

**MISSOURI**

state rail plan

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #6

# Public and Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report

May 2012

Prepared for:



Missouri Department  
of Transportation

Prepared by:

**HNTB**  
HNTB Corporation

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## **1. Goals and Objectives and the Public Involvement Plan**

The success of the Missouri State Rail Plan depends on buy-in and support among MoDOT leadership, freight and passenger railroads, key stakeholders and the general public. Ample opportunity must be provided for meaningful input on these issues, and stakeholders must be aware their issues have been heard and addressed. The general public must also have opportunities for involvement and must feel they have been informed, consulted and involved throughout the planning process.

The Missouri State Rail Plan public involvement effort was designed to accomplish these goals. More specific objectives included helping stakeholders and the general public:

- Increase understanding of system-level goods movement and logistics issues.
- Prioritize investments in light of constrained funding resources.
- Strengthen partnerships and coordination with sister transportation agencies, other government organizations, private industry and the public.
- Be responsive to public comments and concerns; provide feedback as appropriate.
- Develop a partnership with the media to ensure accurate reporting of information.
- Build public consensus on the plan, and create sustainable support for an implementation plan which is understandable, feasible and transparent.

These goals and specific involvement and outreach activities are outlined in **Appendix A: Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan**.

## 2. Stakeholder Database

A cross section of all freight stakeholders in the state and region were engaged throughout the development of the plan, including shippers, carriers, terminal operators, economic development agencies, seaport and airport authorities, state and local governments and other public agencies, receivers, distribution and warehousing representatives and commercial and industrial developers.

Additionally, this effort engaged the Missouri State Rail Plan Advisory Committee, the Missouri Rail Passenger Advisory Committee, regional and metropolitan planning organizations, regulatory agencies, communities with Amtrak service or who might someday get Amtrak and intercity passenger rail, the relevant chambers of commerce, and community advocacy groups such as the St. Louis-based Citizens for Modern Transit and those who represent the disability and environmental communities. These “thought leaders” helped share information presented at meetings and helped build widespread ownership in the State Rail Plan’s recommendations.

When this effort commenced in June 2011, MoDOT had a stakeholder database with 1,214 contacts. By May 2012, the database included more than 1,700 emails and 550 mailing addresses, and continues to grow.

### 3. Community Workshops and Public Meetings - Series One

A series of public open house meetings and community leader workshops were held in each MoDOT district across the state in October and November 2011. The purpose of the meetings – both in person and online – was to gather public input on the development of MoDOT’s State Rail Plan. As the plan will serve as the strategic framework for the development of both freight and passenger rail service in Missouri for the next 20 years, it was vital MoDOT heard from Missourians to incorporate their needs into this process.

Meetings were held in each of MoDOT’s seven districts on the following dates and locations:

**Table 1: Series One Public Meetings**

| Date             | Location                 | Community Workshop Attendance | Public Meeting Attendance |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| October 18, 2011 | Hannibal                 | 29                            | 4                         |
| October 25, 2011 | Jefferson City           | 20                            | 21                        |
| October 26, 2011 | Kirkwood                 | 15                            | 50                        |
| October 27, 2011 | Cape Girardeau           | 10                            | 6                         |
| November 1, 2011 | St. Joseph               | 12                            | 15                        |
| November 2, 2011 | Kansas City/Independence | 35                            | 31                        |
| November 3, 2011 | Springfield              | 13                            | 17                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                          | <b>134</b>                    | <b>144</b>                |

In addition to the seven open house meetings and seven community leader workshops, MoDOT hosted an online public meeting from October 18 through November 18 at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org). This online meeting gave those unable to attend a chance to learn about freight and passenger rail in Missouri, ask questions and provide input.

As work on the plan began, public and community leaders were asked to comment on the following:

- The current rail system’s ability to serve Missouri’s businesses in moving raw materials and finished products.
- The state’s interest in and potential ridership of intercity passenger rail.
- The role of publicly funded improvements to move people and goods on privately-owned railroad systems.
- The importance of investing in different types of rail projects compared to other infrastructure needs, given funding limitations.

The following provides an overview of the meetings, then highlights the key themes which emerged from the community leader and public input. For a detailed summary of each community workshop and public meeting, see **Appendix B: Public Meeting Series One Summary Report**.

### **3.1 Meeting Format**

Two sessions were held in each of seven Missouri communities. The community leader workshop was held with invited guests to provide information on the plan directly to business leaders, elected officials and local transportation and planning experts. A brief presentation was given to describe the purpose and approach of the Missouri State Rail Plan. A question and answer period followed, and participants were encouraged to submit their comments in writing.

The second session was designed for the general public and combined an open house and public meeting format, with a presentation and brief question and answer session. Attendees were registered and invited to review exhibits and share their thoughts directly with the project team at each information station. All public meeting sites were wheel chair accessible.

### **3.2 Meeting Notification and Materials**

The public was notified of the opportunity to attend the meetings and provide public comment using these communication vehicles:

- News release was sent to area media
- Invitations were mailed and e-mailed to community leaders
- Meeting notifications were emailed to approximately 1,200 stakeholders statewide
- A notice and meeting materials were posted on [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org) and multiple MoDOT and local Facebook and Twitter sites

### 3.3 Meeting Displays

The open house portion of the public meeting included these information stations:

**Figure 1: Series One Public Meeting Displays**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Welcome</b>   |
| <b><u>Station #1</u></b><br>Purpose<br>Vision<br>Draft Goals<br>Deliverables                                   |
| <b><u>Station #2</u></b><br>Missouri's Existing Freight Operations<br>Missouri's Existing Passenger Operations |
| <b><u>Station #3</u></b><br>The Business Case for Rail<br>What We've Heard So Far                              |
| <b><u>Station #4</u></b><br>Next Steps<br>Comments   |

### 3.4 Meeting Handouts

Materials available to participants of both the community leader workshops and the public meetings included:

- Agenda
- Missouri Freight Map
- Missouri Passenger Map
- Missouri State Rail Plan Handout
- Meeting Overview and Comment Form

### 3.5 Public Input Highlights and Key Themes

Attendees were aware of and favorable to the economic, environmental and quality of life impacts of both passenger and freight rail, including the following comments:

- Rail reduces truck and automobile traffic on Interstates and local roadways
- Rail is a more fuel-efficient mode of transportation
- Rail reduces emissions which cause lower air quality
- Freight rail is beneficial to state and local economies



- Passenger rail provides a viable option to driving or flying for short to moderate trips
- Passenger rail development is generally a worthy investment as long as it does not impede the movement of freight by rail
- Investments in rail infrastructure will increase speed, reliability and ridership for passenger service in this corridor, and spur more efficient movement of freight

### **3.5.1 Passenger Rail Service**

Awareness about passenger rail is markedly high and positive among those who attended, particularly in the communities where Amtrak service is available. Consequently, the bulk of the comments indicated a desire for:

- More frequent service (more trains) to more locations
- More convenient schedules, particularly for business travelers
- Improved on-time performance
- Faster speeds
- New equipment

Significant comments/themes regarding the Missouri River Runner service included:

- Improved on-time performance is critical to growing and maintaining ridership
- Increasing the number of trains to create more convenient arrival/departure times and promote more same-day travel and business use
- Recognition of and desire for more state investment in passenger rail, even changing the state constitution to make long-term, dedicated funding possible
- Alleviating the single-track bottleneck over the Osage River is a high-priority need
- Frequent complaints about dirty windows and old equipment on Missouri River Runner trains
- Desire for connectivity to the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia
- Service to the tourist attractions at Hermann, Missouri is important and worthy of better service
- Interest in studying the extension of service to other parts of the state, most notably Hannibal, Branson, Springfield, Columbia and St. Joseph, as well as commuter rail extensions in St. Louis and Kansas City
- Amtrak becoming a sustainable national system
- A realization rail is subsidized less than other modes of transportation such as highways and aviation

### **3.5.2 Freight Rail Service**

There is broad awareness of the role of freight rail in Missouri. According to comments from the seven workshops and public meetings, Missourians:

- See freight rail as important to Missouri's economy
- Understand the environmental benefits of shipping by rail
- View the freight rail system as a key part of the state's overall transportation system and as a way to reduce congestion and move heavy loads off of the state's highway grid

- Know Kansas City and St. Louis are the second and third largest freight rail hubs in the nation
- Are aware Missouri has a rich railroading history
- Recognize huge amounts of coal and intermodal freight move through the state
- A few stakeholders see further passenger rail development as a threat to the movement of freight

Significant comments/themes about freight rail included:

- Any improvements to the state's rail infrastructure should benefit both freight and passenger rail and one mode should not impede the other
- Moving freight off the I-70 corridor between Kansas City and St. Louis and onto rail is a priority and a benefit in terms of reducing highway traffic, reducing damage to state and local roadways and reducing air pollution from emissions
- The state should do more to seek out public-private partnerships which could result in moving more freight by rail and increasing economic development
- More should be done to work with businesses which produce mined products and want to ship them more economically by rail
- Promote and develop more intermodal opportunities to provide a seamless connection between rail, highways and ports along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers
- Look for ways to mitigate the impact of seasonal flooding on railroads as some corridors closely parallel the Missouri and/or Mississippi rivers
- MoDOT should continue to alleviate bottlenecks because of the impact they have in delaying freight shipments
- Trucking interests see the state rail plan as a way of improving the transportation system as a whole
- Examine ways to work more with short line railroad operators
- Explore the possibility of reviving some abandoned or under-utilized rail lines as a means of fostering more economic development in the state's small cities and communities
- Build stronger relationships between business/shippers and the railroads to both grow business and address concerns over shipping logistics
- Kansas City area stakeholders would like to see more coordination with the railroads in developing more and better rail-served industrial development clusters
- MoDOT needs to continue its focus on increasing rail safety for at-grade crossings and to address traffic congestion caused by trains moving through a city or community

### **3.5.3 Observations: Funding Rail Improvements**

Community leaders and the public provided the following comments regarding funding for rail improvements:

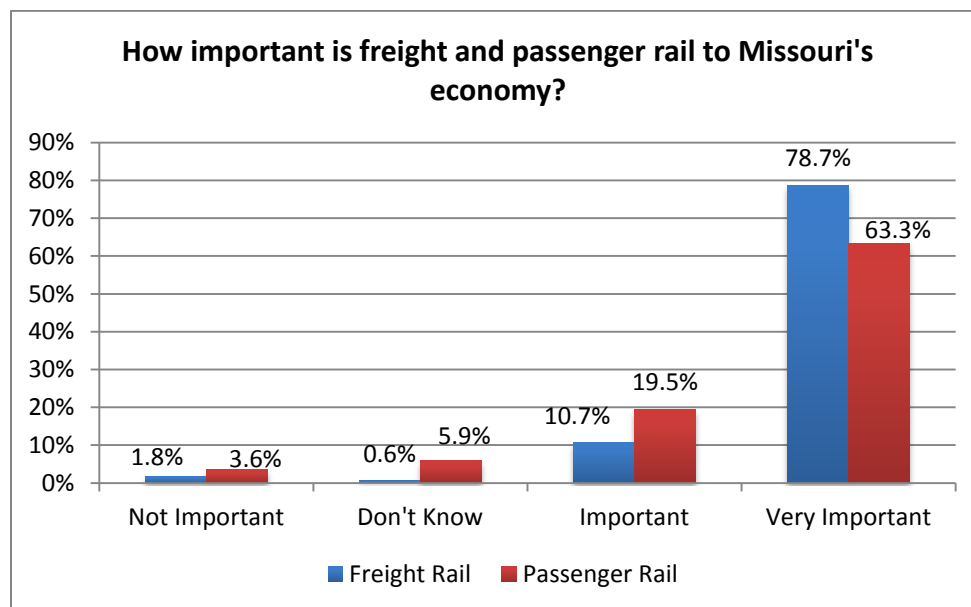
- Continue to support state of Missouri funding of Missouri River Runner service between Kansas City and St. Louis
- Currently, there is no long-term or dedicated funding source for rail
- There is a need to make greater investment in Missouri's rail infrastructure and such investment is worthwhile

- Rail investments should be directed at both freight and passenger rail
- There is lack of knowledge about sources of existing public funding for rail improvements
- There is lack of knowledge about the amounts railroads are investing in Missouri’s rail system with their own dollars on both infrastructure improvements and maintenance along railroad right of way
- Interest in what grant and loan programs other states administer to help fund rail projects/programs
- A desire to include a comparison of per-mile costs of both highway and railroad improvements and maintenance costs
- A desire to seek out more public-private partnerships as a way of combining dollars to get rail projects done

### 3.6 Written Comments

In addition to comments made at the workshops and public meetings, 169 total written comments were submitted (83 comments at the meetings and 86 submitted online at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org)). Respondents were asked how important they thought freight and passenger rail were to the state’s economy, with one indicating least important and four indicating most important. **Figure 2** below shows most believed freight and passenger rail are important to Missouri’s economy.

**Figure 2: Importance of Rail to Missouri's Economy**



Of the 169 comments received, about 89 percent indicated freight rail is important to Missouri’s economy, and 83 percent indicated passenger rail is also important to the state’s economy.

## 4. Public Meetings - Series Two

A second series of public open house meetings was held in each MoDOT district across the state in April 2012. The purpose of the meetings – both in person and online – was to share with the public how their input helped shape the proposed State Rail Plan, and to seek input on its draft recommendations. For a detailed summary of each public meeting, see **Appendix C: Public Meeting Series Two Summary Report**.

Meetings were held in each of MoDOT’s seven districts on the following dates and locations:

**Table 2: Series Two Public Meetings**

| Date           | Location              | Public Meeting Attendance |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| April 10, 2012 | St. Joseph            | 12                        |
| April 11, 2012 | Kansas City, Missouri | 25                        |
| April 12, 2012 | Hannibal              | 27                        |
| April 17, 2012 | Springfield           | 11                        |
| April 18, 2012 | Jefferson City        | 40                        |
| April 25, 2012 | Poplar Bluff          | 5                         |
| April 26, 2012 | Kirkwood              | 35                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |                       | <b>155</b>                |

In addition to the seven open house meetings, MoDOT hosted an online public meeting from April 10 through May 4 at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org). This online meeting gave those unable to attend a chance to review the draft State Rail Plan recommendations, ask questions and provide input.

The public was asked to give their opinions about the recommended strategies for both freight and passenger rail and to share any other comments, thoughts or questions.

The following provides an overview of the meetings, and then highlights the key themes which emerged from the public input.

### 4.1 Meeting Format

One public open house meeting was held in each of seven Missouri communities. Attendees were registered and invited to review exhibits and share their thoughts directly with the project team at each information station. A presentation was given at 4:45 pm, followed by a question and answer session. At some of the meetings project staff continued the public question,

answer and comment session until the meeting was adjourned. All public meetings were wheel chair accessible.

#### **4.2 Meeting Notification and Materials**

The public was notified of the opportunity to attend the meetings and provide public comment using these communication vehicles:

- News release sent to area media
- Meeting notifications emailed to approximately 1,600 stakeholders statewide; each district forwarded the meeting notification to their own email distribution lists as well
- A notice and meeting materials posted on [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org) and multiple MoDOT and local Facebook and Twitter sites

### 4.3 Meeting Displays

The open house portion of the public meeting included these information stations:

**Figure 3: Series Two Public Meeting Displays**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Welcome</b>  |
| <u>Station #1</u><br>Background and Overview<br>Purpose and Vision  |
| <u>Station #2</u><br>Current Missouri Rail Network<br>Current MoDOT Rail Programs   |
| <u>Station #3</u><br>Draft Missouri State Rail Plan Recommendations<br>Strategy Recommendations<br>Policy Recommendations |
| <u>Station #4</u><br>Your Comments<br>What You Can Do   |

### 4.4 Meeting Handouts

Materials available to participants of the public meetings included:

- Meeting overview and comment form
- Draft Executive Summary

### 4.5 Public Input Highlights and Key Themes

Generally, Missourians expressed favorable opinions of the draft State Rail Plan at the second series of statewide public meetings. The following common themes emerged from comments received online or at the meetings held in April:

#### 4.5.1 *Passenger Rail Service*

Those attending the meetings said they like what they see with the state's investment, so far, in both improved passenger rail service between Kansas City and St. Louis, as well as the infrastructure improvements which make the Missouri River Runner service both possible and popular. The common themes being heard from the public now reflect a desire to expand and upgrade the Missouri River Runner service, but also indicate a desire for passenger rail in other

rail corridors around the state and even beyond Missouri's borders where it makes sense to connect with other major destination points. There is also support for higher speed passenger trains in dedicated corridors.

