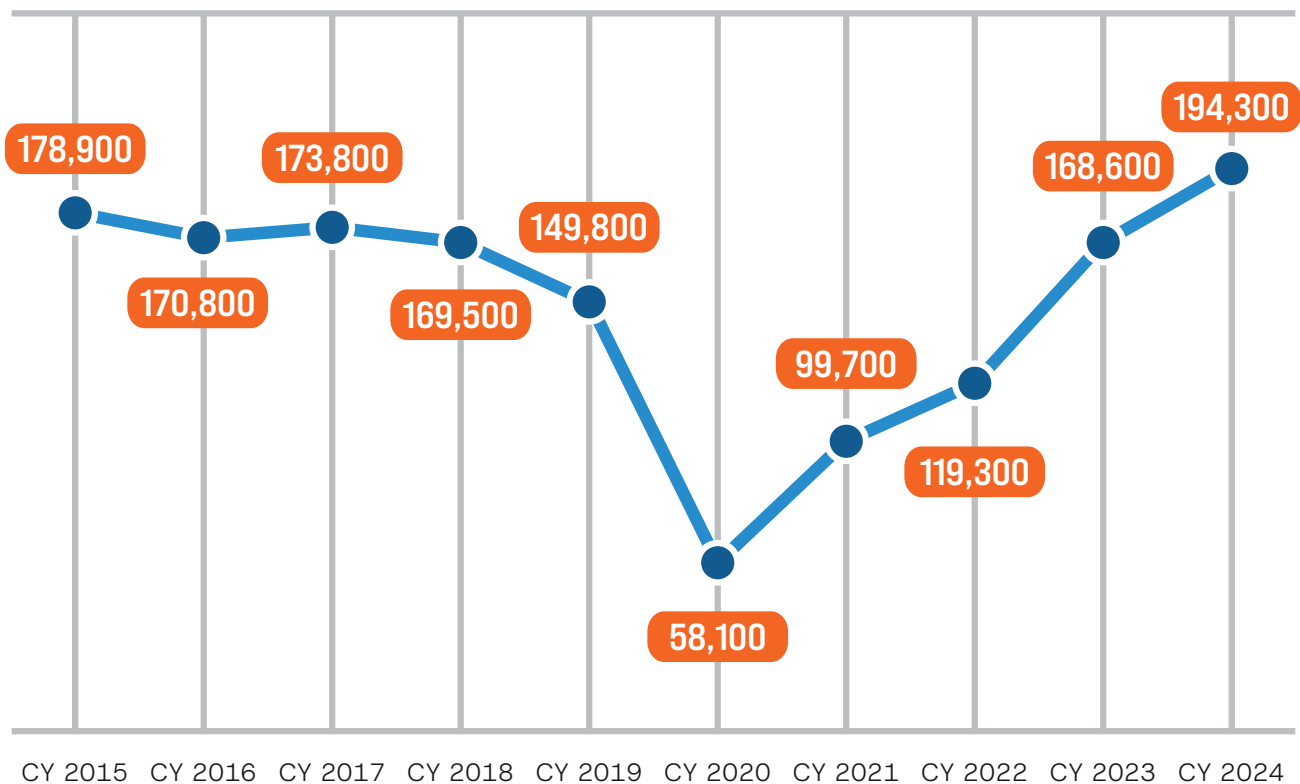


targeted marketing initiatives, fueled a rapid rebound: ridership climbed from 77,200 in 2021 to 120,200 in 2022, then to 168,600 in 2023. By 2024, the Missouri River Runner reached a new high within the last decade of approximately 194,300 riders (calendar year), nearing the previous peak set in 2013.

OTP, while historically a driver of ridership, has faced renewed challenges in recent years. After improvements in the late 2000s brought reliability above 90 percent, rising freight volumes and network demand on the UP main line have impacted OTP. In FY 2023, OTP averaged about 74 percent, meaning roughly one in four trains arrived more than 15 minutes late.

The 2015–2024 period shown in **Figure 3** demonstrates the Missouri River Runner's sensitivity to service reliability, frequency and funding stability. Periods of consistent two-round-trip operation with high OTP have aligned with ridership growth, while service reductions and major disruptions have coincided with declines. The recent record ridership in 2024 underscores the value of stable funding, restored service levels and targeted marketing.

**Figure 3 – Missouri River Runner Ridership CY 2015–2024**



Source: Data from MoDOT and Amtrak, calculations by GFT.

Future growth will depend on securing capital for infrastructure improvements to improve OTP, maintaining operational funding for at least two daily round-trip trains and leveraging connectivity to other Amtrak routes to expand the Missouri River Runner's market reach. **Table 1** presents Missouri's historical state investment in the Missouri River Runner.

**Table 1 – State Investment in the Missouri River Runner**

Year	Value
2019	\$9,125,000
2020	\$9,124,214
2021	\$8,025,000
2022	\$10,875,000
2023	\$13,275,000
2024	\$14,525,000

Source: Data from Missouri State Executive Budget for FY 2019-2024

The funding for Missouri's state transportation system is predominantly derived from user fees, motor fuel taxes and allocations from federal transportation revenue. These financial resources are essential for maintaining and improving the state's transportation infrastructure. Because fuel tax revenues are constitutionally dedicated to road and bridge maintenance and improvements, they cannot be used for passenger rail or other non-highway modes of transportation. Within this framework, the State of Missouri must use General Revenue funds to support the Missouri River Runner, competing with the state's broader needs and investment priorities.

**Funding for the Missouri River Runner is sourced from the general revenue fund.**



## 3.0 Economic Role of the Missouri River Runner

The Missouri River Runner plays a vital role in Missouri's transportation system and economy by linking the state's two largest metropolitan areas with communities along the Missouri River corridor. The Missouri River Runner's significance derives from its role as a tourism- and visitor-oriented service that brings new spending into local communities. Beyond visitor expenditures, Amtrak's operations in Missouri—including employment and compensation and procurement of goods and services—add another layer of economic value, sustaining jobs and supporting statewide business activity. Together, these contributions underscore the Missouri River Runner's importance not only as a transportation link but also as an economic asset.

### 3.1 Visitor Spending

At its core, the Missouri River Runner functions as a tourism-oriented route. Travelers often use the train to visit cultural attractions, attend festivals and experience the towns and historic communities along the line. Stations such as Hermann and Washington serve as gateways to Missouri's wine country and weekend leisure trips, while Jefferson City provides access to the state capital and its museums. At the same time, Kansas City, Kirkwood and St. Louis anchor the service with major lodging markets, convention activity and a wide range of entertainment and sports destinations.

