

Missouri

Intercity Bus Assessment 2026

October 2026 MPTA Update



MPTA Meeting Objectives

- 1) ICB Study Tasks
- 2) Key Takeaways
- 3) Report Recommendations
- 4) Next Steps for MoDOT



ICB Team

November 2025 kickoff
August 2026 delivery

MoDOT

- **Christy Evers, Administrator of Transit**
- Bryan Heckman, Senior Multimodal Operations Specialist
- Breeze McCracken, Multimodal Operations Specialist

WSP

- Paul Nelson, Project Manager
- **Matthew Long, Deputy Project Manager**
- Derrice Ezzell, Transit Planner
- Christian Snelgrove, Transit Planner
- Charlie Stanfield, Transit Planner



Intercity Bus Needs Assessment Background

Why do a Needs Assessment?

- The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires MoDOT to do so as a condition of using intercity bus funding.
- More importantly, MoDOT receives considerable funding for intercity bus service and needs to understand the best way to use it.

What do we want to accomplish?

- To understand where in Missouri there are needs for intercity bus service and what the nature of those needs are
- To understand the best way Missouri can meet those needs



What is Intercity Bus?

Federal Definition:

Regularly scheduled bus service for the **general public** that operates with **stops in rural areas** over **fixed routes** connecting **two or more urbanized areas not in close proximity**, has the capacity for **transporting baggage** carried by passengers, and makes **meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points**, if such service is available.

Plain Speak Definition

Long, regularly-scheduled trips connecting multiple larger cities, often with stops in comparatively rural towns and areas, where the buses have space for your luggage



Intercity Bus Vs. Local Public Transit

Intercity Bus

- Longer, non-local trips
- Trips often cross state lines
- Larger vehicles with space for bags, typically buses



NOTE: These are typical characteristics of Intercity Bus and Local Public Transit service, which may vary in individual cases.

Local Public Transit

- Comparatively shorter and local trips
- Smaller vehicles, including smaller buses and vans



Questions We Want to Answer

- What areas of Missouri need intercity bus service that do not currently have it?
- Which intercity bus services need to be improved, and which specific aspects?
- For what reason(s) do people use or not use intercity bus service?
- How well do people feel they are being served by their rural public transit agencies?
- What needs or gaps exist regarding rural public transit agencies?
- How should the State manage its intercity bus program in the future?



ICB Assessment Components

- 1) Data Collection
- 2) Stakeholder Engagement
- 3) Information Analysis

Aging in Place Review Current State of Intercity Bus Gaps & Needs Assessment Intercity Bus Assessment Report