Specifically, Missouri River Runner passenger service should be expanded and improved with more train frequencies or express service, new passenger rail cars and continued upgrades to track and signals. These new themes emerged from those advocating for more and better passenger service:

- Look beyond Missouri's borders for natural passenger rail connections which could be done in cooperation with neighboring states.
- Work with Amtrak to add station stops on existing long-distance routes serving Missouri, such as the Texas Eagle and Southwest Chief.
- Bring start-up passenger rail service to other corridors such as St. Louis to Springfield, Kansas City to St. Joseph and St. Louis to Hannibal. Service to Branson continues to be mentioned.

#### **4.5.2 Freight Rail**

Those who provided input see great value in working with the freight railroads to add capacity and improve the flow of freight as both a way to promote economic development and shift some of the freight traffic load off of Missouri's interstates and state highways. The idea of a state-supported freight rail grant program was also raised as a way of improving rail connections for business and industry.

Participants noted support for rail service in Missouri should strike a balance between freight and passenger needs.

#### **4.5.3 Funding**

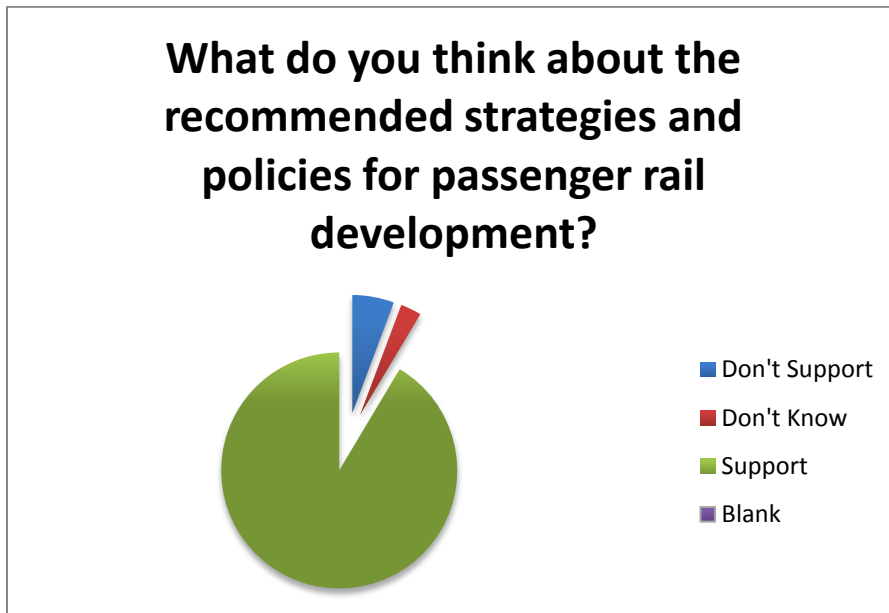
Participants cited the need for some kind of ongoing state rail grant program aimed at short line railroads and as a means of supporting rail-connected business. Missouri should more aggressively pursue federal rail funding and also identify other future funding sources which can be tied to rail improvements.

#### **4.6 Written Comments**

In addition to comments made at public meetings, 36 written comments were submitted at the meetings and 30 comments were submitted online at morail.org or via email to the project team.

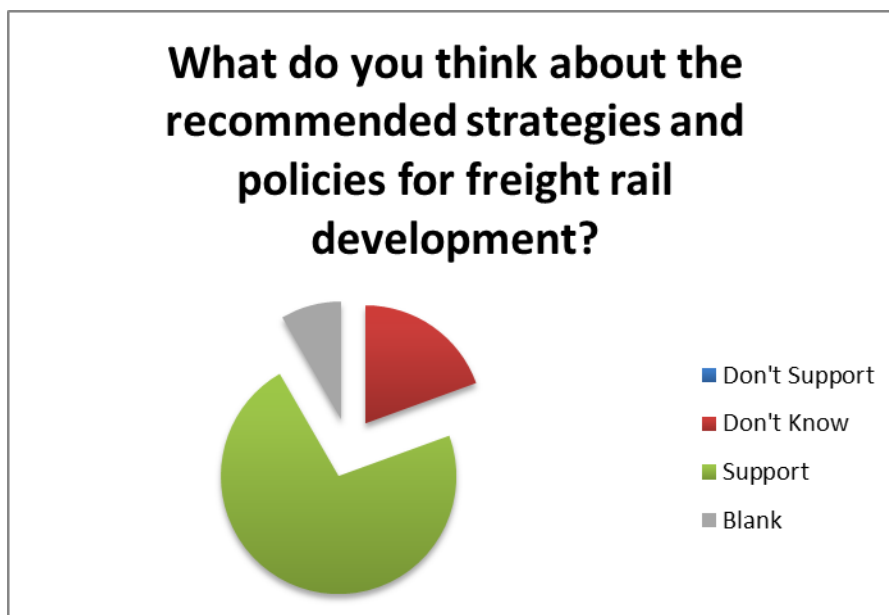
When asked what they thought about the recommended strategies for passenger rail development, 32 of the respondents' comment forms indicated they supported the recommendations, two said they didn't support them and one said they didn't know.

**Figure 4: Passenger Rail Strategies and Policies**



When asked what they thought about the recommended strategies for freight rail, 26 said they supported it, seven didn't know and three didn't respond.

**Figure 5: Freight Rail Strategies and Policies**



Open ended written comments included:

- Support for a local rail freight assistance grant program for short line railroads



- Need for conventional speed rail passenger service to southwest Missouri – Springfield and Branson (more than 10 comments were received advocating service to Springfield and other points in southwest Missouri)
- Clean the windows on the Amtrak trains
- Consider service in Southern Missouri – Poplar Bluff to Springfield and Springfield to Kansas City
- The Missouri River Runner corridor should be double-tracked for its entire length
- Increase frequencies between St. Louis and Kansas City to six per day. This frequency would allow certain trains to skip certain stops to reduce the travel time
- Consider adding another stop on the Southwest Chief at Liberty
- Stop focusing on making I-70 bigger or wider and focus on transferring passenger and freight traffic to our rail system
- Need more emphasis on intermodal (e.g. truck to rail) connectivity
- Be more clear on marketing, funding and implementation strategies

## 5. Surveys

### 5.1 Informed Stakeholder Survey

A targeted, online 10-minute survey was developed to solicit feedback from informed stakeholders including representatives from transit systems, metropolitan planning agencies, regulatory agencies, community leaders with Amtrak service or who might someday get Amtrak, chambers of commerce, and community advocacy groups such as Citizens for Modern Transit and those representing the disability and environmental activists. The survey questions sought input on existing rail service in Missouri, concerns and opportunities with existing service, benefits of expanding freight and passenger rail, and opinions on how to prioritize rail investments in light of tight financial times.

The survey was sent to 264 stakeholders across the state during fall 2011. Eighty-two responded, including five partial and 77 complete responses, for a 31 percent response rate. Highlights of results include:

- Nearly 11 percent of stakeholders surveyed were not aware almost all intercity passenger rail systems in the United States are operated on private railroads.
- Ninety-six percent agreed transportation infrastructure in Missouri does not fully pay for itself, but is funded through a combination of taxes, user fees and public-private partnerships.
- Eighty-one percent supported investing public money in private railroads to ease truck traffic on highways.
- Eighty-one percent believed those communities with an Amtrak station receive economic benefits through tourism, improved local business opportunities and better access to Kansas City and St. Louis; seven percent believed access to passenger rail provides no economic benefit while 11 percent were unsure.
- Many respondents believed having more access to passenger rail in their communities would attract more visitors (82.5 percent), more retail around rail stations (61.3 percent), more office development (41.3 percent), and more residential development around the station (23.8 percent). Fewer than 9 percent indicated there would be no development around stations.
- Respondents indicated current passenger rail service is not frequent enough (55.4 percent), not fast enough (51.4 percent), unreliable (44.6 percent) and not accessible enough by other public modes of transportation (35.1 percent).

### 5.2 MoDOT Online Survey

At the outset of the development of the State Rail Plan, MoDOT posted a survey on its website, [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org). As of March 2012, it had attracted almost 3,000 online respondents. The survey shows Missourians not only have a deep appreciation for the value and service of railroads, but it suggests they also see value in investing federal and state funds to do more to carry people and freight.

- More than 76 percent said if there was a benefit to the state (reduced highway congestion or more reliable passenger service), state or federal funds should be used to fund freight rail expansion.

- More than 91 percent believed passenger rail service and routes should be expanded in Missouri, while 85 percent say they would consider commuting to work or school by rail if it were available.
- Specific to state-supported Missouri River Runner passenger rail service, survey responses indicated the majority of Missourians believe it is both a good value and generally view the service and on-time performance as good. Eighty eight percent said yes to this question: “The Missouri River Runner currently relies on annual funding from the state legislature. Do you support the continuation of this service?”
- A majority (57 percent) supported continued funding; even recognizing such funding is not secure and must be renewed annually by state legislators.
- As to sources of funding, sizeable numbers indicated they would favor using state gasoline tax revenue (48.2 percent) or state sales tax revenue (38.6 percent) to support passenger rail service. More than 32 percent favored a dedicated sales tax to support passenger rail.
- Nearly half (45.9 percent) of respondents indicated increased freight rail capacity should be a high priority.
- Almost 66 percent viewed shipping by rail as more economically justified and cost effective, while more than half (51.5 percent) view freight rail as more environmentally friendly.
- When those who use freight rail were asked what they view as the biggest issue, 43.1 percent named “congestion” as the primary concern. Less than 20 percent see passenger trains sharing track space with freight trains as an important issue.
- Asked to rank railroad facility or service improvements which would help generate more sales/business for companies or would encourage more businesses to use rail, 36.7 percent ranked creating more rail-to-truck transfer facilities as their primary desire and 31 percent suggest more city-owned spur tracks which could be used by multiple companies.

## **6. Project Website, Newsletters and Social Media**

### **6.1 Project Website**

Public meeting notifications, materials and study documents were posted on MoDOT's [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org) site, and also touted on MoDOT's various social media pages, including Missouri River Runner and district Facebook and Twitter sites.

### **6.2 Newsletters**

Three electronic newsletters were sent during the development of the Missouri State Rail Plan. These editions focused on the following:

- Edition one (October 2011): Notification of upcoming public meetings
- Edition two (February 2012): Recap of public meeting input
- Edition three (March 2012): Notification of upcoming public meetings and summary of draft recommendations

### **6.3 Social Media and Grassroots Outreach**

MoDOT's and the project team's extensive grassroots and social media networks provided low cost means to distribute information widely, which brought more awareness to the effort. For example, meeting notices and electronic newsletters were tweeted and posted on MoDOT's statewide Facebook page, reaching 11,970 friends, and the Missouri River Runner page, which has 3,144 friends. St. Louis-based Citizens for Modern Transit also posted and tweeted the information on its Facebook and Twitter sites, reaching at least another 433 friends.

### **6.4 Media Coverage**

Public meetings and the release of the Draft State Rail Plan were covered extensively by newspapers, radio stations and television in almost every district. This news coverage further expanded the public's awareness of the opportunity to attend a meeting, log online for more information and to weigh in with their comments.

**MISSOURI**

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*Appendix A*  
*Stakeholder and Public*  
*Involvement Plan*

September 2011

Prepared for:



Missouri Department  
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# Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan

## 1. Introduction

Missouri's State Rail Plan will be a cornerstone of the Department of Transportation's Multimodal Division, and therefore requires a proactive plan to engage the public and those who have a stake or interest in freight and passenger rail.

This stakeholder and public involvement plan (PIP) for the state rail plan will serve as a guide for achieving the plan goals. Specifically, this plan:

- Establishes the overall framework for the involvement of informed stakeholders and the public, including potentially affected state agencies, transportation experts and providers, jurisdictions, elected officials, economic development officials, community organizations, transportation and environmental advocacy groups and members of the general public with an interest in the outcomes and recommendations;
- Outlines the strategies and tactics to be used to achieve the goals; and
- Establishes a general calendar of events for informed stakeholder and public involvement activities.

This plan provides detailed involvement strategies for the Missouri State Rail Plan. As the effort progresses and further engages stakeholders, the need may arise for modifications to the PIP to address new or emerging public issues, concerns or interests. As a result, the plan will be reviewed and updated on an as-needed basis during the project's duration.

## 2. Project Description and Vision

The Missouri State Rail Plan will solidify a statewide rail vision, inform the state about rail infrastructure investments to support current and future needs and provide implementation strategies for the recommended improvements. At project kick off its vision was to **“provide safe, environmentally-friendly transportation options supporting efficient movement of freight and passengers, while strengthening communities and advancing global competitiveness through intermodal connectivity.”** The public involvement process will seek input on this vision, thus it may evolve as the project proceeds.

The plan will fulfill several different roles in Missouri transportation policy development. It will meet federal requirements and position Missouri to be eligible to receive intercity passenger rail funding. It will further identify the role freight and passenger rail can play in the continued economic development of the state, and prioritize investments which will enhance the movement of people and freight. Finally, the plan will provide the strategic framework for the near- and long-term development of rail service in Missouri to support long-term growth and prosperity.

### **3. Public Involvement Goals**

The public decision-making process requires agency leadership and a strategic, creative plan to engage stakeholders and the public in a meaningful and effective manner. A proactive, transparent public involvement process builds community consensus around recommendations which are well-considered and necessary to meet the stated goals. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of implementation and success.

The overriding goal of this public involvement plan is to gain broad understanding of and support for Missouri State Rail Plan recommendations.

More specific goals include helping stakeholders and the general public:

- Increase understanding of system-level goods movement and logistics issues.
- Be aware investments must be prioritized in light of constrained funding resources.
- Strengthen partnerships and coordination with sister transportation agencies, other government organizations, private industry and the public.
- Be responsive to public comments and concerns; provide feedback as appropriate.
- Develop a partnership with the media to ensure accurate reporting of information.
- Build public consensus on the plan, and create sustainable support for an understandable, feasible and transparent implementation plan.

### **4. Project Team**

The implementation of the Public Involvement Plan for the Missouri State Rail Plan is being guided by Engage Public Affairs, LLC; Avvantt Partners, LLC; the Missouri University of Science and Technology; and HNTB; in partnership with MoDOT Multimodal Division staff and District customer relations managers.

### **5. Key Audiences and Contact Database**

The success of the Missouri State Rail Plan depends on buy-in and support among MoDOT leadership, freight and passenger railroads, key stakeholders and the general public. Ample opportunity must be provided for meaningful input on these issues, and stakeholders must be aware that their issues have been heard and addressed. The general public must also have opportunities for involvement and must feel they have been informed, consulted and involved throughout the planning process.

A cross section of all freight stakeholders in the state and region will be engaged, including shippers, carriers, terminal operators, economic development agencies, seaport and airport authorities, state and local governments and other public agencies, receivers, distribution and warehousing representatives and commercial and industrial developers.