The spending generated by these visitors reverberates beyond station communities. Lodging expenditures support local hotels, motels and bed-and-breakfasts, while also sustaining demand for suppliers, utilities and food distribution. Non-lodging spending on restaurants, retail and attractions boosts local businesses and circulates through the economy as employees spend their wages. In this way, the Missouri River Runner channels out-of-state dollars and leisure travel expenditures into Missouri communities, supporting employment, income and tax revenues across multiple sectors.



Source: MoDOT



Source: MoDOT

## Supporting Local Economies & the Statewide Network

In smaller towns, the service provides a steady flow of visitors that support restaurants, shops and lodging establishments that might not otherwise draw the same level of tourism. In larger cities, the Missouri River Runner provides a convenient alternative to driving, encouraging out-of-state visitors to stay overnight and explore Missouri's cultural and entertainment offerings. The result is a statewide flow of economic benefits-tourism-driven dollars in communities, paired with the operational spending and employment sustained by Amtrak's presence in the state.

## 3.2 Amtrak's Statewide Operations

Separate from passenger tourism, Amtrak contributes directly to Missouri's economy through its operations. The company employs those in rail operations, station management and administrative roles, with income dollars flowing into household spending across the state. Capital investments further extend Amtrak's statewide impact. Amtrak also contracts with Missouri-based vendors for goods and services ranging from rail maintenance and fuel to utilities, engineering and professional services. Projects such as station upgrades, platform improvements and accessibility enhancements support one-time boosts in employment and output while improving long-term service quality. These investments not only sustain jobs in construction and engineering but also enhance the safety and reliability of Missouri's passenger rail transportation infrastructure.



### 3.3 Public Revenues and Broader Benefits

The activity supported by the Missouri River Runner translates into meaningful contributions to state and local tax bases. Visitor spending generates sales tax revenues, hotel occupancy taxes and other local levies that fund public services. Amtrak's payroll supports income tax collections, while its vendor and construction spending contributes to business tax receipts.

In addition to these fiscal benefits, the Missouri River Runner provides wider public advantages by offering a safe, efficient and environmentally friendly travel option along the I-70 corridor. By diverting some trips from highway to rail, the service yields societal benefits including reduced congestion, lower emissions and decreased highway crash risks, generating benefits that complement its economic impacts. The Missouri River Runner is an essential mode of transportation for those who cannot or choose not to drive. It is also the only public transportation that connects citizens from St. Louis, Kansas City and many towns in between to the State Capitol to meet with their elected officials.

### 3.4 Strategic Importance for Missouri's Future

As travel preferences evolve and Missouri seeks to attract more visitors and investment, the Missouri River Runner is positioned to grow in importance. Passenger rail travel via the Missouri River Runner appeals to leisure travelers seeking sustainable and convenient alternatives to driving, while also supporting regional tourism in ways that highways alone cannot replicate. Continued investment in service reliability, stations and connectivity allows the Missouri River Runner to remain a catalyst for economic growth—one that simultaneously supports Missouri's tourism industry, strengthens local economies and contributes to the state's long-term economic competitiveness.



Source: MoDOT

## 4.0 Methodology

This section describes the methodology used to estimate the statewide economic contributions of the Missouri River Runner passenger rail service. It explains how the service translates into measurable outcomes such as jobs, labor income, business output and tax revenues. The analysis is structured around two primary categories of impacts: (1) visitor spending by riders traveling to and within Missouri and (2) Amtrak's statewide operations, including payroll and vendor expenditures that support the Missouri River Runner and the broader passenger rail network in Missouri. Together, these inputs capture how the service generates direct economic activity and supports indirect and induced impacts across Missouri's economy

### Primary Statewide Economic Contribution Categories

**Visitor spending by riders  
traveling to and within Missouri**

**Amtrak's statewide operations,  
including payroll and vendor  
expenditures**



Source: MoDOT



## 4.1 Economic Impact Types

Economic impacts generated by the Missouri River Runner emerge through several layers of activity that extend outward from the train service into Missouri's broader economy. These impacts are conventionally described as direct, indirect and induced effects and together they illustrate how both Amtrak's operations and traveler expenditures contribute to Missouri's economic base.

**Direct Effects** – Direct effects capture the immediate activity tied to the Missouri River Runner service. On the operations side, this includes Amtrak's employment, payroll and vendor purchases that support the service and other activities within Missouri. On the visitor side, direct effects reflect the lodging, dining, entertainment and retail spending by Missouri River Runner passengers traveling to and within the state. These activities are directly linked to the presence of the train service and would be among the first to be disrupted if the Missouri River Runner were no longer in operation.

**Indirect Effects** – Indirect effects represent the supply chain connections that extend beyond Amtrak's operations and passenger purchases. Amtrak relies on a range of Missouri-based suppliers for services such as equipment maintenance, utilities and professional support. Similarly, businesses that benefit from visitor spending—such as hotels and restaurants—rely on inputs from wholesalers, distributors and local service providers. These business-to-business transactions broaden the economic footprint of the Missouri River Runner by stimulating activity across multiple industries.

**Induced Effects** – Induced effects arise when workers employed by Amtrak, its vendors, or tourism-related businesses spend their earnings in Missouri. Household spending on groceries, housing, healthcare, retail and other goods and services supports additional jobs across the state. These consumer-driven impacts illustrate how the Missouri River Runner not only provides a transportation option but also sustains community vitality through household incomes and expenditures.

The Missouri River Runner's significance derives from its role as a tourism – and visitor – oriented service that brings new spending into local communities.

## 4.2 Economic Impact Measures

Economic impacts are reported across several standard measures of economic activity. Each measure captures a different dimension of how the Missouri River Runner contributes to the state's economy per the following categories:

- **Employment (Jobs)** – Reflect the total number of people employed as a result of visitor spending by Missouri River Runner passengers or Amtrak's statewide operations. They are measured as headcount jobs, not stratified by full-time versus part-time status. Employment impacts include direct jobs supported by Amtrak's operations and by tourism businesses serving Missouri River Runner passengers, as well as supplier and household-spending jobs supported through ripple effects.
- **Labor Income** – Refers to total employee compensation, including salaries, wages and benefits, generated by Amtrak operations, supporting industries and visitor-related spending.
- **Value-Added** – Measures the contribution of an industry or activity to Missouri's Gross State Product. It is calculated as business revenues minus the cost of goods and services purchased from other businesses and it includes labor income, taxes on production and property-type income (e.g., rents, royalties and corporate profits).
- **Output** – Represents total business revenues or sales value of all goods and services produced, including intermediate inputs (such as food, lodging, fuel, utilities and materials), payroll, taxes and profits. Output is the broadest measure of economic activity and contains both value added and labor income as components.
- **State and Local Taxes** – Reflect revenues generated for Missouri state and local governments as a result of Missouri River Runner-related activity. These include property taxes, sales taxes, income taxes, lodging taxes and other production-based levies tied to business and household activity supported by Amtrak operations and visitor spending.

