

2020



OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

State of Transportation

A note...

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SARA FIELDS



I like to think of 2020 as a year of opportunity. As the year turned to January 1, no one knew that within a few months, COVID-19 would impact every aspect of our lives. While we are still working through the pandemic itself, we can reflect on our resiliency in the face of such challenges.





City Utilities Transit was an innovator, protecting driver and passenger safety, while continuing to offer service. The stay at home orders demonstrated how much roadway capacity can be freed with travel demand management. Our trail system demonstrated its significance to the community as the world went outdoors. Technology improved to bring the public closer to the planning process.

Though the last year may not have ended as it started, we can use what we've learned in support of an excellent regional transportation system.

Stay safe,

Sara J. Fields, AICP

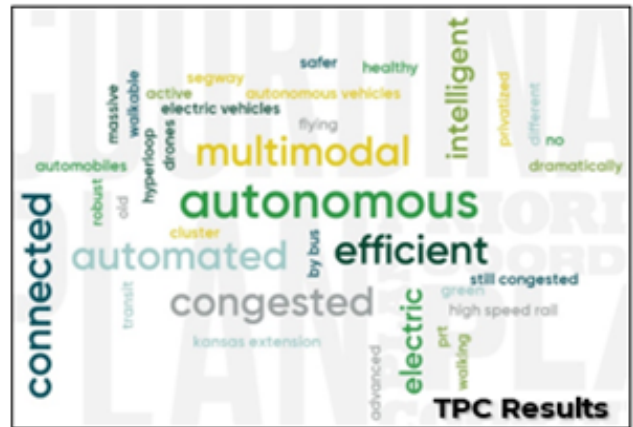
Table of Contents

- Planning Ahead 
- Moving Ahead 
- Clear Skies Ahead 
- Safe Travels 
- People in Transit 
- Out and About 
- Delivered 
- Learn More 

Planning Ahead

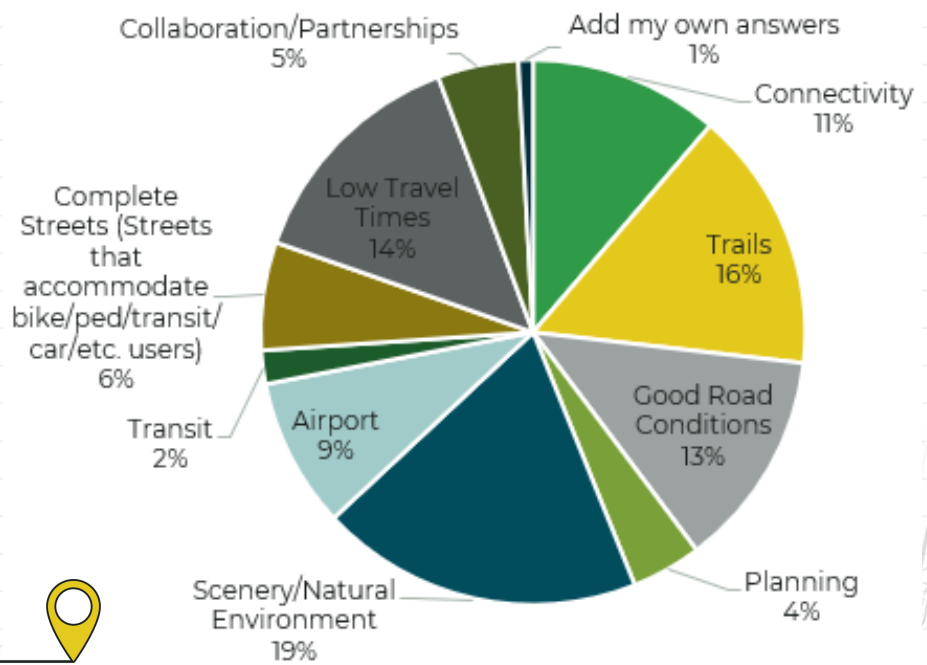
In 2020, OTO kicked off the planning process for *Destination 2045*, the long range transportation plan for the Ozarks Transportation Organization region. The Plan was adopted in 2021.