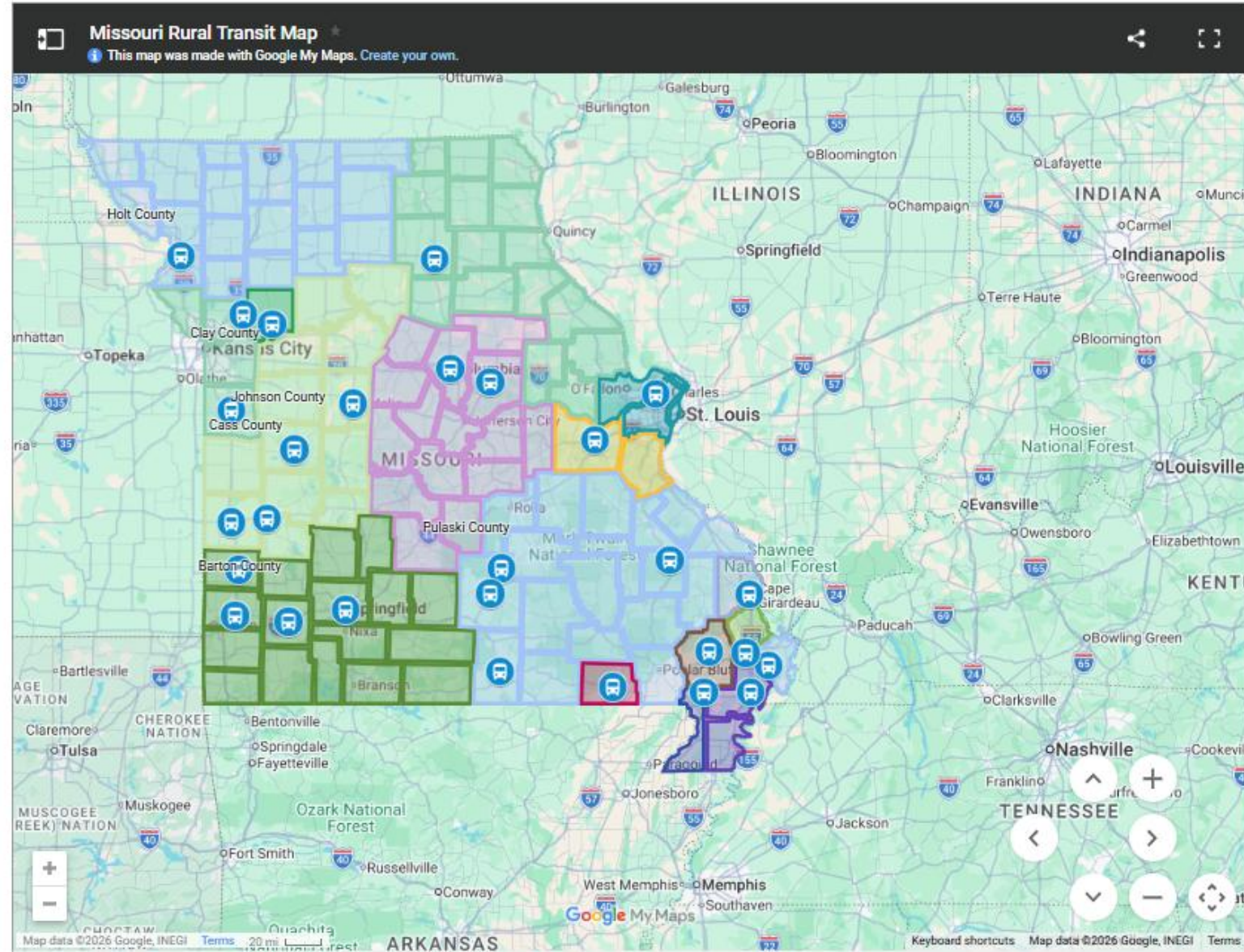


EXPLORE THIS TOPIC

[Transit General Information](#)[FY 27 Transit Overview](#)[Applications and Reporting](#)[Awards](#)[Partner Contact Map by Mode](#)[Public Notices](#)[Rural Transit Provider Map](#)[Transit Resources](#)[InTransit Newsletter and Updates](#)

Missouri Rural Transit Map

Click on the icons to display contact information for that Rural Transit provider.





Multimodal Partner Contact Map by Mode

Select Mode

Aviation

Rail

Transit

Waterways

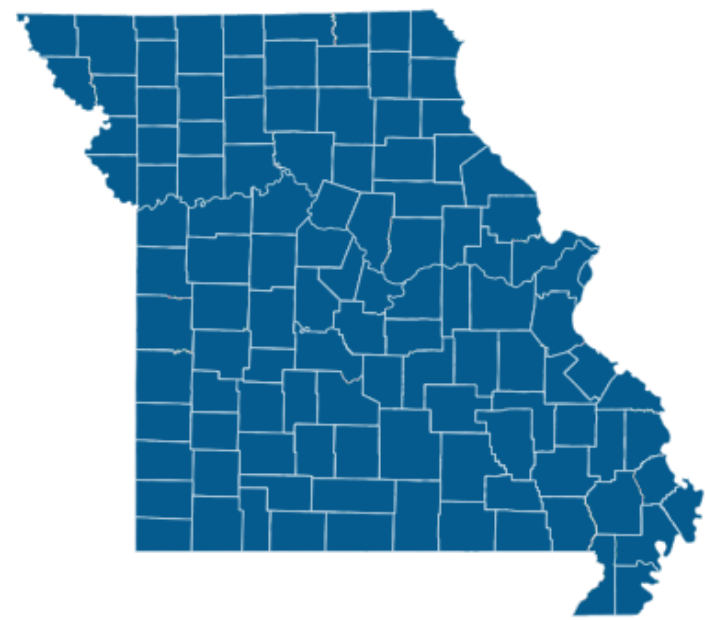
County Selected: Adair

Choose Your County:

All

Mode Reset

Select County To Reveal data:



Name	County	Modal Partner	RPC Name	Phone Number	Email	Address
Abby Kim	St. Louis City	INDEPENDENCE CENTER	East - West Gateway Council of Governments	314-880-5489	akim@independencecenter.org	4245 I St. Lo
Alexandra Cook	Jackson	HARRY S TRUMAN CHILDREN'S NEROLOGICAL CENTER	Mid-America Regional Council	816-373-5060	acook@tnccommunity.com	12404 Indepe
Alexis Holland	St. Louis	PETER & PAUL COMMUNITY SERVICE	East - West Gateway Council of Governments	314-338-8177	aholland@ppcsinc.org	2612 I St. Lo
Allison Zumbahl	Harrison	HARRISON COUNTY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL	Green Hills Regional Planning Commission	660-425-0252	allison.zumbahl@hcchospital.org	2600 I Betha



ICB Engagement

Stakeholder Engagement Activities:

- Stakeholder/Public Survey – closes February 13
- ICB and Transit Provider Survey – closed February 6
- Provider Consultation Meeting – January 22 at 12pm
- Public/Stakeholder Meeting – February 9 at 11am

Adjacent State DOTs

- Kansas
- Iowa
- Oklahoma
- Tennessee





Missouri Department of Transportation Intercity Bus Study

Supporting Aging in Place Through Intercity Bus Service

2025-12-31



Executive summary

By 2030, older adults in Missouri are projected to outnumber children, with rural counties aging even faster than urban areas. Many older Missourians wish to "age in place," remaining in their homes and communities as they grow older. This preference is not only a matter of personal dignity, but also a strategic opportunity for the state and local governments to strengthen communities, improve health outcomes, and realize significant economic benefits through strategic investments in an intercity bus system.

Benefits to Aging in Place

Supporting aging in place benefits older residents by improving health outcomes while also reducing long-term care costs for governments through programs like Medicaid's home and community-based services. Investments that support aging in place also sustain local economies by preventing the loss of households and associated economic activity.

A Barrier to Aging in Place

One of the most prominent barriers to aging in place is transportation. As older adults lose the ability to drive and their access to essential services, healthcare, and social connections, they become increasingly dependent on friends, family, and public and regional transportation options. The lack of reliable transportation leads to missed medical appointments, increased social isolation, and higher healthcare costs, especially in rural counties where distances to services are greatest.