It is important to note that these measures are non-additive. Labor income is a component of value-added and value-added is itself a component of output. Adding the categories would therefore result in double-counting. Instead, each measure provides a distinct lens through which to understand the magnitude of the Missouri River Runner's economic contributions.



## 4.3 Impact Structure

The economic impacts of the Missouri River Runner are based on separating two distinct but interconnected categories: the impacts of visitor spending and the impacts of Amtrak's statewide operations. This distinction allows for the accounting of both the activity generated directly by Amtrak within Missouri and the broader economic activity supported by passengers traveling on the Missouri River Runner.

### Visitor Spending in Missouri

The first category of impacts arises from the expenditures of passengers using the Missouri River Runner. These travelers include out-of-state visitors, in-state tourists and business travelers who generate new spending in Missouri's economy by choosing to ride the train. Their impacts are tied to trip-related spending patterns:

- Out-of-State Tourists** – Visitors from out-of-state arriving by rail spend money on hotels, restaurants, entertainment, shopping and cultural attractions. These expenditures directly support Missouri's hospitality and tourism industries, creating jobs in lodging, dining, retail and recreation.

- Business Travel** – Business travelers contribute through spending on lodging, meals and local services. Similar to the above, expenditures by business travelers further contribute to the hospitality and tourism industries.
- Local and Regional Travel** – Even some in-state passengers generate incremental spending that would not otherwise occur without the Missouri River Runner. For example, day-trippers may spend on dining, shopping, or cultural attractions in station communities.

Visitor spending impacts highlight the enabling role of the Missouri River Runner in drawing new dollars into Missouri.



Source: MoDOT

## Amtrak Operations

The second category of impacts derives from Amtrak's ongoing presence and investment in Missouri. These impacts encompass the daily operations, payroll and vendor expenditures tied to Amtrak's statewide activities.

Collectively, these functions support service operational reliability while also creating direct and measurable contributions to Missouri's economy in two key ways:

- **Employment & Compensation** – Amtrak directly employs positions related to train operations, maintenance, customer service and station management. These wages circulate through the state economy, supporting household spending on goods and services such as housing, food, transportation and healthcare.
- **Vendor & Capital Spending** – Amtrak purchases goods and services from Missouri-based firms across a wide range of industries, including engineering, construction, utilities, equipment suppliers and professional services. Periodic capital projects, such as station upgrades or infrastructure improvements, create additional opportunities for short-term construction jobs and long-term system benefits. Together, these expenditures anchor Amtrak as a recurring contributor to Missouri's business ecosystem.

It is important to note that some Amtrak-supported positions may not be physically located along the Missouri River Runner corridor. For example, vendor firms may employ administrative, logistics, or technical staff at other sites in Missouri. While not directly visible to riders, these off-site positions are nonetheless sustained by Amtrak's ongoing operations in the state.

## Interconnected Impacts

Amtrak operations and visitor spending impacts form the basis of the Missouri River Runner's economic footprint in Missouri. Operations represent the baseline, recurring contribution of Amtrak as an employer and purchaser of goods and services, while visitor spending represents the incremental, travel-driven contribution of passengers using the service. Both categories then ripple outward through the economy, generating indirect impacts through supply chains and induced impacts through household spending.



## 4.4 Methodological Overview

### Visitor Spending in Missouri

Understanding the characteristics of Missouri River Runner passengers is a critical step in quantifying the service's economic impact. These characteristics define the scale and composition of visitor spending and inform the inputs applied in the IMPLAN modeling process. Key factors include the reasons passengers choose the service, their origins and destinations and the likelihood of making the trip by another mode-or forgoing travel altogether-if the Missouri River Runner were unavailable.

Ridership patterns by station are used to differentiate between urban and rural market segments, while trip purpose data help determine the proportion of travel attributable to tourism, business and other activities. Alternative mode choice patterns-such as automobile, intercity bus, air, or no-trip-are incorporated to identify the share of trips that generate net new economic activity for Missouri. Finally, tourism and visitor spending profiles, segmented by trip type (day trip versus overnight) and market (in-state versus out-of-state), provide the expenditure factors that drive the direct spending estimates in the economic impact model.

### Ridership

Year 2024 ridership, over 194,300, is used as the base year for the economic impact analysis. St. Louis was the busiest station, serving over 100,000 passengers, followed by Kansas City, Kirkwood and Jefferson City.

### Trip Purpose

Ridership is used to determine Missouri River Runner ridership that qualifies as tourism-related for economic impact analysis. Data from the FY 2023–FY 2024 Missouri River Runner Passenger Survey indicate the following trip purpose distribution, shown in **Table 2** on the following page.<sup>5</sup>

For this analysis, all trip purposes other than daily commuting and travel to/from school are classified as tourism-related. This approach is consistent with international and national tourism definitions, which recognize business travel, leisure/vacation and visiting friends or relatives (VFR) as forms of tourism. VFR travel in particular is widely accepted in tourism research as generating economic impacts, even though spending patterns may differ (e.g., less on lodging but significant outlays on food, shopping,

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<sup>5</sup> CY 2024 Missouri River Runner ridership by station was estimated by applying the percentage composition of total Amtrak ridership by station in Missouri to the total CY 2024 Missouri River Runner ridership. This approach assumes that the station-level distribution of River Runner riders is proportional to the overall Amtrak ridership patterns at each station. A limitation of this method is that it may not capture differences in travel behavior between River Runner passengers and riders on other Amtrak services serving the same stations, potentially introducing minor bias in station-level estimates

**Table 2 – Trip Purpose Data for Missouri River Runner Passenger**

Trip Purpose	Percent of Riders
Business travel	7%
Daily commute to/from work	0%
Leisure	26%
Personal or family business	6%
Shopping	0%
Something else	7%
Travel to/from school	1%
Vacation	5%
Visit family/friends	48%

Source: Data from MoDOT, FY 2023–FY 2024 Missouri River Runner Passenger Survey Dataset.

recreation and host-related expenditures).<sup>6</sup> Excluding only routine travel (commuting and school), alignment with established VFR best practices and tourism statistics frameworks. Based on this classification, 99 percent of Missouri River Runner ridership is considered a tourism activity. This percentage was also vetted with stakeholders supporting the accuracy.

Trip purpose data is also used to estimate overnight visitors and overnight visitors classified as non-lodging:

- **Overnight Visitors (44 percent)** – Assumed to be the share of riders traveling for purposes typically associated with overnight stays: business travel, leisure, personal or family business and vacation.
- **Overnight Visitors, Non-Commercial Lodging (48 percent)** – Calculated from the share of overnight visitors whose trip purpose is to visit family/friends, indicating they are likely staying in private accommodations rather than commercial lodging.