Additionally, this effort will involve the Missouri State Rail Plan Advisory Committee, the Missouri Rail Passenger Advisory Committee, regional and metropolitan planning organizations,



regulatory agencies, communities with Amtrak service or who might someday get Amtrak and intercity passenger rail, the relevant chambers and community advocacy groups, such as Citizens for Modern Transit and those representing the disability and environmental communities. These “thought leaders” are typically more committed to sharing information presented at meetings and can help build wide-spread ownership in the State Rail Plan’s recommendations.

When this effort commenced in June 2011, MoDOT had a stakeholder database with 1,214 contacts. The Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team will expand this database with stakeholders who attend public and community leader meetings, as well as with contact information for the stakeholders outlined above.

## 6. Strategies, Tools & Techniques

This PIP employs a wide range of methods and tools to ensure widespread awareness of and gain informed input on the Missouri State Rail Plan. The following table outlines the techniques and purpose of each:

| Engagement Method  | Purpose  |
|--|--|
| Public Involvement Plan  | Provide a road map outlining who will be engaged and how the team will solicit their informed input.   |
| Surveys of freight and passenger rail stakeholders   | Inform key stakeholders of the study and obtain their input on potential issues and investment priorities.   |
| Project web site   | Provide information on all aspects of the study, including notices of upcoming meetings and events, copies of reports and other project materials, and links to source information about rail in Missouri and the state rail planning process. |
| Business/community leader workshops  | Meet with, inform and obtain input from business and community leaders located near existing or potential Amtrak/intercity rail stations. These afternoon meetings will be held in each of MoDOT’s seven districts.                            |
| Two series of public meetings, including online versions   | Inform the public of the study and obtain their input on the vision, goals, preliminary findings and draft recommendations. Meetings will be held in each of MoDOT’s seven districts.  |
| Other stakeholder meetings   | Take advantage of existing stakeholder meetings, like the Missouri Passenger Rail Advisory Committee, to provide study updates and solicit informed input.   |
| Communication materials (project identity, media kit, briefing materials and electronic newsletters) | Provide easy to understand materials to inform the media and public of the study’s goals, process and findings, and alert them to multiple opportunities to provide input.   |
| Use grassroots networks to broaden awareness of the State Rail Plan and opportunities for input      | Provide low cost means (email, Facebook, Twitter) to distribute information widely, maximize exposure and build further awareness of the effort.   |

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

MoDOT will serve as the spokesperson for all media inquiries. The Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team will provide draft news releases for MoDOT's review and distribution prior to the public meetings.

MoDOT will lead and staff the community and public meetings, and handle local advertising for the public meetings should it be required. The Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team will plan the meetings, assist each MoDOT District with coordinating the meetings in partnership with local chambers and regional planning commissions; draft the invitations and news releases for MoDOT to distribute, develop meeting materials and exhibits – including an online version of the public meeting -- and notify the public via emails to the list of contacts, drafting information for MoDOT to post on its website and social media, and using its existing grassroots networks. One person from the consultant team will also participate in each public/community leader meeting, to respond to questions and assist as needed.

MoDOT will print project handouts, marketing materials and final documents using its internal printing capabilities. MoDOT will develop and maintain the project website utilizing source copy and materials provided by the Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team. The Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team will produce exhibits and PowerPoint presentations for public and community leader meetings, and provide PDFs of project-specific information and study documents for use at meetings and posting on the MoDOT website, as appropriate. The team will also draft materials for a media kit for MoDOT to distribute during project milestones, such as during public meetings and when study findings and recommendations are announced.

The Missouri State Rail Plan Public Information Team will draft five electronic updates and send them to stakeholders in the growing contact database, to social media sites, grassroots networks. MoDOT will post these E-News editions on the MoDOT website. The team will also prepare briefing materials at periodic intervals during the study which can be used to brief the Highways and Transportation Commission, the legislature and the governor on the progress of the plan. The Team will also provide a final PowerPoint briefing describing the methodology, findings conclusions and preliminary recommendations.

## **8. Documentation**

Comments and input from stakeholders and the public will be documented in a Public and Stakeholder Involvement Summary Report.

# 9. Public Involvement Schedule

■ Duration of Task  
■ Deliverable

| Stakeholder Involvement Tasks                       | 2011 |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       | 2012  |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|------|------|-------|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|--|--|--|--|
|   | Sept |      |      | Oct  |      |       | Nov   |       |       | Dec  |       |       | Jan   |      |       | Feb   |       |     | March |      |      | April |     |      | May  |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
|   | 9/5  | 9/12 | 9/19 | 9/26 | 10/3 | 10/10 | 10/17 | 10/24 | 10/31 | 11/7 | 11/14 | 11/21 | 11/28 | 12/5 | 12/12 | 12/19 | 12/26 | 1/2 | 1/9   | 1/16 | 1/23 | 1/30  | 2/6 | 2/13 | 2/20 | 2/27 | 3/5 | 3/12 | 3/19 | 3/26 | 4/2 | 4/9 | 4/16 | 4/23 | 4/30 | 5/7 | 5/14 | 5/21 | 5/28 |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Passenger Rail - Informed Stakeholder Survey</b> |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Email survey to informed stakeholders               |      | ✓    |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Summarize results                                   |      |      |      |      | ✓    |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Public/Community Leader Meetings - Series #1</b> |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Invitations/notification out                        |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Meetings  |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Summarize results                                   |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Public/Community Leader Meetings - Series #2</b> |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Invitations/notification out                        |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Meetings  |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| Summarize results                                   |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Other Stakeholder Briefings As Needed</b>        |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |
| <b>E-News Updates, Web/Facebook Posts</b>           |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |     |       |      |      |       |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |     |     |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |  |  |  |  |

**MISSOURI**

state rail plan



*Appendix B*

*Public Meeting Series One  
Summary Report*

*Conducted  
October – November, 2011*

**December 2011**

Prepared for:



Missouri Department  
of Transportation

Prepared by:

**HNTB**  
HNTB Corporation

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# Series One

## Community Leader Workshops and Public Meetings

### 1. Introduction

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) sought public and community leader input on the future movement of goods and people in Missouri by rail at a series of public open house meetings and workshops across the state in October and November 2011.

The purpose of the meetings – both in person and online – was to gather public input on the development of MoDOT’s Statewide Rail Plan. The plan will serve as the strategic framework for the development of both freight and passenger rail service in Missouri for the next 20years, so it is vital MoDOT heard from Missourians to incorporate their needs into this process.

In addition to the seven open house meetings, MoDOT hosted an online public meeting from October 18 through November 18 at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org). This online meeting gave those unable to personally attend public open houses a chance to learn about freight and passenger rail in Missouri, ask questions and provide input. MoDOT also convened community leaders in each of the seven locations to seek their input as well.

As work on the plan began, the public and community leaders were asked to comment on the following:

- The current rail system’s ability to serve Missouri’s businesses in moving raw materials and finished products.
- The state’s interest in and potential ridership of intercity passenger rail.
- The role of publicly funded improvements to move people and goods on privately-owned railroad systems.
- The importance of investing in different types of rail projects compared to other infrastructure needs, given likely funding limitations.

The public was also encouraged to join the open house or online meeting to review project information, ask questions and discuss the plan with MoDOT representatives. At the open house meetings, a presentation was given, followed by a question and answer/comment session. All public meeting sites were wheel-chair accessible. The information presented at the open house meetings were included as part of the online public meeting.

The following provides an overview of the meetings, highlights the key themes that emerged from the public input, and then provides a detailed overview of the meeting format, materials, and comments heard and received at each individual meeting.

## 2. Workshop and Public Meeting Dates and Locations

Meetings were held in each of MoDOT's seven districts on the following dates and locations:

**Table B-1: Meeting Dates and Locations**

| Date             | Location                 | Workshop Attendance | Public Meeting Attendance |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| October 18, 2011 | Hannibal                 | 29                  | 4                         |
| October 25, 2011 | Jefferson City           | 20                  | 21                        |
| October 26, 2011 | Kirkwood                 | 15                  | 50                        |
| October 27, 2011 | Cape Girardeau           | 10                  | 6                         |
| November 1, 2011 | St. Joseph               | 12                  | 15                        |
| November 2, 2011 | Kansas City/Independence | 35                  | 31                        |
| November 3, 2011 | Springfield              | 13                  | 17                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                          | <b>134</b>          | <b>144</b>                |



### 3. Public Input Highlights and Key Themes

Attendees were aware of and favorable to the economic, environmental and quality of life impacts of both passenger and freight rail. Comments included:

- Rail reduces truck and automobile traffic on Interstates and local roadways.
- Rail is a more fuel-efficient mode of transportation.
- Rail reduces emissions to improve air quality.
- Freight rail is beneficial to state and local economies.
- Passenger rail provides a viable option to driving or flying for short to moderate trips.
- Passenger rail development is generally a worthy investment as long as it does not impede the movement of freight by rail.
- Investments in rail infrastructure will increase speed, reliability and ridership for passenger service in this corridor, and spur more efficient movement of freight.

#### 3.1 Passenger Rail Service

Awareness about passenger rail is markedly high and positive among those who attended, particularly in the communities/regions where service from Amtrak is available. Consequently, the bulk of the comments indicated a desire for:

- More frequent service (more trains) to more locations
- More convenient schedules, particularly for business travelers
- Improved on-time performance
- Faster speeds
- New equipment

Significant comments/themes regarding the Missouri River Runner service:

- Improved on-time performance is critical to growing and maintaining ridership.
- Increasing the number of trains to create more convenient arrival/departure times and promote more “same-day” travel and business use.
- Recognition of and desire for more state investment in passenger rail, even changing the state constitution to make long-term, dedicated funding possible.
- Alleviating the single-track bottleneck over the Osage River is seen as a high-priority need.
- Frequent complaints about dirty windows and old equipment on the River Runner trains
- Desire for connectivity to the State Fair at Sedalia.
- Service to the tourist attractions at Hermann, Missouri is seen as important and worthy of better service.
- Interest in studying the extension of service to other parts of the state, most notably Hannibal, Branson, Springfield, Columbia and St. Joseph, as well as commuter rail extensions in St. Louis and Kansas City
- Can Amtrak become a sustainable national system
- A realization that rail is subsidized much less than other modes of transportation such as highways and aviation.

### 3.2 Freight Rail Service

There is a broad awareness of the role of freight rail in Missouri. According to comments from the seven workshops and public meetings, Missourians:

- See freight rail as important to Missouri's economy
- Understand the environmental benefits of shipping by rail
- View the freight rail system as a key part of the state's overall transportation system and as a way to reduce congestion and move heavy loads off of the state's highway grid
- Know Kansas City and St. Louis are the second and third largest freight rail hubs in the nation
- Are aware Missouri has a rich railroading history
- Recognize that huge amounts of coal and intermodal freight move through the state
- A few stakeholders see further passenger rail development as a threat to the movement of freight

Significant comments/themes about freight rail:

- Any improvements to the state's rail infrastructure should benefit both freight and passenger rail and that one should not impede the other.
- Moving freight off of the I-70 corridor between Kansas City and St. Louis and onto rail is seen as a priority and a benefit in terms of reducing highway traffic, reducing damage to state and local roadways and reducing air pollution from emissions.
- The state should do more to seek out public-private partnerships which could result in moving more freight by rail and increasing economic development.
- More should be done to work with businesses which produce mined products and want to ship them more economically by rail.
- Promote and develop more intermodal opportunities to provide a seamless connection between rail, highways and ports along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.
- Look for ways to mitigate the impact of seasonal flooding on railroads as some corridors closely parallel the Missouri and/or Mississippi Rivers.
- MoDOT should continue to alleviate bottlenecks because of the impact they have in delaying freight shipments.
- Trucking interests see the State Rail Plan as a way of improving the transportation system as a whole.
- Examine ways to work more with short line railroad operators.
- Explore the possibility of reviving some abandoned or under-utilized rail lines as a means of fostering more economic development in the state's small cities and communities.
- Build better relationships between business/shippers and the railroads to both grow business and address concerns over shipping logistics.
- Kansas City area stakeholders would like to see more coordination with the railroads in developing more and better rail-served industrial development clusters.
- MoDOT needs to continue its focus on increasing rail safety for at-grade crossings and to address traffic congestion caused by trains moving through a city or community.

### **3.3 Observations: Funding Rail Improvements**

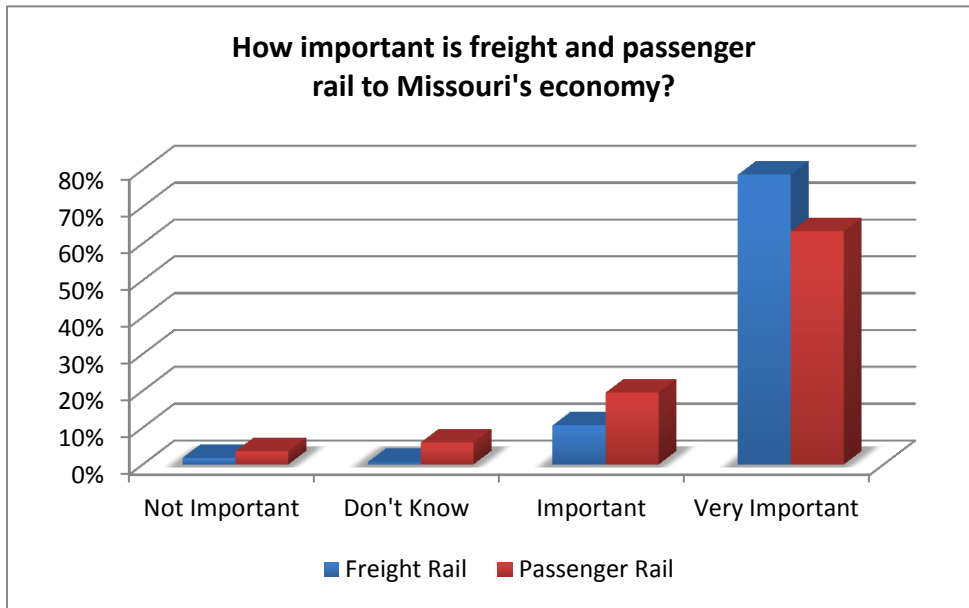
Regarding funding for rail improvements, community leaders and the public expressed:

- Support toward the state of Missouri's funding of the state-supported Missouri River Runner service between Kansas City and St. Louis.
- Currently, there is no long-term or dedicated funding source for rail.
- There is a need to make greater investment in Missouri's rail infrastructure and such investment is worthwhile.
- Rail investments should be directed at both freight and passenger rail
- Lack of knowledge about source of existing public funding for rail improvements.
- Lack of knowledge about the amounts railroads are investing in Missouri's rail system with their own dollars on both infrastructure improvements and maintenance along railroad right of way.
- Interest in what grant and loan programs other states administer to help fund rail projects/programs.
- A desire to include a comparison or per-mile costs of both highway and railroad improvements and maintenance costs.
- A desire to seek out more public-private partnerships as a way of combining dollars to get rail projects done.

## 4. Written Comments

In addition to comments made at the workshops and public meetings, 169 total written comments were submitted at the meetings (83 comments) and online (86 comments) at morail.org. Respondents were asked how important they thought freight and passenger rail were to the state's economy, with one indicating least important and four indicating most important. The chart below indicates most Missourians believe freight and passenger rail are important to Missouri's economy.

**Figure B-1: Importance of Rail to Missouri's Economy**



Responses to open-ended questions are highlighted above, and comments specific to each community are summarized in the individual meeting summaries provided below.

## 5. Meeting Format, Notification and Materials

Two sessions were held in each of seven Missouri communities. The Community Leader Workshop was held with invited guests to provide information on the plan directly to business leaders, elected officials, and local transportation and planning experts. A brief presentation was given to describe the purpose and approach of the Missouri State Rail Plan. A question and answer period followed, and participants were encouraged to submit their comments in writing.

The second session was designed for the general public and combined an open house and public meeting format, with a presentation and brief question and answer session. Attendees were registered and invited to review the exhibits and share their thoughts directly with the project team at each information station. All public meeting sites were wheel chair accessible.