Public input was the focus for *Destination 2045* during 2020, while planning committee meetings started during the fall. OTO held visioning workshops for the Board of Directors and Technical Planning Committee and conducted a survey of the public regarding transportation now and in the future.



"Using one word, what will the transportation system look like in 2045?" Visioning Results

During this input process, we confirmed that trails are important, learned that congestion is a problem, but doesn't last long, heard that we need more transportation funding, and found we need to better understand the desire for passenger rail.



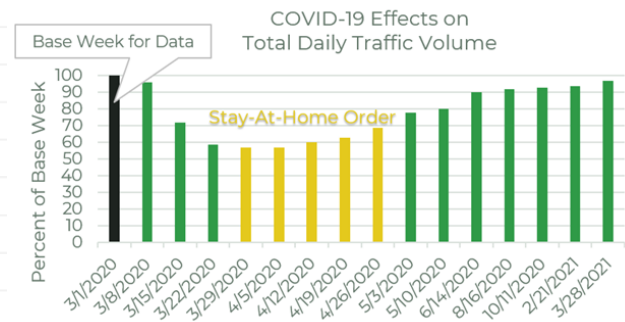
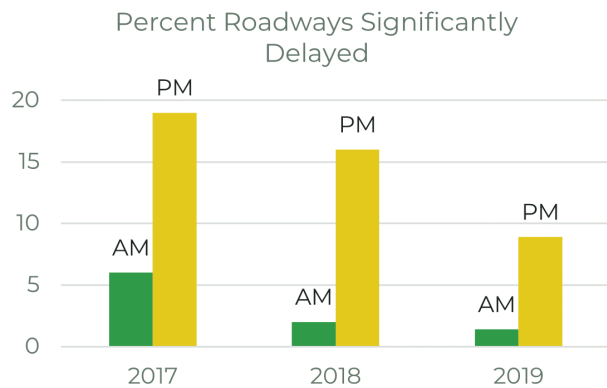
"What are the region's transportation strengths?" Survey Results



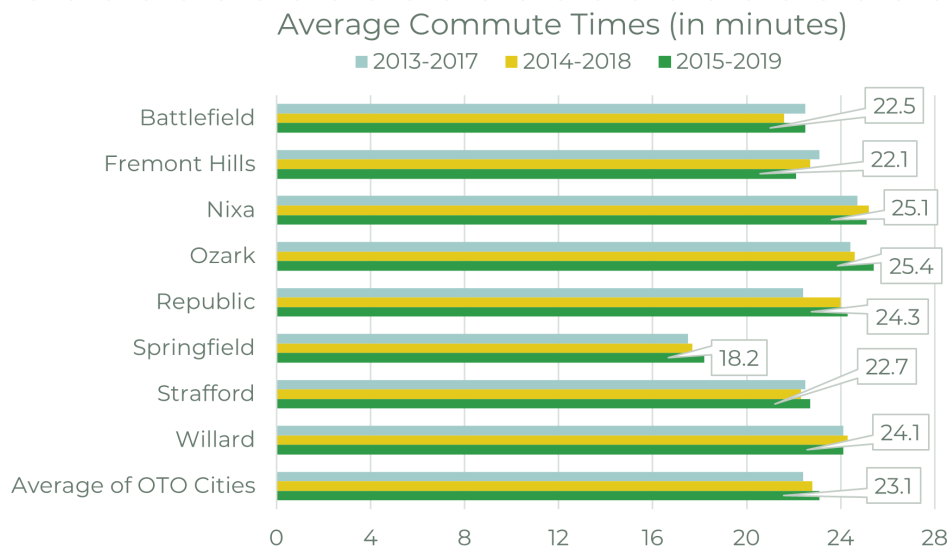
Moving Ahead

COVID-19 provided a snapshot of how increased travel demand management can free capacity on the roadways. Increased telework can reduce demand, and therefore congestion, especially during peak travel times. Consequences, however, can include increased traffic speeds and aggressive driving.

Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita
14.88 2020 | **16.72 2019** | **16.43 2018**



The effects of COVID-19 are not reflected in average commute times, however, as the American Community Survey samples data over a five year period, which does not yet include 2020. For the region, the average commute time does remain below 25 minutes, though Ozark and Nixa have commutes just over 25 minutes.