The Case for an Intercity Bus System

Investing in transportation solutions for older adults yields substantial returns. For every dollar invested in transportation interventions that support aging in place, communities receive a return of \$1.50 in economic and healthcare benefits. A well-designed intercity bus system in Missouri could connect rural residents to regional medical campuses and support services, reducing the financial burden on residents and the state. By implementing best practices to serve older adults and providing additional funding beyond 5311(f) funding, Missouri can help its aging population remain independent, healthy, and engaged in their communities.

Intercity Bus Study
Supporting Aging in Place Through Intercity Bus Service
2025-12-31 |

Barriers to Aging in Place



Older adults are outliving their ability to drive by an average of 7 to 10 years



15% of older Missourians report that having safe and affordable transportation available is a major or moderate problem



Older adults who cannot drive make 15% fewer trips to the doctor and 65% fewer trips to visit loved ones



The average cost of a missed appointment is \$200. If an appointment is replaced by an emergency room visit, the cost increases to \$2,700

Best Practices to Serve Older Adults

- Prioritize routes that improve access to medical and social services
- Daily inbound and outbound service
- Flexible payment options
- Universal design
- Affordable pricing
- Adequate liability insurance
- Impact-based metrics
- Comfortable boarding experiences



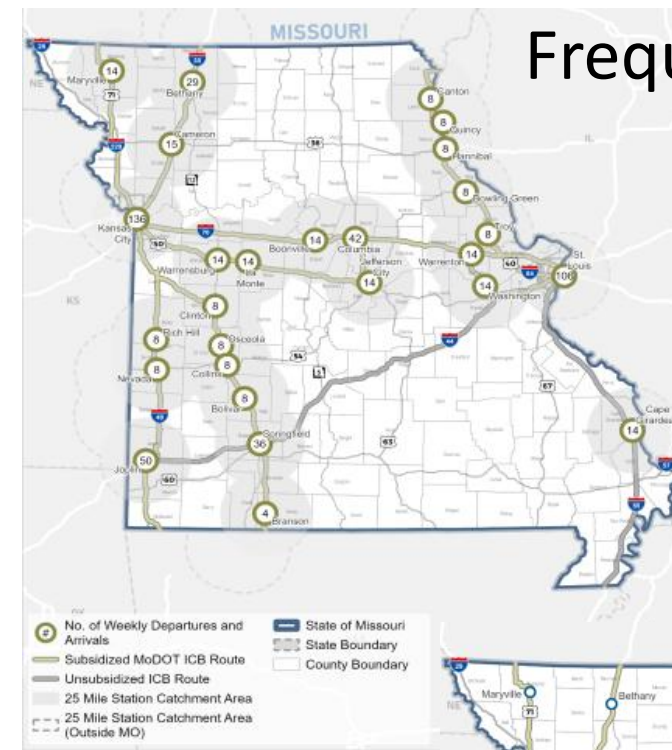
Frequency

Current State of Intercity Bus

Missouri Department of Transportation
March 2026

Previous Plans and Key Findings Existing Intercity Transportation Services

- Last Missouri ICB Assessment was 2010
- Demographics and trip patterns indicate unmet needs are concentrated across corridors where limited service, low frequencies, and weak multimodal connections increase barriers for those individuals most likely reliant on intercity bus services.



Stops & Stations



Current State of Intercity Bus

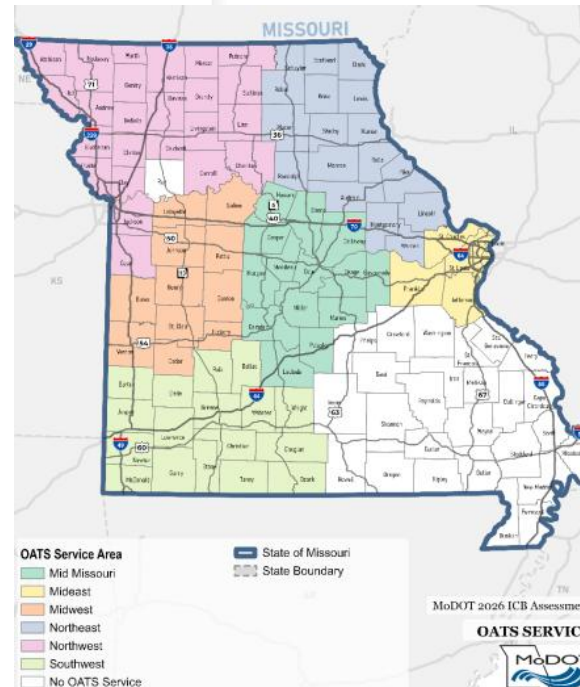
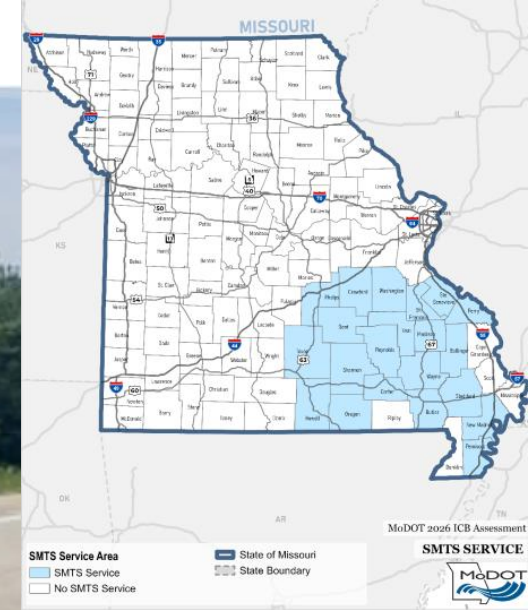
Missouri Department of Transportation

March 2026

Existing Service Providers



Source: SMTS



Source: OATS

Current State of Intercity Bus

Missouri Department of Transportation
March 2026

Service from 2010 to 2026

- Intercity bus services in Missouri have changed over the years with service reductions including fewer routes, lower frequencies, and few stops served.