### 5.1 Meeting Notification and Materials

The public was notified of the opportunity to attend the meetings and provide public comment using these communication vehicles:

- News release was sent to area media
- Invitations were mailed to community leaders.
- Meeting notifications were emailed to approximately 1,200 stakeholders statewide
- A notice and meeting materials were posted on [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org) and multiple MoDOT and local Facebook and Twitter sites.

### 5.2 Meeting Displays

The open house portion of the public meeting included these information stations:

**Figure B-2: Public Meeting Displays**

|   |
|---|
| <u>Welcome</u>  |
| Station #1<br>Purpose<br>Vision<br>Draft Goals<br>Deliverables  |
| <u>Station #2</u><br>Missouri's Existing Freight Operations<br>Missouri's Existing Passenger Operations |
| <u>Station #3</u><br>The Business Case for Rail<br>What We've Heard So Far                              |
| <u>Station #4</u><br>Next Steps<br>Comments   |

### **5.3 Meeting Handouts**

Materials available to participants of both the Community Leader Workshops and the Public Meetings included:

- Agenda
- Missouri Freight Map
- Missouri Passenger Map
- Missouri State Rail Plan Handout
- Meeting Overview and Comment Form

## **6. Individual Meeting Summaries**

### **6.1 Hannibal Workshop and Meeting Summary**

#### **6.1.1 Date and Time:**

October 18, 2011

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 29 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 4 attendees

#### **6.1.2 Location:**

Hannibal Nutrition Center  
219 South 10th Street  
Hannibal, Missouri 63401

#### **6.1.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Marisa Ellison – Northeast District Customer Relations Manager
- Tom Batenhorst - Northeast District Transportation Planning Manager
- Brian Haeffner - Northeast District Area Engineer

#### **6.1.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Kip Strauss, HNTB
- Kiran Rangarajan, Missouri S&T

#### **6.1.5 Questions, Comments and Answers**

During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

- Draft Goals
  - How is the state rail plan helping railroads make money?
  - How can Amtrak become self-sustainable?
  - How can revenues be increased for rail improvements?
  - What is expected from the communities, federal government, state government, and railroads to help grow the current rail system in Missouri?
  - Goals indicate “promote” and should be more proactive and indicate “develop”
- Passenger Rail
  - The study should understand who the demographics and travel characteristics of the riders for scheduling purposes
  - Scheduling Missouri River Runner for business use is important and should be a priority
  - Communities would like to know about the federal and state subsidies to Amtrak and freight railroad companies at the national and state level
  - A request was made to understand the survey data by geographic region
  - A request was made to understand the difference in costs for highway vs. rail investment

- Understand commodity flow data and the sensitivity of coal and how it might impact the flow in the future if use of coal for power generation is reduced

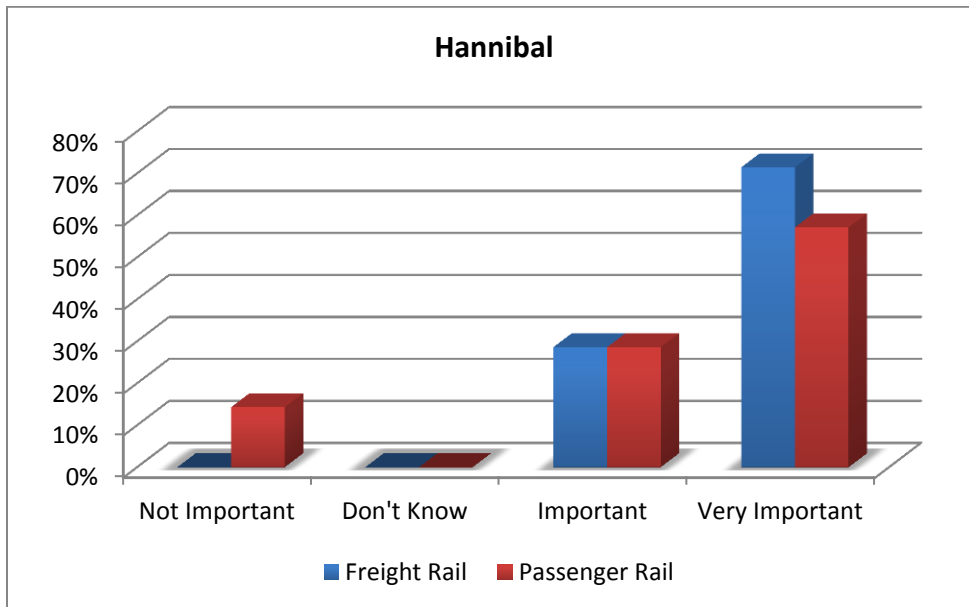
Questions MoDOT asked the audience:

- Q: Who knows how much freight moves in and out of the community?
  - There are two rail lines operated by two railroads (NS and BNSF)
  - In the 1960s, Hannibal had passenger rail
  - Today, approximately 26 trains come through Hannibal, carrying coal and mixed cargo
- Q: What is the contribution of tourism to the community?
  - Significant contribution to the community
  - Sales tax from tourism was around 10 percent in 2008 or 2009
- Q: What is the most critical, passenger or freight service to Hannibal?
  - Hannibal has good rail connections and has enough industries which could potentially transport goods via freight railroads.
  - BNSF is not ready to stop and help the local businesses as the value of business is not significant
- Q: What are the other concerns and comments do you have?
  - Should consider cost to user ratio or cost-benefit ratio
  - Would like to know the cost of developing a rail line from Quincy to Hannibal
  - Quincy to Hannibal cannot be justified without connection to St. Louis
  - People on that corridor need not go all the way to Chicago to reach St. Louis but can use Hannibal stop to reach St. Louis

There were eight written comment forms and online comments submitted from Hannibal. The comments reflected these same themes. Of those, two did not believe there would be much benefit for passenger rail in Hannibal. The remaining six comments saw significant benefits of passenger and freight rail increases in the area. Concerns about funding were raised.



**Figure B-3: Importance of Rail - Hannibal Meetings**



## 6.2 Jefferson City Workshop and Meeting Summary

### 6.2.1 *Date and Time:*

October 25, 2011

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 20 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 21 attendees

### 6.2.2 *Location:*

East Elementary School  
1229 East McCarty Street  
Jefferson City

### 6.2.3 *MoDOT Participants:*

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Dave Silvester, Travis Koestner and Steve Engelbrecht, Central District
- Kristin Gerber, Holly Dentner, Charlett Scott – Central District Customer Relations

### 6.2.4 *Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias – HNTB
- Tom Shrout – Avvantt Partners
- Debra Shrout – Avvantt Partners

### 6.2.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:

During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

#### *Workshop Comments:*

- Waynesville representative would like to see a connection from Branson/Springfield to St. Louis.
- Ed Siegmund asked the following: What's the capacity of the system? Would it be public/private partnership to improve rail for freight? Are freight rail companies receptive to this plan?
- Are freight rail lines receptive to government intervention?
- Would like to see improvements benefiting both freight and passenger service.
- Can you address bottlenecks which would help freight and passenger?
- How much of the plan is looking for ideas about funding?
- Boonville representative – They are in a unique position with rail because of the river, I-70 and the rail line which already passes through. They are interested in making all those working together. He asked if MoDOT is working marine highway plan as well and if there is an opportunity to make all plans work together. Many federal funded projects must take into account multimodal connections.
- Cole County – They hear a lot about rail but it's primarily a Jefferson City issue.
- Is freight rail important in Versailles? – Line is abandoned, would like to see it active.
- Representatives from Cole/Callaway – Their line is out of service -- would like to get back in service. It is a short line from Mexico to Fulton and if it were running it would benefit the local economy.
- Osage County – Is there wisdom in pouring money back into Amtrak?
  - Will it be self-supportive?
  - If the government did away with rail, would it be more efficient with buses?
  - If there is subsidy of divided ticket expense per rider, couldn't they have their own transport?
- Miller County – They have the lake area plus an agricultural area. Getting a vacant rail line operational would be beneficial.
- Do rail companies pay fuel tax? If the fuel tax doesn't support highway then is rail affected?
- School districts in California and the county will benefit from tax assessment of new rail siding.
- Are there any plans to expand rail at Fort Leonard Wood?
- Highway Patrol – If railways take big trucks off highways, it is a good thing. However, a train can become a weapon if you look at it through homeland security.
- Do we have an existing rail plan?
- Hermann – Rail passenger service is important to areas along the Missouri River. They have seen a big spike in ridership and it's benefited their community – they try to increase ridership as much as possible. The on-time performance is very

important to them. It has gotten better because Union Pacific isn't running as much. If service isn't reliable and on-time, ridership will drop.

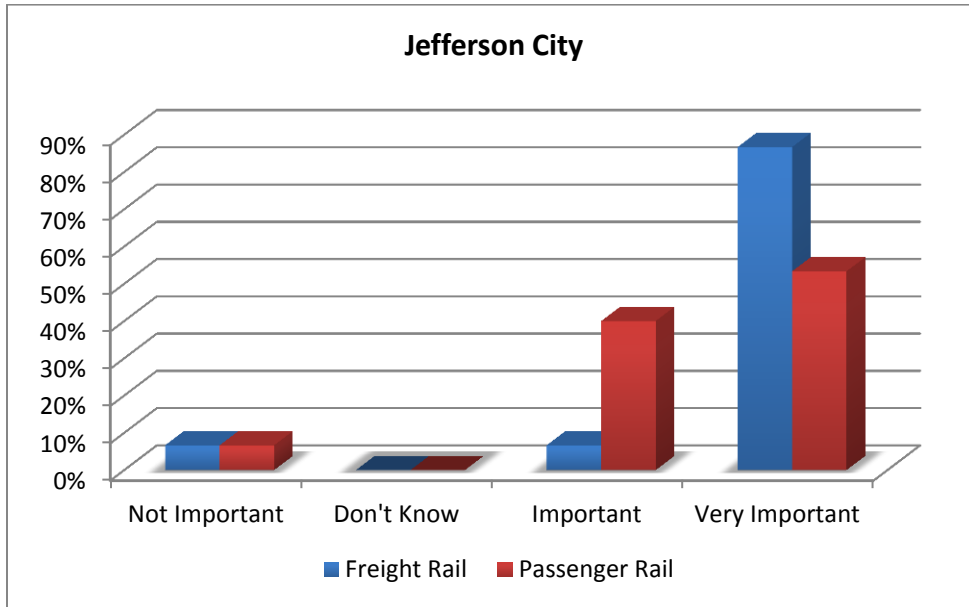
- Does Amtrak have influence on the Osage River Bridge project?
- Does MoDOT have dedicated percentage of funding for rail studies?
- Mr. Morrison (City of Jefferson) – City residents like Amtrak; freight very important to city; on-time performance is important.
- Can we talk with committees (such as RPC) to encourage communities to comment on this plan?
- Waynesville – high speed rail on East and West corridors.
- Versailles – Never expect Amtrak to pay for itself; it just doesn't pay for itself but neither do other transportation methods; all transportation is subsidized.
- Boonville – There are state rail plans out there for other states; they are very expansive – is MoDOT shooting for similar large investments in rail?

*Public Meeting Comments:*

- Are there any projections on probable cost of gas over the next few years?
- What is status of Congress approving money for state support?
- Has national use of trains gone up?
- Is there lack of interest in freight and passenger rail in the U.S.?
- Citizen talked to larger mining industry to see if there is any interest. They are missing an opportunity.
- Kansas City has the second largest railroad area in Missouri. Jefferson City should be the center of area to leverage rail.
- Citizens pay for interstate and airports but citizens unwilling to support rail.
- Greenhouse gas emissions – something is wrong with this. The reduction in the amount of greenhouse gases emitted should be consistent with the percentage increase in fuel efficiencies.
- What is status of Osage River Bridge? What is the schedule?
- Is there money for sidings in California?
- Can you connect downtown Kansas City to airport?
- Citizen is waiting for MoDOT to come through with money.
- What is MoDOT doing to increase funding to rail?
- Would you be able to sell constitutional changes which would allow us to use gas tax funds for rail improvements? Someone needs to start looking at this.

There were 15 comment forms and online comments attributable to Jefferson City. The comments reflected these same themes. Tourism was cited most often as a benefit of passenger rail. There were specific suggestions on how to improve service. Freight rail benefits included: increased employment opportunities, reducing truck traffic and pollution, more efficient than highways, increased competition among modes keeps shipping costs down. Comments raised concerns about funding and how to educate the public of the importance of rail investments.

**Figure B-4: Importance of Rail - Jefferson City Meetings**



### 6.3 Kirkwood Workshop and Meeting Summary

#### 6.3.1 *Date and Time:*

October 26, 2011

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 15 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 50 attendees

Kirkwood Amtrak Train Station

110 West Argonne Drive

#### 6.3.2 *Location:*

Workshop: American Legion Post 156  
314 S. Clay St.

Public Meeting: Kirkwood Amtrak Train Station  
110 West Argonne Drive

#### 6.3.3 *MoDOT Participants:*

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Tom Blair, Deanna Venker, Judy Wagner, Kristy Yates, Wesley Stephens, St. Louis District
- Marie Elliott – St. Louis District Customer Relations

#### 6.3.4 *Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias – HNTB

### **6.3.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

#### *Workshop Comments:*

- Improved on-time performance was critical to turning around passenger rail (experience). Do we know how much coal and how many freight trains are running through here at this time? I applaud you for looking at this from a 20-year plan perspective.
- On-time performance is definitely critical to increasing ridership. People will use the train if we keep up the on-time performance.
- We (Citizens for Modern Transit) are big supporters of increasing the number of trains between St. Louis and Kansas City and we have heard this from our members for years.
- MoDOT funding doesn't seem to allow much flexibility for rail.
- Jefferson County (port) is working to become to the hub but we also need to have the rail in place to serve the Midwest adequately.
- A feasibility study was done on rail needs from St. Louis to Springfield several years ago. What is the status?
- Passengers often ask about the possibility of line to Branson.
- Service to Columbia during business hours would also increase use. You cannot get from St. Louis to Columbia very easily right now.
- On-time performance lets us market Washington as a "day trip," because people know they can come and get back home in a timely manner.
- Comment from Rep. Rick Stream – I am chair of passenger rail committee. Private and public partnership is what makes these projects happen and have been one of the lynchpins of on-time performance. We can accomplish a lot with these.
- Metro adopted long range plans which consider commuter rail, i.e., St. Louis to Kirkwood or St. Louis to Alton. Any consideration for commuter rail in this study?
- One of the obstacles is the tracks owned by Union Pacific, which causes scheduling problems when discussing changes. Also BNSF tracks – if schedules could be adjusted it would be great to have a commuter line that could include Washington, Eureka, St. Louis, for instance.
- Commuter lines are not a new idea to Kirkwood.
- Slots for trains on lines are valuable and it's tough to negotiate.
- I don't think railroads have ruled out additional trains but UP routes are very busy.
- This is a great chance to move some of the freight to rail instead of I-70.
- We don't have the scientific data at this point but we are marketing those trips which will serve business travel.
- The train's connectivity to the Katy Trail and wineries is also a great attraction.

*Public Meeting Comments:*

- About 50 percent of passengers are leisure travelers and would rather have more frequency. More stops are needed like Ironton, Bismark, Peavely.
- When is there going to be a train to Branson?
- Is MoDOT considering collaborating with other states? Has the use of tractor trailers on rail been considered?
- This is the first conversation I've heard on rail. There needs to be rail to Branson, Oklahoma and the Ozarks. Tourism means so much to us. Missouri is considered an ideal place by the British and they're fascinated by Jessie James and Mark Twain but we're not taking advantage of these tourism opportunities with the existing rail.
- One of the biggest complaints is that passengers can't see out of the dirty windows. We will soon be known as the USS Rustoleum. Hopefully, we're going to do better.
- Rep. Rick Stream said Missouri currently subsidizes Amtrak with \$8 million per year.
- Connectivity to activities such as state fair in Sedalia is lacking.
- MoDOT officials may be missing the point. I am suspect of a survey that says no one wants to ride the train because of the 50 mph speed. It is doubtful that college students would bypass riding just because it's 50 mph.