The resulting segmentation is used alongside origin market and alternative mode choice data to identify the portion of trips-and associated spending-fully attributable to the Missouri River Runner.

<sup>6</sup> Research shows VFR travelers often spend less on lodging (since they may stay with friends/family) but still contribute meaningfully through dining, shopping, entertainment and transportation. Some studies note that VFR travel can even stimulate higher “indirect” expenditures, because hosts spend more on food, recreation and household goods when guests visit.



## Out-of-State and In-State Tourism

The tourism-related economic impacts of the Missouri River Runner are derived from two distinct segments of riders whose trips-and associated spending-are fully attributable to the service:

1. **Out-of-State Visitors** – An estimated 59 percent of Missouri River Runner riders reside outside Missouri. These visitors travel either to the state or within Missouri using the Missouri River Runner. Their expenditures on lodging, dining, entertainment, retail and other goods and services represent a direct inflow of new dollars to Missouri’s economy, as this spending would not otherwise occur in the state.<sup>7</sup>
2. **In-State Residents Who Would Forgo the Trip Without the Missouri River Runner** – An estimated 41 percent of all visitors to Missouri reside within the state. These riders are Missouri residents who indicated they would not have made their trip if the service were unavailable (“No Trip” responses in the Alternative Mode Choice survey). While originating in-state, their spending is incremental because it represents economic activity that otherwise would not have occurred.<sup>8</sup>

## Alternative Mode Choice

A critical step in the modeling process was accounting for how in-state travelers would behave in the absence of the Missouri River Runner.

Out-of-state visitor spending is treated as fully attributable to the Missouri River Runner because their expenditures represent new dollars flowing into Missouri’s economy. Even if those visitors used another mode of travel, the decision to visit Missouri itself depends on their ability to access the state conveniently. Without the Missouri River Runner, some out-of-state riders may have forgone their trip altogether or chosen a different destination entirely.

For Missouri residents, only a portion of their spending is considered incremental. Alternative mode choice data are used in this analysis to determine the portion of in-state ridership that generates net new economic activity for Missouri. For in-state riders, the key consideration is whether their trip would have occurred without the Missouri River Runner. As opposed to out-of-state riders, only those who indicate they would not have made the trip in the absence of the service (“No Trip” responses) are counted toward tourism spending.

<sup>7</sup> Estimated based on estimated percent of in-state visitors. According to the Missouri Division of Tourism’s FY 2022 Visitor Profile Report, an estimated 40.8 percent of all visitors to Missouri reside within the state.

<sup>8</sup> Missouri Division of Tourism. FY 2022 Missouri Visitor Profile Report. Jefferson City, MO, 2023. Accessed December 8, 2025. <https://mdt-visitmo-cdn.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/FY2022-Missouri-Visitor-Profile-Report-Final.pdf>.

**Table 3 – Alternative Mode Choice Responses**

Mode	Share of Respondents
Automobile	60.50%
Intercity Bus	4.00%
Air	9.70%
Other Modes	8.90%
Would Not Have Taken the Trip (“No Trip”)	16.90%

Source: Data from MoDOT, FY 2023–FY 2024 Missouri River Runner Passenger Survey Dataset

Alternative mode choice patterns were derived from the Missouri River Runner Passenger Survey (FY 2023–FY 2024), which asked riders how they would have traveled if the service had not been available (shown in Table 3.) Survey responses indicate the following mode substitution rates.

The 17 percent “No Trip” factor is applied only to the in-state tourist segment. Riders who would shift to another mode are excluded from the impact calculations, as their spending is assumed to occur regardless of the Missouri River Runner’s operation. For added conservatism, the analysis assumes that only two-thirds of the “No Trip” in-state riders generate net-new economic activity. This reduction reflects the possibility that a portion of these riders might have redirected their spending to other in-state activities if the Missouri River Runner were not available.

The results were analyzed at the station level to estimate the percentage of in-state riders whose travel generates additional visitor spending in Missouri. Trips that are diverted to other modes of transportation, such as automobiles, buses, planes, or others, do not create new economic activity. However, the “No Trip” segment represents visitors whose spending can be entirely attributed to the Missouri River Runner.

### Passenger Segmentation for Economic Impacts, Urban and Rural

Tourism and visitor spending assumptions for Missouri River Runner riders were developed based on the station’s location in either an urban or rural setting, as station context influences both travel behavior and expenditure patterns. **Table 4** shows the breakdown of ridership for the following stations.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> CY 2024 Missouri River Runner ridership by station was estimated by applying the percentage composition of total Amtrak ridership by station in Missouri to the total CY 2024 Missouri River Runner ridership. This approach assumes that the station-level distribution of River Runner riders is proportional to the overall Amtrak ridership patterns at each station. A limitation of this method is that it may not capture differences in travel behavior between River Runner passengers and riders on other Amtrak services serving the same stations, potentially introducing minor bias in station-level estimates.



**Table 4 – Missouri River Runner Ridership by Station**

City	CY 2024 Ridership
Kansas City	41,009
Independence	1,819
Lee's Summit	7,090
Warrensburg	2,708
Sedalia	2,557
Jefferson City	10,553
Hermann	6,781
Washington	3,969
Kirkwood	13,921
St. Louis	103,868
Total	194,275

Source: Data from the MoDOT and Amtrak, calculations by GFT (2025).

Stations were classified as follows:

- **Urban** – Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit, Jefferson City, Kirkwood and St. Louis
- **Rural** – Warrensburg, Sedalia, Hermann and Washington

**Table 5** presents the annual passenger counts used to estimate tourism-related spending impacts, segmented by visitor origin (out-of-state or in-state), station type (urban or rural) and trip type (overnight with commercial lodging, overnight with non-commercial lodging and non-overnight).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Analysis of ridership data.

**Table 5 – Passenger Segmentation for Economic Impacts, Urban and Rural**

Visitor Segment	Trip Category	Annual Ridership
Out-of-State, Urban	Overnight	45,923
	Overnight – Non-Commercial Lodging	49,903
	Non-Overnight	8,674
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>104,500</b>
Out-of-State, Rural	Overnight	4,126
	Overnight – Non-Commercial Lodging	4,483
	Non-Overnight	779
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>9,388</b>
In-State, Urban	Overnight	3,573
	Overnight – Non-Commercial Lodging	3,883
	Non-Overnight	675
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,131</b>
In-State, Rural	Overnight	321
	Overnight – Non-Commercial Lodging	349
	Non-Overnight	61
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>731</b>

\*Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Data from MoDOT, Amtrak and Missouri Division of Tourism, calculations by GFT (2025).