Table 3-2: Bus Stop Comparison by Provider, 2010 vs. 2026

Stop	Served in 2010				Served in 2026	
	Greyhound	Jefferson	Burlington	Megabus	Greyhound	Jefferson
Anderson						
Bethany						
Bolivar						
Boonville						
Bowling Green						
Branson						
Butler						
Cameron						
Canton						
Cape Girardeau						
Clinton						
Collins						
Columbia						
Ft. Leonard Wood						
Hannibal						
Harrisonville						
Humansville						
Jefferson City						
Joplin						
Kansas City						
La Monte						
Lebanon						
Maryville						
Nevada						
Osceola						
Peculiar						
Quincy, IL						
Rich Hill						
Rock Port						
Rolla						
Sikeston						
Springfield						
St. Joseph						
St. Louis						
Troy						
Warrensburg						
Warrenton						
Washington						
Wentzville						
Total Stops, by Provider	30	17	7	3	12	19
Total Stops, all Providers	57				31	

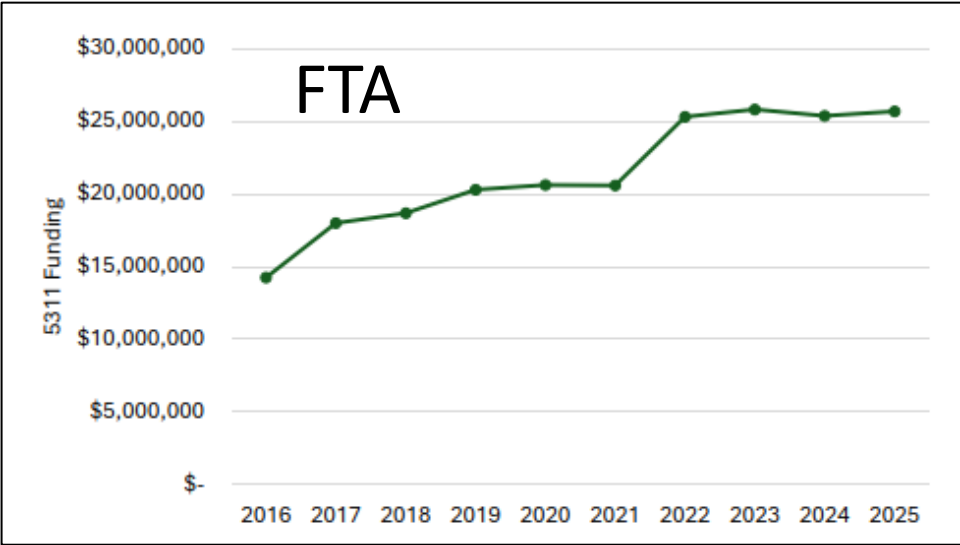
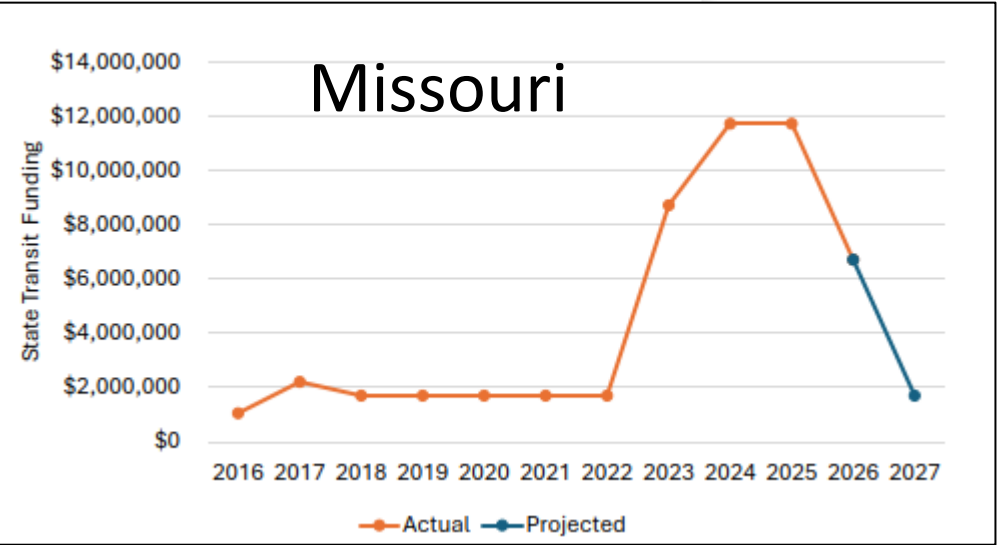
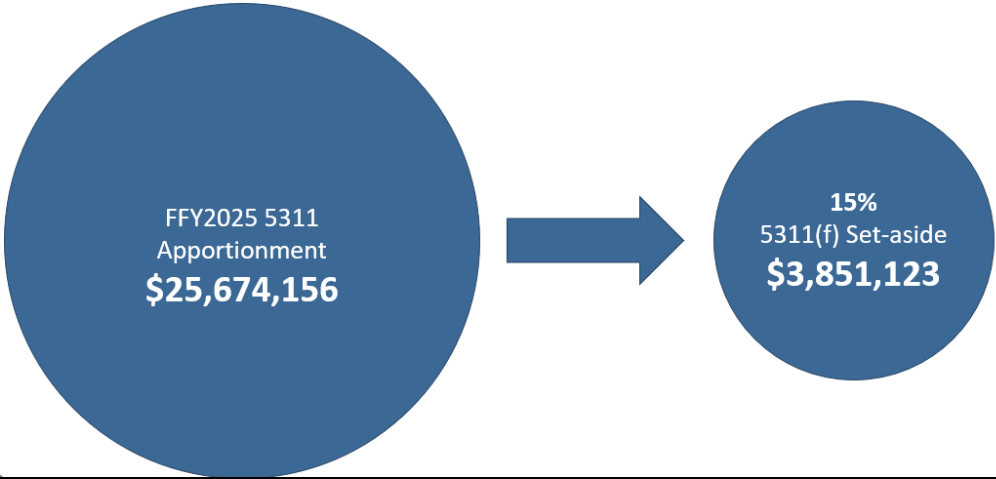
Served by Greyhound Served by Jefferson Served by Burlington Served by Megabus