There were 12 comment forms and online comments attributable to Kirkwood. The comments reflected these same themes. Comments raised concerns about funding and how to educate the public and Congress of the importance of rail investments. Freight rail would benefit the movement of coal and farm products, remove trucks from the highways and generate jobs. Passenger rail is safer, saves highway maintenance, and could attract more tourism.

**Figure B-5: Importance of Rail - Kirkwood Meetings**



## **6.4 Cape Girardeau Workshop and Meeting Summary**

### **6.4.1 Date and Time:**

October 27, 2011

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 10 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 6 attendees

### **6.4.2 Location:**

The Osage Centre

1625 North Kingshighway

Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

### **6.4.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Michele Teel, Director of Multimodal
- Kristi Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Nicole Thieret – Southeast District Customer Relations Manager
- Dale Kinneman – Southeast District Area Engineer

### **6.4.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias, HNTB

### **6.4.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

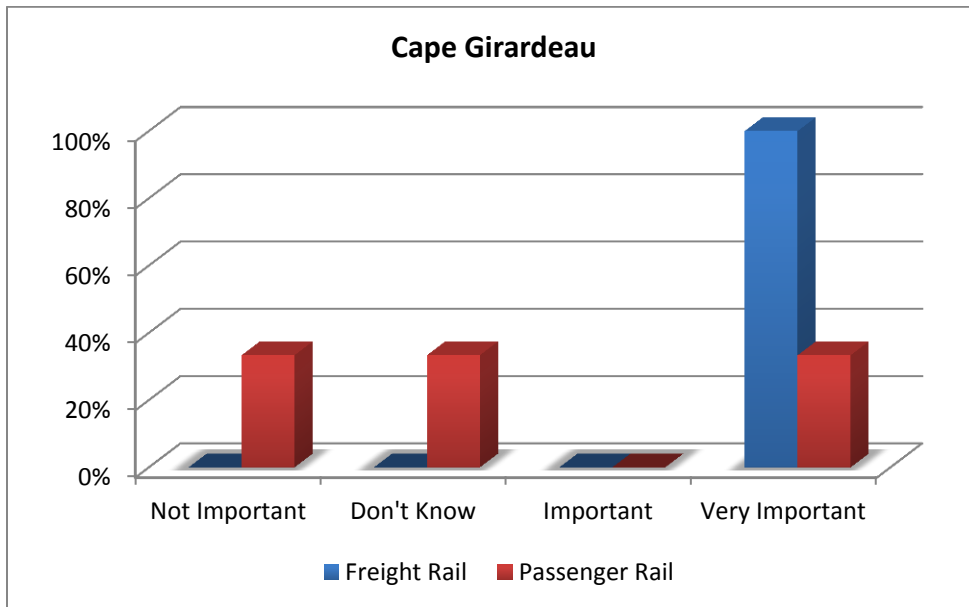
- Q: Does passenger rail operate on the same rail as freight?
  - A: Yes. Also, passenger rail takes precedent over freight to meet on time performance and other customer service goals.
- Q: What is the cost to build or upgrade rail?
  - A: It costs about \$1 million per mile for new rail to be constructed.
- Q: Where does funding come from?
  - A: A lot of the funding comes from the federal government. The privately-owned railroads are partners as well. The state doesn't have a lot of funds to contribute. All Missourians benefit because improved customer service, local stations and improved freight movement provide economic benefit to all, even if they never use the rail service.
- Q: What is the possibility of getting Amtrak service to Cape?
  - A: The toughest obstacle we have now is keeping the current Amtrak service running. At this time, we are seeking input throughout the state of Missouri to figure out what makes the best use of dollars for the citizens of Missouri. Right now, we are not looking at bringing Amtrak to Cape.
- Q: MoDOT provides \$8.5 million each year to support the Missouri River Runner service. How much subsidy is given toward each passenger?
  - A: About \$45 dollars per passenger.

- Q: Are we going to spend a ton of money to build and upgrade these railroads again, and in 50 years find railroads obsolete?
  - A: At this time, we are seeking input throughout the state of Missouri to figure out what makes the best use of dollars for the citizens of Missouri.
- Q: What are we doing about the river situation? We've seen flooding here and in Kansas City too, which impedes our ability to move our goods and get them shipped in a timely manner.
  - A: This is good information that we need to include in this report. Economic prosperity must be given attention and this is an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Q: One of the main issues is reliability. It appears that Missouri has an issue of the movement of goods in the South Central part of Missouri. Will the new plan have interconnectivity from freight to barge?
  - A: Absolutely. We will have a component in this plan for the movement of goods from rail to barge.
- Comment: Proctor and Gamble company representatives commented that they have trouble with freight loads getting lost in rail yards.
- Comment: Rail service is important as fuel prices rise.
- Comment: We need stronger bridges to carry higher weights.
- Comment: We would love to do more shipments by way of rail. But it is not as efficient to use rail as opposed to trucks.
- Comment: We would like to ship mined products by rail, but rail companies won't respond to requests for service. Being able to run a short line would be a solution.
- Q: When will the final plan be in place?
  - A: The draft plan will be published in the spring on [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org).

There were three comment forms and online comments attributable to Cape Girardeau. The comments reflected these same themes. A concern was cited about the cost benefit of passenger rail. One respondent said seniors and lower income residents would benefit with an alternative to the car. Another said passenger rail would be competitive to some short airline routes. Freight rail benefits cited included less wear and tear on highways, easing congestion on I-70, and more efficient freight movement within and out of state.



**Figure B-6: Importance of Rail - Cape Girardeau Meetings**



## **6.5 St. Joseph Workshop and Meeting Summary**

### **6.5.1 Date and Time:**

November 1, 2011

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 12 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 15 attendees

### **6.5.2 Location:**

MoDOT District Office Training Conference Center  
3602 North Belt Highway  
St. Joseph, MO 64506

### **6.5.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Tony McGaugy – Northwest Assistant District Engineer
- Melissa Black – Northwest District Customer Relations Manager
- Shannon Kusilek - Northwest District Transportation Planning Manager
- Mike Rinehart - Northwest District Area Engineer
- Tonya Lohman - Northeast District Area Engineer
- Adam Watson – District Utilities Engineer

### **6.5.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias – HNTB

- Tom Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC
- Debra Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC

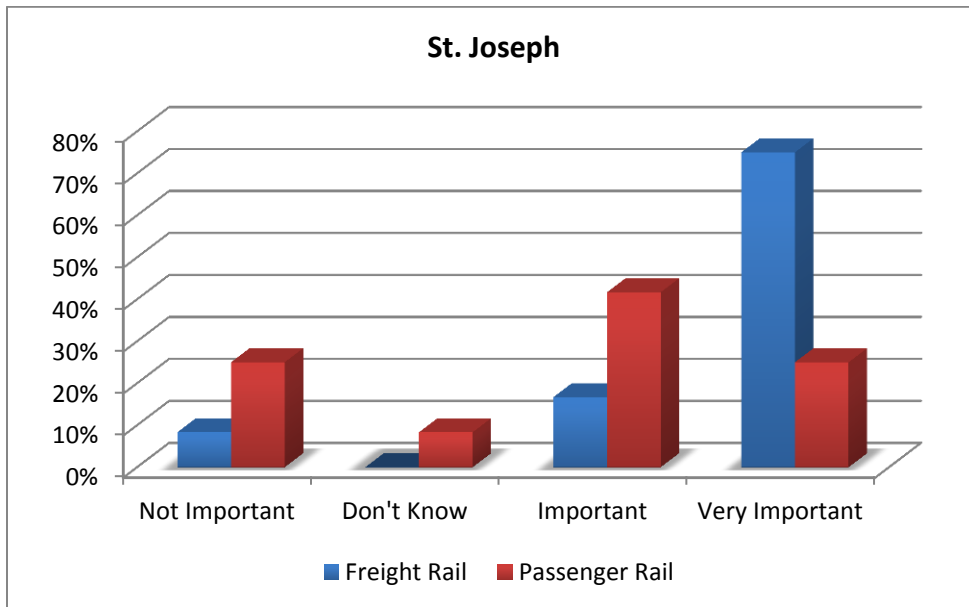
#### **6.5.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

During the presentation/Q&A, the following comments were made:

- Ways to improve current system
  - To increase speeds, need to improve tracks, crossings, etc.
  - Bi-level cars, buy American, new cars coming
  - Cross-docking opportunities for freight?
- Passenger Rail
  - What can we do to get passenger rail in St. Joe? (very popular)
  - Monorail system in St. Joseph?
  - Study group here with city council passing something to support passenger rail to St. Joe
- Funding
  - Where does funding come from? (MoDOT response: general revenue from state revenue)
  - A new station is \$800,000, we get \$25,000 per year
  - Return on investment for taxpayer?
- General Questions
  - How long is the virtual meeting open?
  - Is there a city or regional group associated with this rail plan?

There were 12 comment forms and online comments attributable to St. Joseph. The comments reflected these same themes. Comments said that freight rail is less expensive, eases truck congestion, provides small communities access to cheap and reliable transportation of goods and services, helps manufacturers deliver competitively to customers around the world. Comments regarding passenger rail included need for rapid repair of lines after floods, the need for higher speed rail, and the need for a connection between St. Joseph and Kansas City. One suggestion was to add commuter rail service into Kansas City, along with taxis and other transportation around train stations to help commuters reach their final destinations.

**Figure B-7: Importance of Rail - St. Joseph Meetings**



## **6.6 Kansas City/Independence Workshop and Meeting Summary**

### **6.6.1 Time and Date:**

November 2, 2011

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 35 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 31 attendees

### **6.6.2 Location:**

Workshop: Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Board Room at Union Station  
30 West Pershing  
Kansas City, MO

Public Meeting: Sermon Center North Meeting Room  
301 N. Dodgion Ave,  
Independence, MO

### **6.6.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Kristy Hill Wegner – Kansas City District Customer Relations

### **6.6.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias – HNTB
- Kip Strauss – HNTB
- Tom Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC
- Debra Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC

- Kiran Rangarajan – Missouri S&T

### **6.6.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

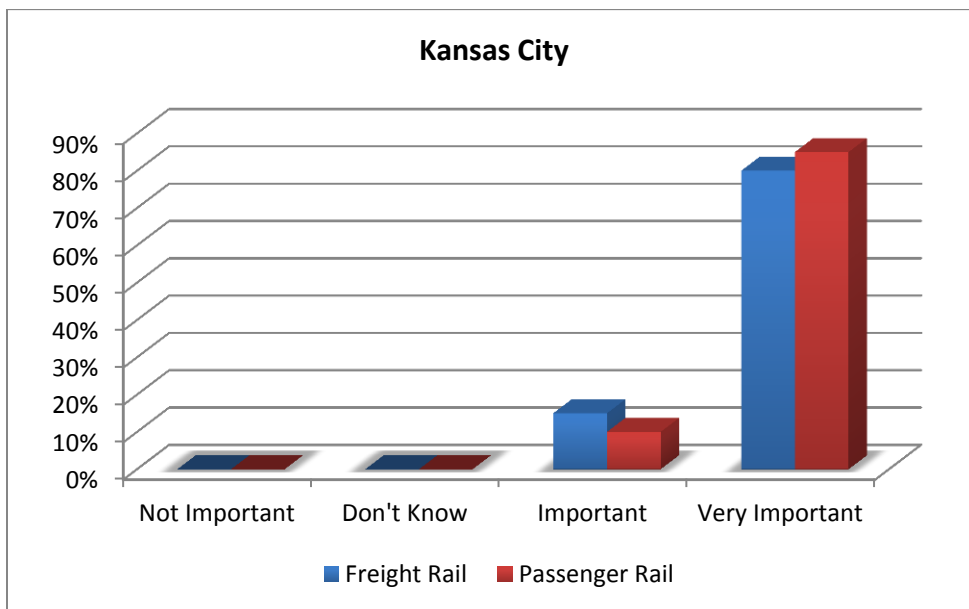
During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

- Ways to improve current system
  - Increased frequency is needed for service between Kansas City and St Louis
  - The only single track segment between STL and Jeff City across Osage river is the high priority project and funds have been identified to fix it
  - Osage crossing letting moved up to spring of 2012
  - Need for MoDOT to invest in other modes of freight movement along I-70 corridor
- Passenger Rail
  - Need for better passenger rail tracks
  - What about passenger rail service south out of KC towards Springfield and Branson?
  - Avg. speed from KC to STL is approximately 50 mph. Can increase average speed by eliminating places where the trains runs slow
  - Station delay is a key point to consider with respect to Missouri River Runner
  - Fast and reliable rail service can compete with airlines between KC and STL
  - Consider making fewer stops across the state as a way to speed up service
  - Need to have newer cars and added capacity by having more cars on each train
    - Missouri is part of coalition that includes other Midwest states and California that has received federal funding to purchase new locomotives and railcars. Missouri should see new bi-level coaches on the Missouri River Runner route in about two years.
- Funding
  - State looking for projects which benefit both passenger rail and freight railroad (Public Private Participation)
  - Some states have small loan programs to help build spurs for businesses
  - There is no long-term funding mechanism for rail. It's like living pay check to pay check
  - Need for a long-term state funding mechanism
- High Speed Rail
  - What does HSR mean in MO?
    - Currently the top speed is 79 mph. HSR indicates trains will go up to 90 mph but more importantly will improve reliability
- General Questions/Comments
  - KC is the largest railroad hub by tonnage
  - Need to talk to shippers in addition to railroads
  - State rail plan should include a marketing effort/ awareness
  - Consider separating freight lines and passenger line in some areas

- Some areas run freight at night and passenger rail during the day
- Consider efficiency of trains in the 4 states vs. I-70 Dedicated Truck Lanes
- Economic Development
  - Railroads are interested in building 300 acre industrial sites serving multiple industries rather than smaller 30 acre industrial sites
  - State rail plans should identify these large rail industrial sites
  - 95,000 trains passed KC last year
  - State rail plan should address tax credits to spur rail investment

There were 21 comment forms and online comments attributable to Kansas City. The comments reflected these same themes. Respondents indicated freight rail would remove trucks from the freeway, is more efficient, creates jobs, saves energy, and pollutes less. Cheaper movement of goods makes Missouri more competitive globally. Comments regarding passenger rail touched on the need to increase frequency and expand existing service, the less intrusive nature of rail investments vs. highway investments, attracting more tourism, revitalizing communities around train stations.

**Figure B-8: Importance of Rail - Kansas City Meetings**



## 6.7 Springfield Workshop and Meeting Summary

### 6.7.1 Date and Time:

November 3, 2011

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Community Leader Workshop: 13 attendees

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – Public Open House Meeting: 17 attendees

### **6.7.2 Location:**

Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
202 S. John Q. Hammons Parkway  
Springfield, MO

### **6.7.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Rudy Farber – Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission
- Becky Baltz – Southwest District Engineer
- Bob Edwards – Southwest District Customer Relations

### **6.7.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias – HNTB
- Angela Rolufs – Missouri S&T

### **6.7.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

#### *Workshop Comments:*

#### Passenger Rail:

- Time factor for passenger rail makes it unappealing for business travelers when compared to air travel. Example provided was Chicago to Dallas. Commenter agreed that shorter trips from downtown to downtown could be competitive with air travel.
- If there are limited rail lines, shouldn't the investment be in freight over passenger movement?
- What is the time to travel from Kansas City to St. Louis? Feasible to use rail to travel for an early meeting? Need for at least one more daily service between the two cities.
- Is the study team looking at other states for successful passenger rail programs, specifically Northeastern United States?
- What is population requirement to increase passenger rail service between St. Louis and Kansas City? Number of vehicles on I-70 would be reduced with more on-time passenger service between two cities – how to capture percentage of car traffic on I-70.
- Question about “Economic Benefits” slide – are these actual, measured benefits, or perceived benefits of survey responders (answer was perceived benefits of survey responders).