- **Out-of-State, Urban** – Represents the largest segment, with 104,500 annual passengers, including 45,923 overnight visitors using commercial lodging, 49,903 overnight visitors staying in non-commercial accommodations and 8,674 non-overnight visitors.
- **Out-of-State, Rural** – Account for 9,388 passengers annually, with 4,126 overnight commercial lodging visitors, 4,483 overnight non-commercial lodging visitors and 779 non-overnight visitors.
- **In-State, Urban** – Total 8,131 passengers annually after applying the “No Trip” and two-thirds conservative adjustment, including 3,573 overnight commercial lodging visitors, 3,883 overnight non-commercial lodging visitors and 675 non-overnight visitors.
- **In-State, Rural** – Represents the smallest segment, with 731 passengers annually, including 321 overnight commercial lodging visitors, 349 overnight non-commercial lodging visitors and 61 non-overnight visitors.

This segmentation allows for the application of urban- and rural-specific expenditure profiles and different length-of-stay assumptions for each category, for accurate calculations of tourism spending attributable to the Missouri River Runner.



## Average Length of Stay

Average length of stay factor inputs are based on data from the Fiscal Year 2023 Economic Impact of Visitors in Missouri.<sup>11</sup> This dataset reports that visitors staying overnight in Missouri average 2.88 days/nights, while the overall average length of stay for all visitors (including day trips) is 2.24 days/nights.

These stay length assumptions are applied to both out-of-state and in-state (forgone trip) visitor segments and are segmented by urban and rural station types, so spending accurately reflects the time visitors spend in Missouri as a result of the Missouri River Runner service.

## Lodging and Non-Lodging Expenditures

Tourism and visitor spending for Missouri River Runner passengers primarily consists of lodging expenditures, such as hotels, motels, or other paid accommodations and non-lodging spending, which includes meals, beverages, entertainment, sightseeing and retail purchases. Spending patterns vary by trip purpose (with business travelers spend more on lodging but less on leisure activities and vacationers/leisure travelers allocating a greater share to sightseeing, dining and entertainment), trip duration (with longer stays generating higher total expenditures, particularly for lodging and meals and day trips resulting in lower per-visitor totals) and destination type. These factors are incorporated into destination-

specific expenditure profiles, so that per-trip spending estimates accurately reflect the travel behavior and spending tendencies of different passenger segments. Daily spending estimates (shown in Table 6) for Missouri River Runner visitors are based on Champion Traveler cost profiles for solo travelers in representative urban and rural Missouri destinations, adjusted to 2024 dollars:

**Table 6 – Average Daily Visitor Expenditures by Destination Type and Spending Category<sup>12</sup>**

Destination Type	Category	Average Daily Expenditures
Urban	Total	\$228.89
	Lodging	\$80.84
Rural	Total	\$257.62
	Lodging	\$122.72

Source: Data from Champion Traveler.

Lodging expenditures are multiplied by 2.88 days/nights for overnight visitors using commercial accommodation, consistent with the average stay length for overnight visitors. Non-lodging expenditures-calculated as total daily spending minus daily lodging costs-are multiplied by 2.24 days/nights for overnight visitors (both commercial and non-commercial accommodations) to reflect the average duration of activities. Non-overnight visitors are assigned a single day of non-lodging expenditures with no length-of-stay adjustment.

<sup>11</sup> Missouri Division of Tourism. The Economic Impact of Tourism in Missouri: Fiscal Year 2023. February 7, 2024. Accessed December 8, 2025. <https://mdt-visitmo-cdn.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/05/FY2024-Missouri-Tourism-Economic-Impact.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Average expenditures in St. Louis are used as a proxy for urban travel, while average expenditures in Washington are used as a proxy for rural travel.

This approach allows lodging costs to be captured over the full duration of paid stays, while other spending categories (e.g., meals, attractions, retail) reflect the broader average duration of visitor activities in Missouri.

**Table 7** presents the estimated per-trip spending by Missouri River Runner passengers, segmented by destination type (urban or rural) and visitor type (overnight – commercial lodging, overnight – non-commercial lodging and day visitor). These values are calculated by applying daily lodging and non-lodging spending rates to length-of-stay factors derived from Missouri Department of Tourism data-2.88 days for lodging expenditures, 2.24 days for non-lodging overnight expenditures and 1 day for non-overnight visitors.

In urban destinations, overnight visitors using commercial lodging spend an estimated \$564.45 per trip, including \$232.82 on lodging and \$331.63 on other goods and services. Overnight visitors staying in non-commercial accommodation spend \$331.63 per trip on non-lodging items, while day visitors spend \$148.05. In rural destinations, overnight commercial lodging visitors spend the most per trip-\$655.61, with \$353.43 allocated to lodging and \$302.18 to other expenditures. Rural overnight non-commercial lodging visitors spend \$302.18 on non-lodging goods and services and rural day visitors spend \$134.90 per trip.

**Table 7 – Per-Trip Visitor Expenditures by Destination and Lodging Type**

Destination	Visitor Type	Daily Lodging Rate	Daily Non-Lodging Rate	Total Lodging Expenditures	Total Non-Lodging Expenditures	Total Trip Expenditures
Urban	Overnight - Commercial Lodging (2.88 days/nights)	\$80.84	\$148.05	\$232.82	\$331.63	\$564.45
	Overnight - Non-Commercial Lodging (2.24 days/nights)	\$0.00	\$148.05	\$0.00	\$331.63	\$331.63
	Day Visitor (1.00 days/nights)	\$0.00	\$148.05	\$0.00	\$148.05	\$148.05
Rural	Overnight - Commercial Lodging (2.88 days/nights)	\$122.72	\$134.90	\$353.43	\$302.18	\$655.61
	Overnight - Non-Commercial Lodging (2.24 days/nights)	\$0.00	\$134.90	\$0.00	\$302.18	\$302.18
	Day Visitor (1.00 days/nights)	\$0.00	\$134.90	\$0.00	\$134.90	\$134.90

Source: Data from Champion Traveler and Missouri Division of Tourism, calculations by GFT (2025).



As discussed previously, the calculation of tourism and visitor spending begins by multiplying the ridership for each passenger segment-defined by origin, station type and trip category-by the average per-trip expenditure for that segment. The general formula is:

$$\text{Tourism and Visitor Spending} = \text{Annual Ridership} \times \text{Per-Trip Expenditure} \times \text{Average Length of Stay}$$

For instance, expenditures on commercial lodging by out-of-state riders in urban areas are calculated as follows:

$$\$10,691,853 \text{ in Hotel Expenditures} = 45,923 \text{ annual passengers} \times \$80.84/\text{day} \times 2.88 \text{ days}$$

This same process is applied to each passenger segment, generating total annual spending estimates for both lodging and non-lodging categories.

