

Executive Summary

"If transportation allows the lifeblood of commerce to flow, then Missouri, at the center of the world's largest economy, should be the heart pumping that blood to every part of the world resulting in economic prosperity right here at home."

- MoDOT Director Pete Rahn, State of Transportation Address. February 2, 2005

The overarching goal of any transportation plan is to provide for the efficient, effective, and safe movement of goods, services, and people from one location to another. Accomplishing this goal is no small task, as every citizen represents a stakeholder deeply impacted by transportation issues. Those stakeholders utilize Missouri's transportation system every day, and possess a wide range of values, priorities, and conceptions. Decisions regarding transportation must be made not only with these values in mind, but also must consider impacts to local government, the environment, and economic development. These issues alone make transportation decisions complex issues. Continually shrinking public dollars complicate the issues even more, as priorities must be set to ensure the statewide transportation system as a whole remains salient, while being sensitive to the needs and desires of the local citizen.

To help ensure a viable, effective transportation system in the future and to address these complex issues from a regional standpoint, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has entered into partnership with the regional planning commissions (RPCs) in Missouri. RPCs possess the unique characteristics of having first-hand knowledge of not only state and federal planning agencies, but also of the local communities and counties they serve. Taking advantage of this knowledge, MoDOT has enlisted each Missouri's RPC to produce a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Acknowledging that transportation needs vary from region to region, the RTP will allow for effective transportation planning at the local level, thereby creating a better transportation system for the state as a whole.

This document represents the first step in producing a Regional Transportation Plan for the Mo-Kan Regional Council region, consisting of Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton, and DeKalb counties. To start the RTP process, Mo-Kan, with the help of local elected officials, identified transportation stakeholders, and interested citizens, has developed a set of transportation goals and objectives for the region. These goals and objectives represent the transportation priorities of the Mo-Kan region, and will serve as a starting point for the development of the full RTP. This is a multi-year, multi-phase project that will result in the creation of a dynamic planning document designed to guide the transportation development for the Mo-Kan region for several years to come, thereby ensuring a safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system for the citizens of northwest Missouri.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives will be used to guide the development of the Mo-Kan Regional Transportation Plan. The goals and objectives were developed as a result of a collaborative effort by the Mo-Kan Transportation Advisory Committee, the Missouri Department of Transportation, and the Mo-Kan Regional Council. As with any planning process, these goals should only be considered a starting point for the development of the Regional Transportation Plan. As more public input is sought and the plan begins to take shape, the goals and objectives will likely be amended to reflect current transportation trends and regional needs.

Goal 1: Provide a fully functional road, bridge, and highway transportation network to facilitate the efficient, effective movement of goods, services, and people throughout Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton, and DeKalb counties.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Improve existing infrastructure by maintaining existing state highways, lettered routes, and other transportation assets.
- 1.2 Prioritize high-volume traffic routes for rehabilitation and reconditioning, and consider upgrading those routes with the highest traffic volume.
- 1.3 Continue a bridge assessment program, and repair/replace bridge components (deck, substructure, superstructure) as needed.
- 1.4 Ensure transportation system is accessible to all citizens of the region.

Goals 2: Promote local alternatives to automobile transportation to reduce negative impacts on the regional environment, reduce congestion, and improve the health of the region's citizens.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Promote the construction and use of public hiking/biking trails both within and between local communities.
- 2.2 Support and assist in the development of pedestrian-friendly roadways and communities.
- 2.3 Encourage continued support and expansion of public transit assets, including OATS and the *The Ride* bussing networks.
- 2.4 Maintain and expand regional freight alternatives, including air, rail, and barge.

Goal 3: Provide a safe transportation network throughout the region and promote safe driving habits by motorists.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Participate in local safety initiatives, including the joint MoDOT / Missouri Highway Patrol program *Blueprint for Safer Roadways* to reduce the number of fatalities on local roadways.
- 3.2 Work with local and state agencies and private citizens to reduce the number of vehicle collisions with deer and other animals.
- 3.3 Provide and continually reassess safety-related signage and roadway visibility.
- 3.4 Encourage the passage of a primary seatbelt law in the State of Missouri.
- 3.5 Continue working with local and state first responders to provide for rapid, safe response to emergent situations on the region's roadways.

Goal 4: Utilize existing transportation infrastructure and develop new assets to promote economic development across the region.

Objectives:

- 4.1 Maintain and increase the efficiency of the region's transportation networks to better facilitate the movement of goods and services.
- 4.2 When developing transportation expansions, plan for those that minimize impacts to the economic potential of local communities and businesses.
- 4.3 Incorporate local and regional land use plans, comprehensive development plans, and population forecasts in making transportation decisions.
- 4.4 Provide timely information on the resources available for transportation enhancements with regard to economic development.

Goal 5: Ensure a transparent planning process that is accessible to all citizens within the region, encourages public participation, and complies with all state and federal regulations.

Objectives:

- 5.1 Include the region's citizens in all phases of developing plans related to transportation, including the Regional Transportation Plan.
- 5.2 Inform the general public about upcoming planning initiatives and ensure access to all interested stakeholders.
- 5.3 Approach transportation planning from a regional standpoint, involving interested parties from not only the local impact area, but also the region as a whole.