#### Freight Rail:

- Discussion about industry requirements for on-time delivery and how freight rail can respond to industry needs.
- Tons of coal are delivered to Missouri by rail – Missouri's highways would be destroyed if this was delivered via truck.
- Why is freight rail important to Springfield region?
- It is very important to look at energy. Look at transportation from global perspective. What is most efficient use of the resource? U.S. is huge. Passengers should not be competing for space needed to move coal. Spend state funds on moving more freight to rail and away from trucks. Don't invest in moving people by rail, if it competes with freight. Invest limited funds into freight over people.
- Businesses want access to rail, but don't know how to approach rail companies to find out how it would work

#### Safety:

- When train goes through city, traffic is negatively impacted. Spend money on improving this over high-speed rail
- At-grade rail crossing safety is a concern
- Traffic congestion caused by trains is a concern

#### General Comments:

- Truck transport of freight vs. rail transport: bonuses paid to drivers for exceeding weight limits - comment from attendee, former truck driver. Time pressure placed on truck-drivers encourages breaking of rules.
- Is there any intention to extend passenger service to Springfield?
- Previous study completed. Triangle: Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield. Need for passenger rail, but no funding available to expand. Seymour interest - former rail hub.
- Need passenger rail service to Branson. Highway improvements to this area in last 20 years are an example of growth driving infrastructure.

#### Comments from Representative Dennison:

- Tremendous improvement in how we move people and freight.
- Moving more freight than ever before, but with less employees - more automation.
- Trucking industry has also improved. Must continue a combined effort of truck, rail, and water.
- Motor Carriers Association member: Need to continue to look at ways to improve entire system. Trucking industry has grown even in down economy. Must look at transportation as a system.

#### *Public Meeting Comments:*

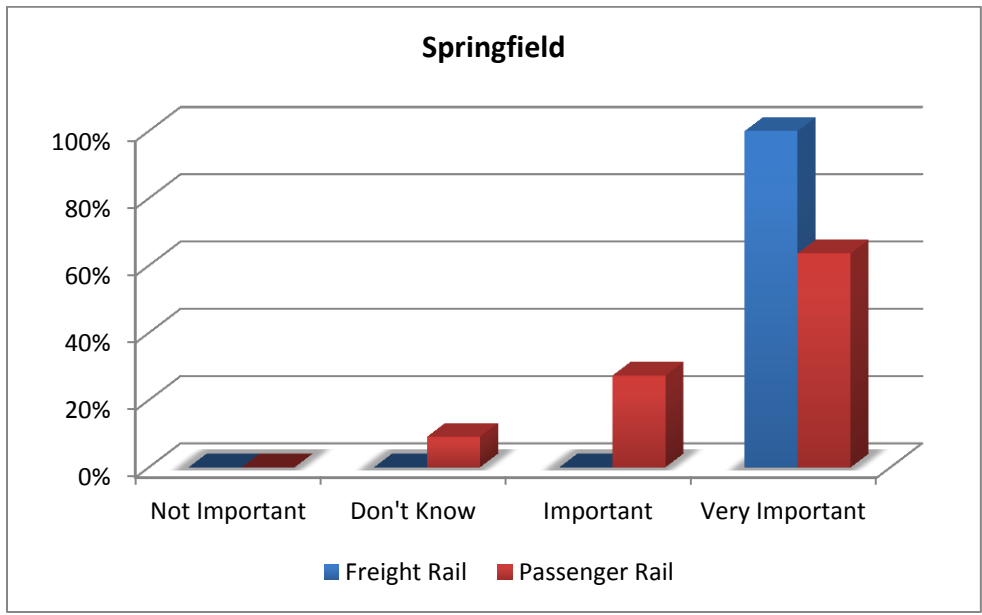
- A 2007 study indicated that it was too costly to bring passenger rail to Southwest Missouri. Attendee had seen a website for the national rail plan which indicated a goal of having 80 percent of population within an hour of high speed rail. Springfield is not within an hour of any passenger rail service.

- Will Springfield ever have passenger rail? MoDOT response: ridership potential must justify this investment.
- You should compare cost of expansion to cost of building additional highway lanes.
- Land grants for freight rail should be included in the analysis.
- Are current freight railroad companies open to idea of passenger rail?
- Look at public-private partnership for transportation to target movement of freight and passengers. Railroad negotiates from a position of quantity of freight moved.
- Is rail plan going to lean toward improving what we have, with no expansion?
- Is this plan important to people who make decisions, or is it just being done because funds are available from Federal Government?
- The 2007 Amtrak study is not valid anymore because of changes underway, including new high speed rail from St. Louis to Chicago.
- Add additional passenger trains to schedule; you will start competing with traveling by car.
- How long KC to STL? What is on-time performance rate? (MoDOT Response: five hours and 90 percent)
- If you could travel it in four hours with a 95 percent on time rate, ridership would increase dramatically.
- No passenger air service from Springfield to STL.
- Is Missouri trying to draw consortium together to gather facts? Get a consortium of short lines to work together to go after Federal funding for studies.
- Any discussions with lower states about passenger rail connections?

There were 11 comment forms and online comments attributable Springfield. The comments reflected these same themes. Respondents indicated freight rail is more cost efficient, reduces pollution, is critical to economic development and keeps overall cost of freight movement down. Concerns were cited whether an increase in freight rail would put truckers out of work, and whether freight rail increases would degrade passenger rail service. Comments regarding passenger rail included a suggestion to allow private cars to be transported on the passenger train so that passengers could use their own cars when they reach their destinations. There were also comments indicating concerns that passenger rail investments will be focused on the route between St. Louis and Kansas City, overlooking the needs in Springfield and elsewhere in the state.



**Figure B-9: Importance of Rail - Springfield Meetings**



**MISSOURI**

state rail plan



*Appendix C*

*Public Meeting Series Two  
Summary Report*

*Conducted  
April 2012*

**May 2012**

Prepared for:



Missouri Department  
of Transportation

Prepared by:

**HNTB**  
HNTB Corporation

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# Round Two Public Meetings

## 1. Introduction

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) sought public input on the draft State Rail Plan at a series of public open house meetings across the state held in April 2012

The purpose of the meetings – both in person and online – was to share with the public how their input helped shaped the proposed State Rail Plan, and to seek input on its draft recommendations.

In addition to the seven open house meetings, MoDOT hosted an online public meeting from April 9 through May 4 at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org). The online meeting gave those unable to personally attend public open houses a chance to learn about proposed freight and passenger rail and policy recommendations, to ask questions and provide input.

The public was also encouraged to join the open house or online meeting to review project information, ask questions and discuss the plan with MoDOT representatives. At the open house meetings, a presentation was given, followed by a question and answer/comment session. All public meeting sites were wheel-chair accessible. The information presented at the open house meetings was included as part of the online public meeting.

The following provides an overview of the meetings, highlights the key themes which emerged from the public input, and provides a detailed overview of the meeting format, materials, and comments heard and received at each individual meeting.

## 2. Public Meeting Dates and Locations

Meetings were held in each of MoDOT's seven districts on the following dates and locations:

**Table C-1: Meeting Dates and Locations**

| Date           | Location       | Public Meeting Attendance |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| April 10, 2012 | St. Joseph     | 12                        |
| April 11, 2012 | Kansas City    | 25                        |
| April 12, 2012 | Hannibal       | 27                        |
| April 17, 2012 | Springfield    | 11                        |
| April 18, 2012 | Jefferson City | 40                        |
| April 25, 2012 | Poplar Bluff   | 5                         |
| April 26, 2012 | Kirkwood       | 35                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |                | <b>155</b>                |

### **3. Public Input Highlights and Key Themes**

Generally, Missourians expressed favorable opinions of the draft State Rail Plan at the second series of statewide public meetings. The following common themes emerged from comments received online or at the meetings held in April:

#### **3.1 Passenger Rail**

Those attending the meetings said they like what they see with the state's investment, so far, in both improved passenger rail service between Kansas City and St. Louis, as well as the infrastructure improvements which make the Missouri River Runner service both possible and popular. The common themes being heard from the public now reflected a desire to expand and upgrade the Missouri River Runner service, but also a desire for passenger rail in other rail corridors around the state and even beyond Missouri's borders where it makes sense to connect with other major destination points. There was also support for higher speed passenger trains in dedicated corridors.

Specifically, Missouri River Runner passenger service should be expanded and improved with more train frequencies or express service, new passenger rail cars and continued upgrades to track and signals.

These new themes emerged from those advocating for more and better passenger service:

- Look beyond Missouri's borders for natural passenger rail connections which could be done in cooperation with neighboring states.
- Work with Amtrak to add station stops on existing long-distance routes which serve Missouri, such as the Texas Eagle and Southwest Chief.
- Bring start-up passenger rail service to other corridors such as St. Louis to Springfield, Kansas City to St. Joseph and St. Louis to Hannibal. Service to Branson continues to be mentioned.

#### **3.2 Freight Rail**

Those who provided input see great value in working with the freight railroads to add capacity and improve the flow of freight as both a way to promote economic development and shift some of the freight traffic load off of Missouri's interstates and state highways. The idea of a state-supported freight rail grant program was also raised as a way of improving rail connections for business and industry.

It was noted that support for rail service in Missouri should strike a balance between freight and passenger needs.

#### **3.3 Funding**

Participants saw the need for some kind of on-going state rail grant program aimed at short line railroads and as a means of supporting rail-connected business. It was also said Missouri should more aggressively pursue federal rail funding and also identify other future funding sources which can be tied to rail improvements.

#### **3.4 Meeting Specific Highlights:**

#### **3.4.1 St. Joseph, April 10, 2012**

- Consider Kansas City to St. Joseph passenger service as part of a longer KC to Omaha corridor. Also consider extending to Lincoln to serve University and provide connection with Amtrak's Zephyr
- Interest in adding stop on SW Chief in Missouri – possibly in Marceline
- Interest in adding a stop on the Texas Eagle – possibly in Ironton

#### **3.4.2 Kansas City, April 11, 2012**

- Clarify economic benefits section, particularly the comparison of benefits between scenarios
- Consider implementing express stops between Kansas City and St. Louis. The frequent stops slow down the service for through passengers and not many people get on and off in the small towns
- The plan should mention other modal alternatives, such as the five daily bus trips between St. Louis and Kansas City
- MoDOT should work with the rail caucus in the state legislature to implement passenger rail service improvements
- Need to develop a strong business plan for high speed rail that will attract private investment
- Need to implement technology to allow for better tracking of train locations

#### **3.4.3 Hannibal, April 12, 2012**

- Consider St. Louis to Hannibal service possible as part of a St. Louis to Twin Cities long distance route
- Show calculation of subsidy per passenger mile for passenger rail vs. automobile

#### **3.4.4 Springfield, April 17, 2012**

- Support for proposed new service to Springfield and on to Branson
- It is important to balance freight and passenger needs, but it is important not to delay passenger rail planning
- A state rail grant program would help rehabilitate rail lines to keep them open and help build rail spurs important to attracting business. (Cited some industries turning down Springfield area due to lack of rail spurs.)

#### **3.4.5 Jefferson City, April 18, 2012**

- Include more aggressive language towards economic development
- Include provisions to expand freight rail to the abandoned Rock Island railroad easement
- Broaden funding provisions to tie future dollars to future visions
- High speed rail should directly serve both Columbia and Jefferson City
- Freight capacity enhancements between St. Louis and Kansas City should include improvements on parallel freight rail routes



- Use stronger language on freight rail funding program – Missouri “should establish” rather than “could consider establishing” – a freight rail grant program.
- Emphasis of state rail plan should be evenly balanced between passenger and freight service. Plan is currently weighted heavily towards passenger service
- We need to have long term funding for passenger service so we can implement long term plans and invest in stations, infrastructure and equipment

#### **3.4.6 Poplar Bluff, April 25, 2012**

- Would like to see direct service from St. Louis including to New Orleans, New York City and Washington, DC
- Would like to see rail service to Branson
- Need to address noise levels caused by trains, particularly at night and with those trains operating at speeds of 79 mph and above

#### **3.4.7 Kirkwood, April 26, 2012**

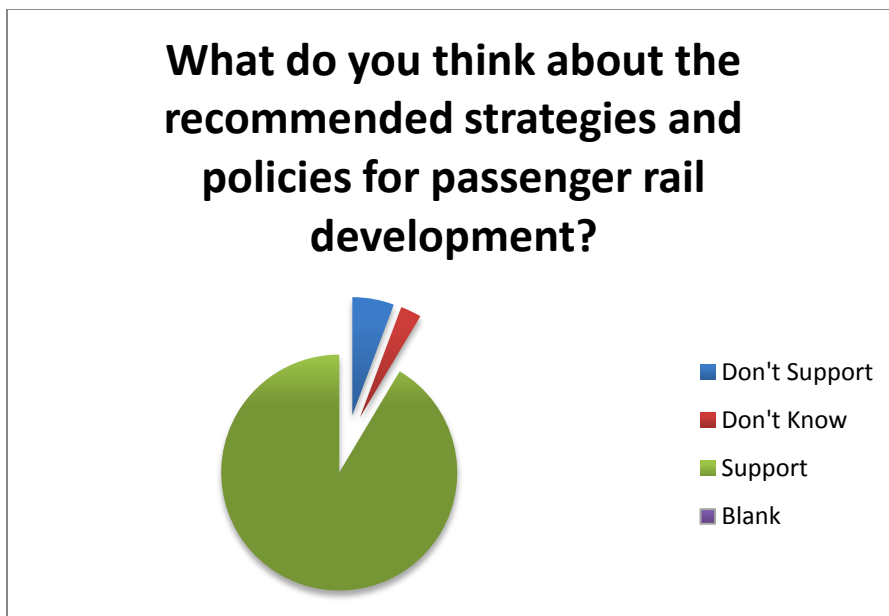
- Please review suggestions from Mr. Jerome Day in the Show Me Institute Study on Transportation Infrastructure:
  - Provide room in median of I-70 for future expansion of freight and high speed passenger rail
  - Use technology to improve the efficiency of rail freight movements
- Adding frequencies is more important than increasing speed
- Consider implementing a rail truck ferry system where trucks are driven onto rail cars and then transported across the state
- MoDOT should be pursuing more additional federal and state funding for rail – plan focuses on federal funds only

## 4. Written Comments

In addition to comments made at public meetings, 36 written comments were submitted at the meetings and 30 comments were submitted online at morail.org or via email to the project team.

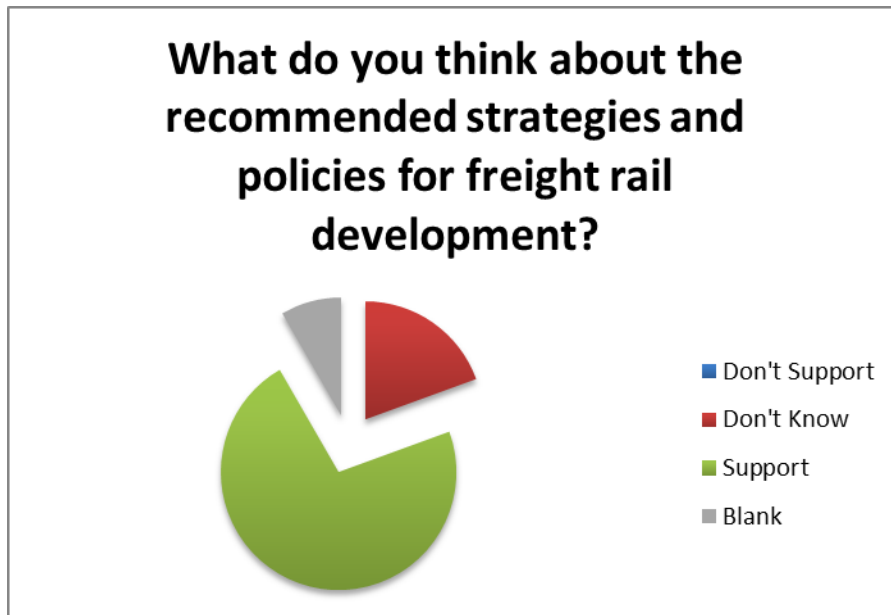
When asked what they thought about the recommended strategies for passenger rail development, 32 respondents indicated they supported the recommendations, two said they didn't support and one said they didn't know.