Current State of Intercity Bus

Missouri Department of Transportation
March 2026

Funding Availability
Stakeholder Perceptions

FY2025 5311(f) Set-aside

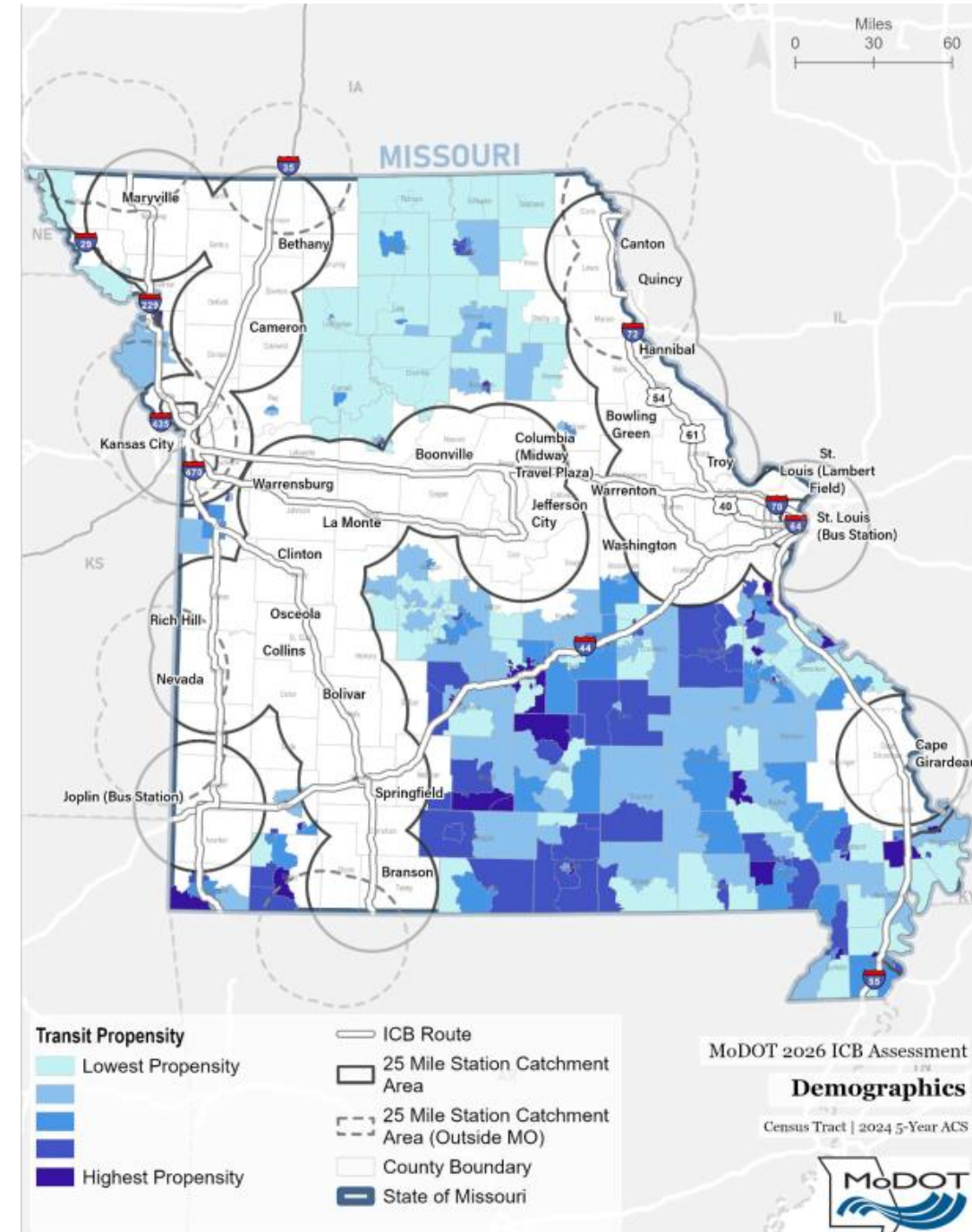


Gaps & Needs Assessment

Missouri Department of Transportation
June 2026

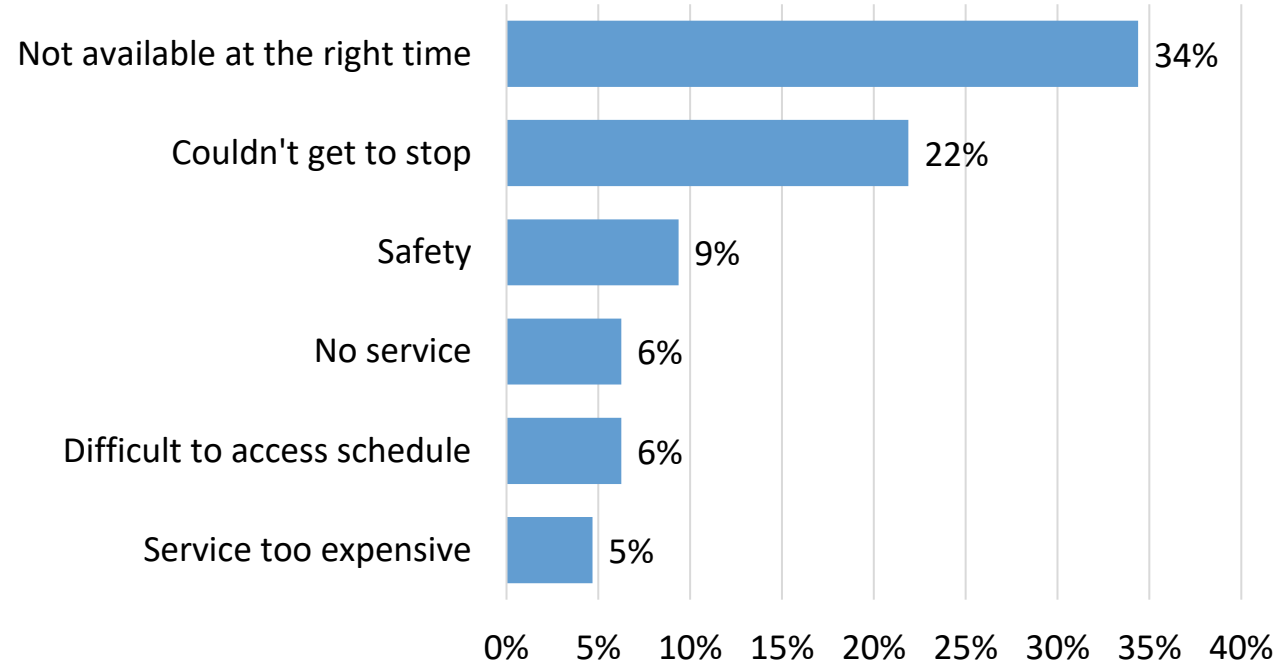
Demographics Trip Generators Public Transit Connections ICB and Transit Operator Engagement Public Engagement

- Most Missourians live within a reasonable distance of an ICB stop but access remains