**Table 8** presents the estimated annual tourism-related expenditures in Missouri, generated by passengers on the Missouri River Runner. These expenditures are segmented by visitor type (out-of-state or in-state), station type (urban or rural) and spending category (lodging or non-lodging). The totals are calculated by multiplying per-trip expenditure estimates-based on daily spending rates and length-of-stay factors-by the number of annual passengers in each segment.

Out-of-state visitors account for the majority of spending, contributing approximately \$47.9 million annually. Additionally, in-state visitors who would not have traveled without this service contribute an extra \$3.7 million. Lodging-related expenditures amount to \$13.1 million, while non-lodging expenditures, which include meals, attractions and retail purchases, total \$38.6 million.



Source: MoDOT

**Table 8 – Annual Tourism Expenditures by Missouri River Runner Passengers by Visitor Segment and Spending Category**

Ridership Type	Expenditure Category	Annual Expenditures
Out-of-State, Urban	Lodging	\$10,691,853
	Non-Lodging	\$33,062,239
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$43,754,092</b>
Out-of-State, Rural	Lodging	\$1,458,200
	Non-Lodging	\$2,706,513
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,164,713</b>
In-State, Urban	Lodging	\$831,951
	Non-Lodging	\$2,572,628
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,404,580</b>
In-State, Rural	Lodging	\$113,465
	Non-Lodging	\$210,598
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$342,063</b>
Total Expenditures	Lodging	\$13,095,470
	Non-Lodging	\$38,551,979
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$51,647,448</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: Data from MoDOT, Amtrak, Champion Traveler, and Missouri Division of Tourism, calculations by GFT (2025).*

### Visitor Spending by Station

While the preceding analysis details per-trip expenditures by visitor type and destination, **Table 7** can also be disaggregated to show how those expenditures are distributed geographically across the Missouri River Runner corridor. Station-level results (shown in **Table 9**) highlight the concentration of tourism and visitor spending in Missouri's two largest metropolitan areas.

**St. Louis  
Percent of Total  
Visitor Related  
Spending**

**53%**



St. Louis alone accounts for more than half of all Missouri River Runner–related visitor spending (\$27.5 million, or 53 percent of the total), reflecting both its role as a major origin/destination hub and the city’s higher lodging and non-lodging costs. Kansas City generates another 21 percent (\$10.8 million). Kirkwood (\$3.7 million), Jefferson

City (\$2.8 million) and Hermann (\$1.9 million) also capture meaningful shares, underscoring the economic importance of mid-sized cities and regional tourist towns. Stations such as Washington, Warrensburg, Sedalia, Independence and Lee’s Summit see lower but still significant inflows, often linked to specific local attractions, festivals, or university-related travel.

**Table 9 – Visitor Expenditures by Missouri River Runner Station**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Lodging</b>	<b>Non-Lodging</b>	<b>Total</b>
Kansas City	\$2,651,047	\$8,197,789	\$10,848,836
Independence	\$117,586	\$363,611	\$481,197
Lee’s Summit	\$458,368	\$1,417,404	\$1,875,772
Warrensburg	\$265,746	\$493,241	\$758,986
Sedalia	\$250,952	\$465,783	\$716,735
Jefferson City	\$682,210	\$2,109,587	\$2,791,797
Hermann	\$665,488	\$1,235,189	\$1,900,677
Washington	\$389,479	\$722,898	\$1,112,378
Kirkwood	\$899,959	\$2,782,927	\$3,682,886
St. Louis	\$6,714,634	\$20,763,550	\$27,478,184
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,095,470</b>	<b>\$38,551,979</b>	<b>\$51,647,448</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: Data from MoDOT, Amtrak, Champion Traveler, and Missouri Division of Tourism, calculations by GFT (2025).*

## Amtrak Operations in Missouri

For the economic impact analysis, Amtrak payroll and vendor expenditure totals are treated as direct inputs to the IMPLAN model for Missouri. Payroll impacts are modeled as labor income, while vendor and capital expenditures are allocated to the appropriate IMPLAN sectors based on expenditure categories. This approach captures the full range of indirect and induced impacts generated by Amtrak's operational spending in the state.

### Amtrak Payroll

According to Amtrak's FY 2024 State Fact Sheet for Missouri, the company employed staff across multiple functions in the state, including train crews, station personnel and administrative roles. The total annual payroll for Amtrak employees in Missouri was \$10.68 million, representing wages and benefits paid directly to Missouri residents.<sup>13</sup> This payroll supports household spending across the state, generating secondary economic benefits through induced impacts.

**\$10.68M (FY 2024) = Amtrak's total annual payroll for employees, representing wages and benefits paid directly to Missouri residents.**

## Amtrak Vendor and Capital Expenditures

Amtrak also purchases goods and services from Missouri-based vendors to support its operations. In FY 2024, total in-state vendor and capital expenditures amounted to \$152.23 million. Amtrak's most recent State Fact Sheet notes that construction services represent the largest single procurement category systemwide.<sup>14</sup> To reflect this and maintain consistency with previously reported categories in Missouri,<sup>15</sup> the following assumed breakdown of Amtrak's national vendor expenditures is applied in this analysis in the absence of a detailed breakdown:

- **Construction Services (30 percent)** – Includes capital projects such as station upgrades, track improvements, bridge rehabilitation and related engineering and contracting services.
- **Railroad Equipment & Signaling (20 percent)** – Purchases of locomotives, passenger cars, signal systems and related components.

<sup>13</sup> National Railroad Passenger Corporation. Missouri: Amtrak State Fact Sheet, Fiscal Year 2024. Washington, D.C., 2025. Accessed December 8, 2025.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>15</sup> This distribution is assumed for modeling purposes based on two factors: (1) the vendor expenditure categories documented for the Missouri River Runner in FY 2019 and (2) Amtrak's recent disclosure that construction services now represent its largest national procurement category. While the precise national shares may vary from year to year, this structure provides a reasonable and defensible approximation of how Amtrak's vendor spending is distributed across industries for IMPLAN analysis.



- **Utilities & Energy (15 percent)**
  - Electricity, fuel and other utility expenditures necessary to operate stations, facilities and equipment.
- **Professional & Technical Services (15 percent)** – Architectural, engineering, IT and consulting services that support Amtrak’s operations and capital programs.
- **Maintenance & Repair Services (10 percent)** – Expenditures for rolling stock repair, equipment servicing and facility upkeep provided by third-party contractors.
- **Office, Supplies and Miscellaneous Procurement (5 percent)** – Smaller categories including office supplies, printing, landscaping and other operational support services.
- **Transportation Support Services (5 percent)** – Third-party contracts for logistics, freight handling and other ancillary transportation activities.