**Figure C-1: Passenger Rail Strategies and Policies**



When asked what they thought about the recommended strategies for freight rail, 26 said they supported it, seven didn't know and three didn't respond.

**Figure C-2: Freight Rail Strategies and Policies**



Open ended comments included:

- Support for a local rail freight assistance grant program for short line railroads
- Need for conventional speed rail service to Southwest Missouri – Springfield and Branson (more than 10 comments were received advocating service to Springfield and other points in SW Missouri)
- Need to clean the windows on the Amtrak trains
- Consider service in Southern Missouri – Poplar Bluff to Springfield and Springfield to Kansas City
- The Missouri River Runner corridor should be double-tracked for its entire length
- Increase frequencies between St. Louis and Kansas City to six per day. This frequency would allow certain trains to skip certain stops to reduce the travel time
- Consider adding another stop on the Southwest Chief at Liberty
- Stop focusing on making I-70 bigger or wider and focus on transferring passenger and freight traffic to our rail system
- Need more emphasis on intermodal (e.g. truck to rail) connectivity
- Be more clear on marketing, funding and implementation strategies

## 5. Meeting Format, Notification and Materials

Public open house/meetings were held in each of seven Missouri communities. The session was designed for the general public and combined an open house and public meeting format, with a presentation and brief question and answer session. Attendees were registered and invited to review the exhibits and share their thoughts directly with the project team. In some cases, the presenters and the audience maintained the conversation format for the duration of the meeting.

### 5.1 Pre-Meeting Publicity

The public was notified of the opportunity to attend the meetings and provide public comment using these communication vehicles:

- A news release was sent to area media by each district
- Postcard meeting notifications were emailed to approximately 1,600 stakeholders statewide
- PDFs of the postcard meeting notification were also distributed by each district
- A notice and meeting materials were posted on [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org) and multiple MoDOT and local Facebook sites, and tweeted on MoDOT's Twitter pages.

### 5.2 Meeting Displays

The open house portion of the public meeting included these exhibits:

**Figure C-3: Public Meeting Displays**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Welcome</b>  |
| <u>Station #1</u><br>Background and Overview<br>Purpose and Vision  |
| <u>Station #2</u><br>Current Missouri Rail Network<br>Current MoDOT Rail Programs   |
| <u>Station #3</u><br>Draft Missouri State Rail Plan Recommendations<br>Strategy Recommendations<br>Policy Recommendations |
| <u>Station #4</u><br>Your Comments<br>What You Can Do   |

### **5.3 Meeting Handouts**

Materials available to participants of the public meetings included:

- Meeting Overview and Comment Form
- Draft Executive Summary

## 6. Individual Meeting Summaries

### 6.1 St. Joseph Meeting Summary

#### 6.1.1 *Date and Time:*

April 10, 2012

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 12 attendees

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

#### 6.1.2 *Location:*

East Hills Library (Theater Room)

502 North Woodbine Street

St. Joseph, MO

#### 6.1.3 *MoDOT Participants:*

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Holly Hailey – Northeast District Customer Relations

#### 6.1.4 *Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias, HNTB

#### 6.1.5 *Questions, Comment and Answers:*

1. Will MoDOT own the new Osage River Bridge?

A: No. The Union Pacific Railroad will own the bridge. The new bridge is being built with 80 percent federal funds and 20 percent UP funds. The bridge will include reliability and on time performance of the existing Missouri River Runner passenger service because it eliminates the last single track section of the railroad between Jefferson City and St. Louis. The agreement for the bridge improvements guarantees passenger access to the corridor for 20 years.

2. Will you be buying new passenger rail cars?

A: Yes. Missouri is one of four states that received a grant to purchase new double-decker passenger rail cars. I'm serving on a railroad equipment specifications task force. The goal is to make standards more consistent between states. In the past, different purchases had completely different specifications. Now we are trying to standardize specs so one state could use rail cars from another state, for example. This also helps the manufacturers gain some production economies of scale. Having the State Rail Plan in place puts Missouri in line for these types of federal grants.

3. The proposed service from Kansas City to St. Joseph to Omaha should be extended to Lincoln, NE

A: This makes sense – an extension to Lincoln would allow the trains to serve the large University population and would also provide a connection to Amtrak's

Zephyr route. But in order for any of this service to be implemented, Missouri must work with its neighbors in Nebraska to develop a plan for implementing service. Nebraska has not historically been very active in pursuing new passenger rail service.

4. Are there any plans to add stops to the long distance trains which serve Missouri?

A: There has been interest in restoring the stop in Marceline on the Southwest Chief route, and a new stop has been suggested at Ironton on the Texas Eagle line. Amtrak is willing to consider these additional stations.

There are incentives in the grants but there aren't currently any specifically tied to jobs. The incentives are more related to ensuring on-time performance. Michelle Teel added that MoDOT receives about \$7.9 million in general funds from the State budget each year. State funds are used to leverage federal funds, since there is usually about a 20 percent state match required. Without the ability to leverage federal funds down the road, the state might have to return federal funds at some point.

5. Does the Rail Plan include a proposal to add service between St. Louis and Hannibal?

A: The Draft State Rail Plan includes a recommendation to extend the existing Illinois-sponsored service which currently runs between Chicago and Quincy but it does not include a recommendation to study service between Hannibal and St. Louis. Members of the audience suggested this route should extend north of Hannibal all the way to St. Paul/Minneapolis Minnesota. MoDOT will consider adding recommendation to the plan to study the feasibility in this corridor.

## **6.2 Kansas City Meeting Summary**

### **6.2.1 Date and Time:**

April 11, 2012

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 25 attendees

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

### **6.2.2 Location:**

Mid-America Regional Council (Board Room)

500 North Broadway, Suite 200

Kansas City, MO

### **6.2.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Dan Niec and Lee Ann Kell – Kansas City District
- Jennifer Benefield – Kansas City District Customer Relations

#### **6.2.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias, HNTB
- Tom Shrout, Avvantt Partners
- Debra Shrout, Avvantt Partners

#### **6.2.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

1. Any studies on number of passengers, traffic at these stations? Number one complaint – too many stops. Could you reduce them? Three stops in less than 30 miles. Consider implementing express stops between Kansas City and St. Louis. The frequent stops slow down the service for through passengers and not many people get on and off in the small towns.

A. People want more stops (not less); they want access

2. I'm not concerned about number of stops – there is a false impression that stop times are three to four minutes. But a 125 mph locomotive can quickly accelerate and get back up to speed. Rail cars used in Missouri are older; California cars are better.

A: New equipment in procurement now

3. Is there a rail caucus in the legislature? Kansas and Illinois have them. (There is also an anti-rail caucus.) You should work with the rail caucus in the state legislature to implement passenger rail service improvements

A. The rail caucus is led by Rep. Rick Stream out of Kirkwood

4. How much information is on the website?

A. All information is available online. Eventually we hope to provide real-time arrival information at stations.

5. Is there an option for putting passenger rail in the I-70 median?

A. Others have suggested using existing right of way for a passenger rail corridor down the middle of I-70. Medians are expensive to get to – you need bridges and platform access, so it's more likely a new high speed rail corridor would be in a new area. Our existing freight rail corridors get people across the state on the River Runner pretty competitively to the car now.

6. Chicago, to Kansas City to St. Louis – I took a recent trip. It was a good experience -- I arrived in Kansas City ten minutes early

A. Service will soon get even better. We are going to procure 133 bi-level passenger cars

7. With improvements – how many vehicles are expected to be pulled off the I-70 corridor because of rail investments?

A. Today there are 30,000 – 40,000 motor vehicles per day and 30,000 – 50,000 truck daily on I-70. Missouri River Runner carries about 500 passengers daily, and is about 60 percent occupied. Missouri plays a significant role in handling cross-country freight. Missouri has financed two major rail projects in the last ten years, which has helped improve service: Sheffield and Argentine projects. We are recommending Missouri invest in similar projects around the state. We need to



continue to make these investments so there are more reliable schedules for freight. Public/Private partnerships are needed to support rail investments, too.

8. Freight is important – but why do we need railroad inspectors? We have six Class 1 railroads.
  - A. Key to improving passenger rail is to ensure adequate freight rail capacity. Inspectors help ensure safety and efficiency.
9. How does the public audit you?
  - A. We try to put everything online so people who want information can find it.
10. Need more collaboration between states. Systems are different and there are inconsistencies
11. You need \$179 million to fund passenger rail improvements and operations. How was this number calculated? Also, how will this help UP with inflation? What provisions are in place to increase the frequency of service?
  - A. Funding for projects in the plan is estimated in 2012 dollars. To secure more funding we must first demonstrate the desire and the demand for rail, but we cannot do that until we increase frequency of service. It's a bit of a Catch-22.
12. What is the pipeline/timeline for improvements from Kansas City to St. Louis?
  - A. Projects in the pipeline include improvements at Webster Groves, Missouri; a third main track for terminal railroad in St. Louis; improving the west approach; and 13 upgrades west of Jefferson City. The speed limit is 79 west of Jefferson City.
13. What do the freight railroads need from you in exchange for more passenger service?
  - A. UP needs help increasing east-west freight capacity so they can shift some freight movement to other tracks. This frees up capacity for more passenger service.
14. What is the safety performance of highway rail crossings?
  - A. We've had 12 incidents at grade crossings which resulted in 13 fatalities, which is a small amount compared to traffic volume, but any fatalities are unacceptable. We are taking a systematic approach to improving those crossings, working with planning partners and others.
15. Concerned about the modal divide between freight and passenger rail.
  - A. We need to look at transportation as a total system. The State Rail Plan affects how we use roads and how we invest in our roads affects the State Rail Plan. A seamless system is important.
16. Plan should mention other modal alternatives – five daily bus trips between St. Louis and Kansas City

#### **6.2.6 From written comments:**

- Clarify economic benefits section, particularly the comparison of benefits between scenarios
- Need to develop a strong business plan for high speed rail which will attract private investment
- Need to implement technology to allow for better tracking of train location

## **6.3 Hannibal Meeting Summary**

### **6.3.1 Date and Time:**

April 12, 2012

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 27 attendees

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

### **6.3.2 Location:**

Hannibal Nutrition Center  
219 South 10th Street  
Hannibal, MO

### **6.3.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Marisa Ellison – Northeast District Customer Relations Manager

### **6.3.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Alan Tobias, HNTB

### **6.3.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

1. Comment: We want timelines within the 20 year plan.
2. What's the next step? A feasibility study?  
A: It depends on the availability of funding, but that is one option.
3. What about high-speed rail along highway corridors, like in the median? The state already owns it.  
A: We are looking at it but it is expensive because overpasses are already in place among many other factors
4. What do the railroads think?  
A: they are very interested, especially on the freight side; they want to focus on those projects which give them the most benefit.
5. Q: What about high-speed rail between St Louis and Chicago? When are they starting service?  
A: They already have service, improvements will just increase speed.
6. Q: When will the rail plan be completed?  
A: Mid-May, it's a snapshot in time and will continue to evolve. We will always welcome additional comments.

## **6.4 Springfield Meeting Summary**

### **6.4.1 Date and Time:**

April 17, 2012

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 11 attendees

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

### **6.4.2 Location:**

Springfield Chamber of Commerce

202 South John Q. Hammons Parkway

Springfield, MO

### **6.4.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Bob Edwards – Southeast District Customer Relations Manager

### **6.4.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Kip Strauss, HNTB

### **6.4.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

1. We need good feeder bus service which matches the enhanced rail trains.
2. We appreciate you working on rail/grade crossing improvements in Springfield.  
A: MoDOT is going to change the way they pick rail grade improvements - it will be bottom-up from the local communities.
3. A representative from the Taney County Advisory group expressed their support for this project and is excited for the plan. Branson, Hollister and Tri-Lakes is a growing area with 8 million tourists a year.
4. There are opportunities to extend passenger rail from St. Louis to Springfield and then on to Branson.
5. Some industries were turned away because rail spurs were not available.
6. As we look at the State Rail Plan we need to make sure we keep local rail lines open and operating because they are hard to reopen once they are closed.
7. Funding to rehabilitate tracks would be good. This is where a grant program would be helpful.
8. What are MoDOT's priorities for additional passenger services?  
A: There are key planning factors which determine where passenger service improvements will be made.

9. Would it help if MSU explored the St. Louis to Springfield line and Springfield to Branson passenger rail opportunities?  
A: It may be helpful. Similar to the University of Missouri-Columbia study has helped in planning and securing funding for improvements to the St. Louis to Kansas City Corridor.
10. State can be a great catalyst to FRA.  
A: Universities can help perform studies which show the need. 2007 Springfield to St. Louis study is outdated now and should be updated.

## **6.5 Jefferson City Summary**

### **6.5.1 *Date and Time:***

April 18, 2012  
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 40 attendees  
4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

### **6.5.2 *Location:***

MoDOT Central Office, Conference Room 100  
105 W. Capitol Ave.  
Jefferson City, MO

### **6.5.3 *MoDOT Participants:***

- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Steve Billings, Teresa Hall, Central Office – Multimodal Division
- Sally Oxenhandler and Janis Gieck – Central District Customer Relations

### **6.5.4 *Consultant Team Participants:***

- Kip Strauss, HNTB
- Tom Shrout, Avvantt Partners
- Debra Shrout, Avvantt Partners

### **6.5.5 *Media Attending:***

- St. Louis Public Radio
- KOMU
- KRCCG
- KBIA
- Missouri.net

### **6.5.6 *Questions, answers and comments:***

1. It's great to have a plan, but there is no money for the plan and no plan for money in the plan. MoDOT won't be able to get general revenue, so where is the plan for funding?

A: We have a long way to go. \$53 million in recent funding has put us in a good position. Has helped position Missouri for progress to increase capacity and reduce bottlenecks. We're seeing some progress and good results.

2. The plan offers no more latitude for stops. From Kansas City to Chicago, there is only one stop in LaPlata. Wouldn't it be more beneficial to have more stops along the route?

A: We will take a look at this suggestion to see if we can tweak the plan.

3. You should tap into lines which already exist and add stops, rather than add a line to St. Joseph, which would be costly. Hopefully adding stops wouldn't be too expensive.

A: It's not inexpensive to add stops. We recently added a stop in Wichita at a cost of \$1.5 million. But it's a positive approach. In order to get money, we have to have a plan. More stops are a key element to getting grants.

4. There was a comment regarding extending Amtrak to Hannibal.

A: Amtrak provides the trains; communities provide the stations. Hannibal proposed an area near existing tracks as a potential stop. Don't know all of the factors, such as what Quincy will support, etc. We can't get money to study these kinds of options without a plan.

5. I don't see a strategy for incremental steps in raising trains speeds. You can't go from two trains at 50 mph to six trains at 90 mph in one fell swoop.

A: MU study has allowed us to make some improvements. We have conducted preliminary engineering studies and review for six studies on the western side of state. We may have to add one additional frequency. We have to take a look at how do we serve business needs better? A frequency between St. Louis and Kansas City with only a stop in Jefferson City might be a way to better serve business customers.

6. You might also think of using a higher grade motor coach – for feeder connections.

A: That's the same concept as testing feeder routes.