uneven specifically for rural communities outside major transportation corridors
- Demographics and trip patterns indicate unmet needs are concentrated across corridors where limited service, low frequencies, and weak multimodal connections increase barriers for those individuals most likely reliant on intercity bus services.



Key Stakeholder Survey Takeaways

Stop location and stop accessibility are top of mind for customers.



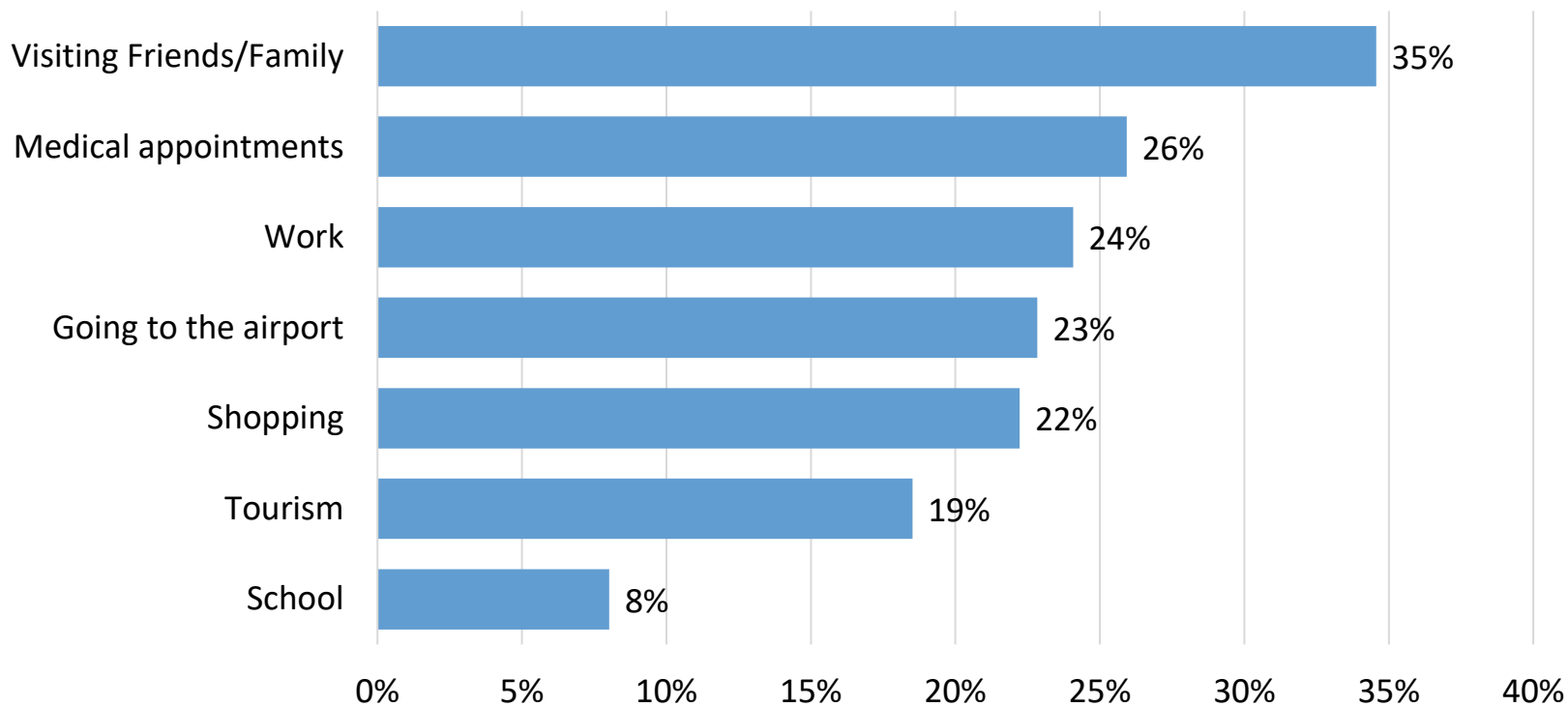
Ranking of ICB Improvements:

1. More Frequent Service
2. New Routes
3. Improved Public Transit Access
4. Lower Costs
5. Accessibility of Stop Locations
6. Quality/Cleanliness of Buses
7. Improved Safety and Security



Key Stakeholder Survey Takeaways

When asked for what purposes people use ICB, visiting friends/family and medical appointments rose to the top.



Key Stakeholder Survey Takeaways

Q: What other improvements would entice you to use intercity bus?

- *“Regular schedules”*
- *“Some way to get between **Kansas City** and **St. Louis** besides driving...the frequent service outages on Amtrak render it unreliable.”*
- *“More **affordable**”*
- *“More schedules to **Columbia** for medical trips”*
- *“**More destinations** served”*

Q: What additional comments do you have regarding intercity bus services in Missouri?

- *“This has been **essential and a cost effective** way to help several individuals get to family/friends and/or home who are stuck in the community without transportation.”*
- *“We need more options for our community members as **securing transportation is one of the biggest barriers** when it comes to accessing care, the community, employment, etc.”*
- *“There are so many state workers that live outside of **Jefferson City** that it seems like a bus service could be very useful.”*
- *“This kind of service will **transform the lives of so many people in our community** and throughout the Southeast Missouri.”*



Key Provider Survey Takeaways

- Most transit providers do not coordinate with ICB providers, as ICB service does not currently exist in their area.
- Most transit providers do not provide service that would qualify as ICB.
- Some transit providers would be open to providing ICB service if there was more funding to do so, but others see it as infeasible.
- Many transit providers noted the rural nature of where they provide service as the biggest challenge to providing service.





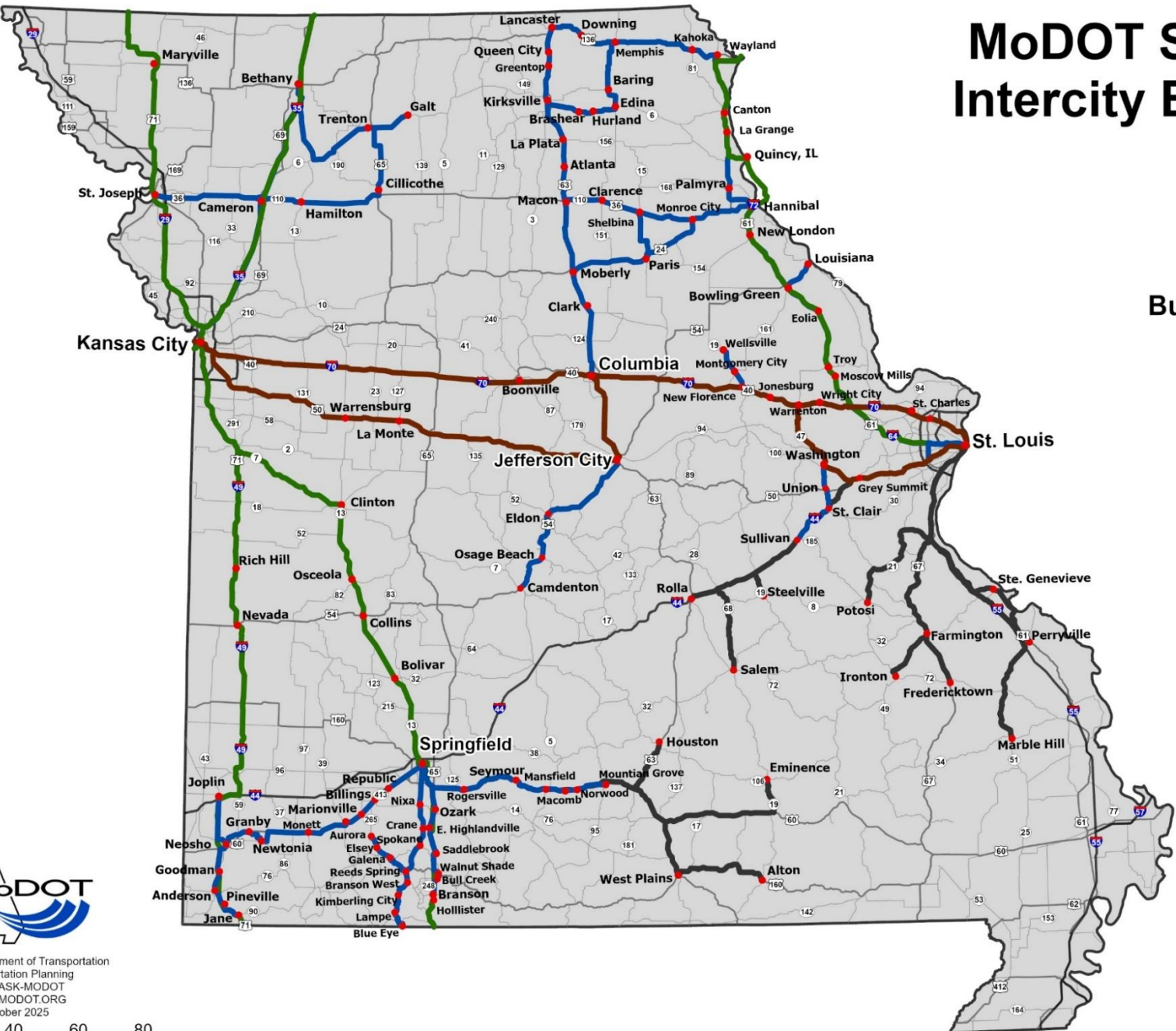
2026 Missouri Intercity Bus Needs Assessment