## Economic Modeling Process

The IMPLAN economic modeling system was employed to analyze the Missouri River Runner’s contributions to the state economy. IMPLAN is one of the most widely used input-output (I/O) models in the United States, built from data provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Commerce. The model contains current economic metrics-jobs, labor income, value-added and economic output-across more than 500 industry classifications, which align with North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups.

The IMPLAN model was calibrated at the statewide level using direct inputs specific to the Missouri River Runner and Amtrak’s statewide operations. Using this approach, the model captures differences in employment, labor income, value-added and economic output across industries, while applying a uniform set of multipliers to trace supply chain activity and household re-spending effects. Modeling at the statewide level recognizes the interconnected nature of Missouri’s economy, reflecting how passenger rail service in one corridor and Amtrak’s operations generate ripple effects throughout the state.

## Aligning Inputs with IMPLAN Sectors

Each reported input was mapped into IMPLAN's industry framework for consistency and comparability:

- **Visitor Expenditures** – Lodging and non-lodging outlays were tied to service industries that directly benefit from travel-related activity.
- **Amtrak's Employment & Compensation** – Payroll from Amtrak's associated in-state employment and compensation was aligned with rail transportation.
- **Amtrak's Procurement** – Vendor expenditures were mapped to IMPLAN sectors such as nonresidential construction, manufacturing, utilities and professional services, with construction services representing the largest category.

## Economic Impact Review & Validation

All economic impact results underwent a structured quality-assurance process to confirm consistency and credibility. This process included:

- **Totals Reconciliation** – Confirming that visitor and operations results aggregated properly to statewide totals for jobs, labor income, value added, output and taxes.
- **Impact Composition Checks** – Reviewing the balance between Amtrak operations and visitor spending for proportionality with reported inputs.
- **Multiplier Reasonableness** – Testing Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) multipliers to verify that the ratio of total to direct impacts fell within plausible ranges.
- **Per-Unit Benchmarks** – Calculating and reviewing labor income per job, jobs per \$1 million of output and tax yields for reasonableness.

These checks provide confidence that the final estimates represent conservative, transparent and defensible measures of the economic contributions supported by the Missouri River Runner.



Source: MoDOT



## 5.0 Findings

This section presents the results of the economic impact analysis of the Missouri River Runner passenger rail service. The analysis draws on three primary inputs: Amtrak employment and payroll in Missouri, Amtrak procurement of goods and services from Missouri-based vendors and tourism and visitor spending generated by out-of-state passengers. These inputs were integrated into the IMPLAN model to estimate the direct effects of Amtrak’s operations and visitor activity, as well as the indirect and induced effects generated through supplier purchases and household spending.

The results are reported at the statewide level and, where applicable, disaggregated to highlight station-level spending patterns. The findings are organized into two parts:

1. **Inputs to the IMPLAN Model** – A summary of the data sources and categories of inputs used in the analysis.
2. **Economic Impacts** – The aggregated and disaggregated economic contribution of the Missouri River Runner service to Missouri’s economy.

### 5.1 Inputs to the IMPLAN Model

Three sets of inputs formed the basis of the Missouri River Runner analysis. These were structured to align with IMPLAN sector definitions and to capture Amtrak’s operations, procurement activity and tourism-related visitor spending in Missouri.

#### Amtrak Employment & Payroll

Direct employment and payroll at Amtrak represent the labor component of ongoing operations in Missouri. In FY 2024, Amtrak supported 116 jobs statewide, with a combined payroll of \$10.7 million. These figures, shown in **Table 10**, represent the direct labor income inputs to IMPLAN and capture only Amtrak’s direct operational workforce in Missouri.

**Table 10 – Amtrak Employment & Payroll**

Category	Value
Employment	116
Payroll	\$10,681,950

Source: Data from Amtrak, “Amtrak in Missouri”, (2024).

## Amtrak Procurement Expenditures

Amtrak purchases a significant volume of goods and services from Missouri-based vendors, spanning both operating and capital-related categories. In FY 2024, these in-state vendor and capital expenditures totaled \$152.2 million, as shown in **Table 11**. Expenditures were distributed across multiple industry sectors, with the largest share in construction services (\$45.7 million, 30 percent), followed by railroad equipment and signaling (\$30.4 million, 20 percent). Other categories included utilities and energy, professional and technical services, maintenance and repair, office supplies and transportation support services.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

30%

RAILROAD EQUIPMENT & SIGNALING

20%

**Table 11 – Amtrak Procurement Expenditures by Category**

Category	Amount (\$)
Construction Services	\$45,670,220
Railroad Equipment & Signaling	\$30,446,814
Utilities & Energy	\$22,835,110
Professional & Technical Services	\$22,835,110
Maintenance & Repair Services	\$15,223,407
Office, Supplies, & Misc.	\$7,611,703
Transportation Support Services	\$7,611,703
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$152,234,068</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: Data from Amtrak, calculations by GFT (2025).*



## Tourism Expenditures

Tourism and visitor spending reflect the expenditures of out-of-state passengers traveling to and within Missouri on the River Runner. In FY 2024, these visitors spent \$51.6 million statewide, including both lodging and non-lodging purchases such as meals, retail and attractions, as shown in **Table 12**. Of this amount, \$13.1 million (25 percent) was spent on lodging, while \$38.6 million (75 percent) was directed toward non-lodging expenditures.

**Table 12 – Tourism Expenditures**

Expenditure Type	Out-of-State			In-State			Total
	Urban	Rural	Subtotal	Urban	Rural	Subtotal	
Lodging	\$10,691,853	\$1,458,200	\$12,150,053	\$831,951	\$113,465	\$945,416	\$13,095,470
Non-Lodging	\$33,062,239	\$2,706,513	\$35,768,752	\$2,572,628	\$210,598	\$2,783,226	\$38,551,979
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$43,754,092</b>	<b>\$4,164,713</b>	<b>\$47,918,805</b>	<b>\$3,404,580</b>	<b>\$324,063</b>	<b>\$3,728,643</b>	<b>\$51,647,448</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

Source: Data from MoDOT, Amtrak, Champion Traveler, and Missouri Division of Tourism, calculations by GFT (2025).



Source: MoDOT

## 5.2 Economic Impacts

Economic impacts were estimated for the following: (1) Amtrak’s operations, which include payroll and in-state vendor expenditures and (2) tourism-related spending by out-of-state visitors and in-state residents who would not have traveled without the service.

ANNUAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT

**\$480M**

JOBS SUPPORTED IN MISSOURI

**1,789**

### Statewide Economic Impacts

The combined effects of Amtrak operations and tourism spending attributable to the Missouri River Runner are shown in **Table 13**, totaling an estimated \$478.9 million in annual economic output, supporting 1,789 jobs across Missouri. The total labor income generated across all impact types is approximately \$97.7 million, with \$206.6 million in value-added and \$43.4 million in state and local tax revenues.

**Table 13 – Statewide Economic Impact Summary**

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output	Taxes
1 - Direct	975	\$48,577,013	\$109,257,635	\$256,933,298	\$20,335,097
2 - Indirect	473	\$29,333,069	\$62,281,725	\$162,288,167	\$15,507,872
3 - Induced	342	\$19,750,869	\$35,071,767	\$59,635,278	\$7,527,210
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,789</b>	<b>\$97,660,951</b>	<b>\$206,611,127</b>	<b>\$478,856,743</b>	<b>\$43,370,179</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: IMPLAN, calculations by GFT (2025).*



## Visitor & Tourism Expenditure Impacts

Tourism-related spending by Missouri River Runner passengers generates an estimated \$91.8 million in annual economic output and supports 727 jobs across Missouri, as shown in **Table 14**. This includes \$51.6 million in direct spending on lodging, meals, attractions and retail purchases; \$22.4 million in indirect supply chain impacts; and \$17.7 million in induced household spending. Labor income from these tourism-related impacts totals \$29.2 million, while value added is estimated at \$50.1 million. Tourism spending also contributes \$11.8 million annually to state and local tax revenues.

**Table 14 – Visitor & Tourism Expenditure Economic Impact Summary**

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output	Taxes
1 - Direct	529	\$16,244,137	\$26,935,730	\$51,607,544	\$7,016,899
2 - Indirect	96	\$7,039,378	\$12,749,460	\$22,447,541	\$2,579,310
3 - Induced	102	\$5,871,687	\$10,426,564	\$17,729,186	\$2,237,819
<b>Total</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>\$29,155,203</b>	<b>\$50,111,755</b>	<b>\$91,784,270</b>	<b>\$11,834,027</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: IMPLAN, calculations by GFT (2025).*



*Source: MoDOT*

## Amtrak Payroll & Investment Impacts

Amtrak’s operational presence in Missouri-including payroll for 116 employees and \$152.2 million in vendor purchases-generates \$387.0 million in total annual output and supports 1,062 jobs statewide. **Table 15** summarizes the economic impacts of Amtrak’s operations in Missouri. The direct component accounts for \$205.3 million in output, while supply chain and household spending generate an additional \$181.8 million in combined indirect and induced effects. Total labor income from Amtrak’s payroll and in-state spending is estimated at \$68.5 million, with \$31.5 million in annual tax revenues.

**Table 15 – Amtrak’s Missouri Payroll & Investment Economic Impact Summary**

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output	Taxes
1 - Direct	446	\$32,332,876	\$82,321,906	\$205,285,849	\$13,318,198
2 - Indirect	376	\$22,293,691	\$49,532,264	\$139,840,626	\$12,928,563
3 - Induced	240	\$13,879,182	\$24,645,203	\$41,906,092	\$5,289,391
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>\$68,505,748</b>	<b>\$156,499,373</b>	<b>\$387,032,568</b>	<b>\$31,536,152</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding*

Source: IMPLAN, calculations by GFT (2025)..



Source: MoDOT



## Economic Impacts by Station

The Missouri River Runner generates localized economic benefits at each of its station communities through the spending of passengers on lodging, dining, entertainment, retail and other travel-related services. **Table 16** summarizes the disaggregated visitor spending impacts by station.

Visitor spending impacts are concentrated in Missouri's largest cities with the highest ridership, with St. Louis leading the state (387 jobs and \$49 million in output), followed by Kansas City (153 jobs and \$19.3 million). Stations that with moderate levels of ridership, such as Kirkwood, Jefferson City, Hermann and Lee's Summit, each generate several million dollars in output and support 26 to 52 jobs, while stations with fewer boardings, like Independence, Sedalia, Warrensburg and Washington, contribute more modest impacts but remain important as local gateways for tourism activity.

**Table 16 – Visitor Spending Economic Impacts by Station**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Employment (jobs)</b>	<b>Labor Income (\$, 2024)</b>	<b>Value Added (\$, 2024)</b>	<b>Output (\$, 2024)</b>	<b>Taxes (\$, 2024)</b>
Kansas City	153	\$6,124,214	\$10,526,255	\$19,279,801	\$2,485,804
Independence	7	\$271,638	\$466,889	\$855,150	\$110,257
Lee's Summit	26	\$1,058,881	\$1,819,997	\$3,333,492	\$429,797
Warrensburg	11	\$428,451	\$736,418	\$1,348,818	\$173,907
Sedalia	10	\$404,600	\$695,423	\$1,273,732	\$164,226
Jefferson City	39	\$1,575,981	\$2,708,785	\$4,961,388	\$639,687
Hermann	27	\$1,072,940	\$1,844,162	\$3,377,752	\$435,504
Washington	16	\$627,942	\$1,079,302	\$1,976,841	\$254,880
Kirkwood	52	\$2,079,005	\$3,573,379	\$6,544,971	\$843,863
St. Louis	387	\$15,511,551	\$26,661,144	\$48,832,328	\$6,296,102
<b>Total</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>\$29,155,203</b>	<b>\$50,111,755</b>	<b>\$91,784,270</b>	<b>\$11,834,027</b>

*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.*

*Source: IMPLAN, calculations by GFT (2025).*

## 5.3 Conclusion

The Missouri River Runner delivers measurable and recurring economic value to the state through its dual role as a visitor-oriented service and a core component of Amtrak's statewide operations. By channeling new tourism dollars into hotels, restaurants, attractions and retail, the service sustains hundreds of jobs in communities along the corridor. At the same time, Amtrak's payroll and vendor spending represent a consistent source of income and business activity across diverse industries, from construction and equipment supply to utilities and professional services. Together, these impacts contribute nearly half a billion dollars in annual economic output and generate more than \$43 million in state and local tax revenues.

The findings underscore the importance of continued state support. Missouri's investment in the Missouri River Runner not only preserves an essential transportation option but also multiplies into broader economic benefits for residents, businesses and communities. As travel demand rebounds and ridership reaches new highs, the Missouri River Runner is positioned to serve as a cornerstone of Missouri's long-term transportation strategy. Sustained investment in operations and targeted improvements in reliability and connectivity will be critical to fully realize the service's potential. This investment allows the Missouri River Runner to continue to strengthen Missouri's competitiveness, attract visitors and support the vitality throughout Missouri well into the future.