7. The single largest determination in selecting Amtrak is not average speed – but does the train fit your scheduling needs. Frequency is as important as or more important than travel time. To add frequencies you have to add equipment and track and staff.

8. Service is what is important – not necessarily the mode of service. The plan has a rail bias – need to look at increasing intermodal connections.

9. We're hearing a lot about long distance travel. Have you given any thought to adding service in suburban areas?

A: We are definitely looking at commuter rail. We heard favorable comments about a Springfield to Branson commuter line. The plan is fluid. It can be changed and reviewed.

10. What is in the plan to address capacity – capacity affects both passenger rail and freight.

A: The State Rail Plan just identifies those corridors where capacity could be added. It sets the discussion, but a lot more study needs to be done.

11. There is some funding for dedicated high speed rail. We will reach a tipping point at some point. We have to look to the future and balance where the tipping point will be – is it better to add capacity or add dedicated high speed rail lines?

A: Some decisions depend on the policies of the host railroad. Some are not comfortable mixing freight and rail. Amtrak believes you can safely mix passenger rail and freight at 110 mph – but more resources are required for higher speeds.

12. Traveling from Kansas City to St. Louis takes five hours and 45 minutes. How much time would be saved if stops were eliminated?

A: Stops only take two to three minutes and the trains get up to speed quickly. Eliminating stops takes some time off the travel time, but it also takes away business from those stops. You lose people who may have ridden and wanted to get off at a certain stop. Fewer stops works mostly on high density lines.

13. What is status of federal funding?

A: The Senate has passed a transportation bill, but the House has not. A state rail plan is need so that when federal funding becomes available, we're ready to move ahead.

14. Missouri has focused on the Union Pacific corridor due to passenger rail. Missouri plays a key role in freight movement. Is it in Missouri's interest to retain capacity for freight? What is the strategy for improving freight capacity?

A: Increasing rail access at our ports, like connections to the newly widened Panama Canal, is critical. It's important to have rail access to move freight.

15. It's important to tell us what you want – you have to vote for people who support the service.

16. The first plan was all about high speed rail. The second version is better – but beats around the bush. Can we provide more specific strategies? The current plan leaves things open to interpretation and up to whoever is in administration at the moment. I'd like to see words be more aggressive and open, so developers know where they stand.

A: Thank you. We welcome your comments.

17. The plan provides advice to MoDOT to do more and better of what MoDOT is already doing, but I don't see vision or guidance as to policy and legislation on actions and strategies which could be taken to improve freight passenger service.

A: We hear you and will see if we can go in a different direction.

18. Need to have long-term plans and goals. How do we put funding in a station when you don't know if you have long-term funding? Until you have long-term funding, you can't make and set long-term goals.

A: Thank you, and good point.

19. Everyone is looking always to get dedicated funding. The challenge is how you plan without dedicated funding.

20. I feel like the plan is letting the consultant team off the hook.

A: What helps us is what you'd like to see and what you want in the plan. We need specifics – that's the purpose of the meetings.

21. The questions asked tonight arose from things we saw lacking in the report.

A: So much depends on funding. The plan can evolve as funding becomes available. The MU study is an example. It gave us a reason to make changes on the St. Louis to Kansas City rail line.

22. But it's the chicken and the egg situation. Not a lot will happen unless there is a compelling reason to provide funding. It's a conundrum. If we want this – what do we need to do to get it?

A: Don't need to do engineering studies, but would have to have a series of projects to propose for funding. It's taking the University of Missouri study to the next level.

23. Again, it's the chicken and egg scenario. You can't propose something without funding and you can't get funding without specifics.

24. There is also another line which goes through Eldon. Will it ever be open again?

A: Amount of investment would not be feasible to make it a viable rail line. There are also tunnels in Argyle and Freeburg which will not accommodate high cars.

25. Where do we find additional capacity? Coal trains don't care if they pass through Jefferson City or not. Passenger trains do. Add a second track along the UP route or find other routes so trains can move on other routes. I understand there are institutional barriers, such as railroads not working together, but I don't see anything in the plan which establishes alternate freight routes.

A: Alternative in the plan is when we get to the tipping point. Would Missouri want to invest in dedicated passenger rail lines?

26. I want to broaden consideration of passenger and freight movement coordination.

27. We have to look at what we're doing well. We're talking a lot of money. We have to be realistic when setting priorities and be strategic. The cost of high speed rail becomes a joke. The public doesn't see the need and will lose focus on what we do well.

28. Are there any studies on number of passengers, traffic at these stations? Number 1 complaint – too many stops. Could you reduce them? Three stops in less than 30

miles. Consider implementing express stops between Kansas City and St. Louis. The frequent stops slow down the service for through passengers and not many people get on and off in the small towns.

A: People want more stops (not less); they want access.



## **6.6 Poplar Bluff Meeting Summary**

### **6.6.1 Date and Time:**

April 25, 2012

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 5 attendees

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

### **6.6.2 Location:**

Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce

1111 West Pine St.

Poplar Bluff, MO

### **6.6.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Michelle Teel – Director, Multi-Modal Operations
- Marissa Van Robey, Southeast District, Community Relations

### **6.6.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Marie Keister, Engage Public Affairs/HNTB Team

### **6.6.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

1. Is there any potential funding from the federal government?
  - A. Yes. Some of the funds we are working with now have come from the Federal Railroad Administration. There are lots of variables on whether federal funding will continue, but there appears to be some momentum for funding passenger rail programs now.
2. Will you be buying new passenger rail cars?
  - A. Yes. Missouri is one of four states receiving a grant to purchase new double-decker passenger rail cars. I'm serving on a railroad equipment specifications task force. The goal is to make standards more consistent between states. In the past, different purchases had completely different specifications. Now we are trying to standardize specs so one state could use rail cars from another state, for example. This also helps the manufacturers gain some production economies of scale. Having the State Rail Plan in place puts Missouri in line for these types of federal grants.
3. Are there jobs tied to those federal grants?
  - A. There are incentives in the grants but there aren't currently any which are specifically tied to jobs. The incentives are more related to ensuring on-time performance. Michelle Teel said MoDOT receives about \$7.9 million in general funds from the State budget each year. These state funds are used to leverage federal funds, since there is usually about a 20 percent state match required.

Without the ability to leverage federal funds down the road, the state might have to return federal funds at some point.

4. I'm curious about dedicated right of way for high speed passenger rail lines. Is this feasible?
  - A. Buying separate right of way for new, high speed rail lines is a significant investment – MoDOT estimates at least \$400 million to purchase right of way alone. MoDOT's first priority is to shore up the Missouri River Runner and guarantee on-time performance for business travelers using the route. Missouri is spending about \$50 million to do this, with the assistance of federal grants. Since we started making these improvements to the River Runner's on-time performance during the last five years, ridership has increased significantly. When we move from 79 mph to 90 mph speeds and above, we anticipate ridership will really take off. Illinois is spending \$4 billion to upgrade the freight railroad tracks to increase the speed, convenience and reliability of passenger rail service. One of the State Rail Plan's recommendations is to look at the viability of a new high speed corridor between St. Louis and Kansas City. We would also like to add passenger rail service to other areas in the state. Population in the U.S. is going to grow by 100 million in the next few decades. We have to find ways to move people more efficiently.

#### **6.6.6 From Written Comments:**

- Would like to see direct service from St. Louis including to New Orleans, New York City and Washington, DC
- Would like to see rail service to Branson
- Need to address noise levels caused by trains, particularly at night and with those trains operating at speeds of 79 mph and above.

### **6.7 Kirkwood Meeting Summary**

#### **6.7.1 Date and Time:**

April 26, 2012  
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM – Public Meeting: 35 attendees  
4:45 PM – 5:30 PM – Presentation

#### **6.7.2 Location:**

Kirkwood Train Station  
110 West Argonne Dr.  
Kirkwood, MO

#### **6.7.3 MoDOT Participants:**

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager

- Michelle Teel – Director, Multimodal Operations
- Marie Elliott, St. Louis District Customer Relations
- Tom Blair St. Louis District

**6.7.4 Consultant Team Participants:**

- Marie Keister, Engage Public Affairs/HNTB Team
- Tom Shrout, Avvantt Partners/HNTB Team

**6.7.5 Questions, Comment and Answers:**

1. Illinois is about to erase us with their plans. We don't have 20 years to implement this plan – we need to get it done in the next five or six years.
  - A. Right now we are actually carrying more riders in Missouri than they are in Illinois. But I appreciate what you're saying – when Illinois has 110 mph Cadillac-type service, they will surpass us in ridership until we can provide similar service here. We need to keep our momentum here.
2. Is there a lobbyist for passenger rail issues in Jefferson City:
  - A. Citizens for Modern Transit has a lobbyist there.
3. What is the annual state subsidy for Missouri intercity passenger rail service today?
  - A. The state pays part of the passenger operations cost, a certain percentage is paid by the fare; Amtrak pays for the rest.
4. We'd rather have more frequency than higher velocity. Velocity is important too – but we want more frequency first.
  - A. Thank you. That's MoDOT's position, too. Let's make sure our business customers get to their destinations on time. I like to say you can get to Grandma's late, but you can't get to your meeting late. First we are focused on providing reliable, on time, more frequent service.
5. Southwest Airlines' frequent service is what wins the day for them. On another track, have you considered putting trucks on rail cars instead of building new truck only lanes on I-70?
  - A. Many of the trucks using I-70 today go to local destinations along the corridor, so it won't work to put those on a rail car. However, there are a lot of products that can move by train instead of truck, and that's why our freight rail recommendations are so important.
6. Re-building I-70 will take new revenues. We should all be telling MoDOT and our legislators that people would like to get people in trains and freight on trains, not highways.
  - A. Rail is definitely part of the equation. I-70 is 50-year old, outdated facility that needs to be rebuilt to meet today's safety and travel needs. But rail and other modes of travel also need to be considered. We will report your comment back to our leadership.

7. How does MoDOT distribute its funds to rails vs. roads?
  - A. Roads are funded with a gas tax. We are not allowed to use that money for non-highway needs. So each year we go to the General Assembly to ask for general revenue funds for rail and other non-highway modes. This makes the funding for rail much less predictable. While we've been successful at securing about \$8 million in state general revenue funds each of the last five years, costs have gone up, so we're getting less for that same amount of money. It is a constant challenge. That's why one of the State Rail Plan recommendations is to stabilize funding for rail. We need to make it more predictable.
8. You need a recommendation for pursue more funding overall – state as well as federal. Right now the recommendation focuses only on more federal funding.
9. In Illinois, the Chicago to St. Louis subsidy has gone down as service and ridership have increased. They have one of the best returns on their fare box. I'd like to see MoDOT spend more of its budget on an overall strategy of moving people and goods on multiple modes systematically, more strategically, and not be so focused on highways.
10. What do we do if Mitt Romney is elected? He's not a rail supporter.
  - A. I can't speculate on that. Missouri has a great story to tell about its rail program – it's been good for jobs, good for economic development, and ridership is really growing. We will share our facts, objectively. It's tough to argue with the great things happening here.
11. The problem in all state is that the freight railroads own the right of way.
  - A. Union Pacific, who owns the right of way and tracks used by the Missouri River Runner, has been a great partner. We talk every week to be sure the Missouri River Runner is running on time. It may be harder for other states that are starting new passenger service to work with their Class 1 railroads, but in our state we work very closely with our freight partners, and it's been very positive.
12. I used to ride the train from St. Louis to Missouri. It used to be late all the time when there was heavy maintenance of the track a few years ago. How much capacity is left on the tracks for passenger rail?
  - A. There are ways to get more capacity out of the existing freight rail right of way, including building new track. We are not experiencing any heavy delays due to maintenance right now.
13. The Amtrak president told me that once Amtrak quit hauling freight, the freight railroads got friendlier. As long as the freight railroads don't have to stop, passenger rail is acceptable to them.
14. We all need to bring up passenger rail to our representatives in Jefferson City. Their minds are not on it. The more we can do to educate them on rail issues like they have

done in Illinois, the better off we will be. MoDOT can't do this – only we can. We have to spend time in legislators' offices, explaining why this is important – and urgent.

15. We need rail service to Branson.
16. We need rail service to Springfield.
17. Regarding page 80 of your draft Plan, expand your thinking – note that one third of Americans prefer a walkable life style, and that real estate developers will profit and bring higher property values around stations. Use some of that income for the private match. Don't expect 80 percent of the funding to come from the federal government. That level of funding probably won't happen.
18. I would caution using Illinois and California as examples. MoDOT should make its case here by showing how you're spending money more wisely. Let the results stand on their own.
19. Connecting two metro areas to Chicago is a good rail corridor.
20. Chicago is cashing checks from our riders. We need a higher sense of urgency!
21. We need to have more legislators ride the train and see all the riders getting on here each day. Show legislators how Missouri's rural population is a significant portion of the ridership.
22. What kind of new rail cars are you considering here?
  - A. We are looking at new bi-level cars. We are also looking at diesel cars, or DMUs. The interior seats will face each other. Missouri is one of four states that received a grant to purchase new double-decker passenger rail cars. I'm serving on a railroad equipment specifications task force. The goal is to make standards more consistent between states. In the past, different purchases had completely different specifications. Now we are trying to standardize specs so that one state could use rail cars from another state, for example. This also helps the manufacturers gain some production economies of scale.
23. How fast will trains go here? What about true high speed rail of 220 mph?
  - A. We are looking at taking the River Runner up to 90 mph and eventually to 110 mph. Buying separate right of way for new, high speed rail lines is a significant investment – MoDOT estimates at least \$400 million to purchase right of way alone. So MoDOT's first priority is to shore up the Missouri River Runner and guarantee on-time performance for business travelers using that route. Missouri is spending about \$50 million to do this, with the assistance of federal grants. Since we started making these improvements to the River Runner's on-time performance during the last five years, ridership has increased significantly. When we move from 79 mph to 90 mph speeds and above, we anticipate ridership will really take off. Illinois is spending \$4 billion to upgrade the freight railroad tracks to increase the speed, convenience and reliability of passenger rail service. One of the State Rail Plan's recommendations is to look at the viability of a new high speed corridor

between St. Louis and Kansas City. We would also like to add passenger rail service to other areas in the state. Population in the U.S. is going to grow by 100 million in the next few decades. We have to find ways to move people more efficiently.

24. Other states have purchased short line railroads and routes. Will you do that here?

A. Missouri didn't buy up rail lines like other states did when the railroads were deregulated. We have a small program which finances some projects.

25. There is current animosity and negativity toward rail. How do you deal with this issue?

A. We just stick to the facts, telling our story objectively. We let people draw their own conclusions. That has worked well for us so far.

26. If you have such a great stories, legislators are likely to ask you why private companies don't do it.

27. You should consider passing a statewide tax for rail like we did for parks.

A. Missourians for Transportation Alliance is looking into some of these financing ideas. We don't have enough funds to take care of our bridges and highways, too – MoTA is looking at ways to increase funding for all modes and there is also a Blue Ribbon Transportation Task Force which is also looking the need for increased transportation funding.

28. Remember other destinations: Lake of the Ozarks and Branson.

29. What's next?

A. We will take public comments until May 4<sup>th</sup>, then we'll update the draft State Rail Plan and submit it to the Federal Railroad Administration at the end of May. But like any plan, the day after we finalize it the plan will change. This document will make it possible for us to pursue funding for future rail investments.

#### **6.7.6 From written comments:**

- Please review suggestions from Mr. Jerome Day in the Show Me Institute Study on Transportation Infrastructure:
  - Provide room in median of I-70 for future expansion of freight and high speed passenger rail
  - Use technology to improve the efficiency of rail freight movements
- Consider implementing a rail truck ferry system where trucks are driven onto rail cars and then transported across the state
- MoDOT should be pursuing more additional federal and state funding for rail – plan focuses on federal funds