August 2026

Prepared for: 

Prepared by: 





MoDOT Subsidized Intercity Bus Routes

- Bus Routes by Service Providers**
-  OATS
 -  SMTS
 -  Greyhound
 -  Jefferson Lines
 -  Bus Stops

Vision

MoDOT envisions a more connected ICB system that provides safe, reliable, and accessible transportation to all Missourians, expanding opportunity and improving quality of life for rural and urban communities

Goals

- 1: By 2030, implement a competitive solicitation process for intercity bus services that results in the cost-efficient use of available funds by minimizing state subsidy per passenger mile.
- 2: By 2030, increase the percentage of Missourians within 25 miles of an ICB stop from 78% to 85%
- 3: By 2028, establish quarterly ICB-focused meetings between MoDOT, ICB providers, and public transit agencies to address challenges, share ideas, and enhance coordination.
- 4: Develop and distribute a program management plan (PMP) outlining provider responsibilities and expectations regarding safety, reliability, and service.
- 5: Develop and implement a process for leading negotiations between ICB providers, transit agencies, and local municipalities for siting and co-locating safe, secure stops and facilities.
- 6: Develop and implement a formal intercity bus marketing and outreach program to increase awareness of intercity bus among the public, stakeholders, and potential service providers.

Focus Areas

Access
Coordination
Education & Marketing
Funding
Leadership
Safety and Security
Reliability
Ridership



Recommendations (10)

1: Establish a Strategic, State-Led ICB Program Framework

- Define a statewide intercity bus network concept (core corridors + feeder connections).
- Establish clear criteria for funding routes, such as through prioritizing performance, connectivity, and existing unmet needs.
- Consider competitive procurement or contracting models for key routes to improve accountability and service quality.

2: Prioritize Rural Connectivity and Feeder Service Integration

- Improve schedule alignment and transfer coordination between rural transit and ICB routes.

3: Address Geographic Service Gaps and Strengthen Key Corridors

- Target gap-filling investments in corridors with high unmet demand (e.g., I-44, southwest and southeast Missouri).
- Restore or introduce stops in identified high-demand communities (e.g., Rolla, Fort Leonard Wood, West Plains).
- Strengthen primary corridors between major cities (Kansas City–St Louis, Columbia–Jefferson City), where demand for increased frequency was identified.

4: Improve Intermodal Connectivity

- Prioritize direct connections to Amtrak stations, major airports, and transit centers.
- Implement timed transfers and shared facilities, where feasible.
- Coordinate with local agencies to integrate ICB into existing multimodal hubs.



Recommendations

5: Enhance Customer Experience and System Usability

- Develop a centralized, statewide ICB information webpage
- Develop a unified ICB program brand
- Integrate services into trip planning tools and digital platforms
- Improve stop amenities, signage, and safety in rural areas

6: Align Services with Key User Needs and Trip Purposes

- Prioritize service to medical hubs, colleges, and employment centers
- Support routes and schedules that provide same-day medical and service trips
- Incorporate aging-in-place considerations, including accessibility and affordability

7: Strengthen Performance Monitoring and Data Transparency

- Establish standardized reporting requirements for all operators.
- Implement performance metrics including ridership, connectivity, and subsidy per trip.
- Utilize data to support investment decisions and stakeholder communication.

8: Clarify Program Purpose and Communicate Value

- Develop a clear, consistent program narrative and value proposition.
- Highlight economic, mobility, and health access benefits.
- Coordinate with partners to improve public understanding and support.



Recommendations

9: Optimize Use of Existing Funding and Explore Supplemental Resources

- Align funding with high-performing and high-need routes.
- Explore opportunities to leverage state or local funding to supplement federal programs.
- Evaluate pilot programs to test new services before full deployment.

10: Establish a Formal Coordination Program Between Transit and Intercity Bus Providers

CONCLUSION

There are intercity bus needs in Missouri that are not being adequately met, and MoDOT has identified using 5311(f) funding to better meet these needs as a priority.

MoDOT should continue to use the full 15% set-aside of FTA 5311 annual program funds to support intercity bus operations to accomplish the recommendations of this Intercity Bus Assessment.



Next Steps for MoDOT

- 1) ICB Report availability
- 2) 5311 annual program funding
- 3) Opportunities for participation