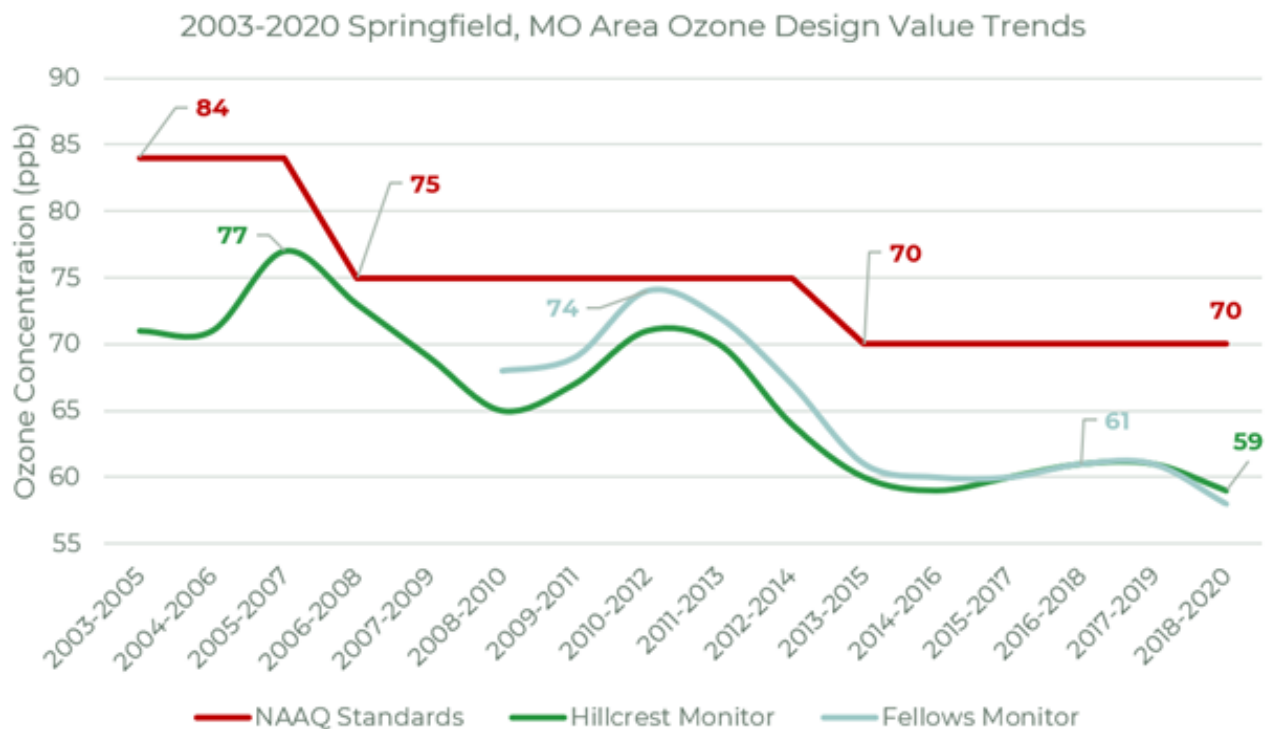
Clear Skies Ahead

Air quality continues to improve, and this is another measure where COVID-19 has made an impact. Vehicle emissions are a factor in the development of ground-level ozone, and while traffic did return during the summer of 2020, it was still below prior years.

Agencies and companies in the OTO region have had success receiving funding through Missouri Department of Natural Resources Volkswagen Trust Fund opportunities made available in 2020.

- Ozarks Coca-Cola/Dr. Pepper Bottling Company - replace diesel delivery trucks with new diesel short haul combination trucks
- L. Davis Transports LLC. - replace for-hire-carriers with new diesel long haul combination trucks
- Associated Wholesale Grocers - repower a 3 terminal tractor with new all-electric equipment
- Kum & Go - electric vehicle charging for the Division and Packer location

Funding continues to be available through the VW Trust Fund. Current opportunities can be found on the DNR VW Trust Fund Webpage - <https://dnr.mo.gov/air/what-were-doing/volkswagen-trust-funds>.



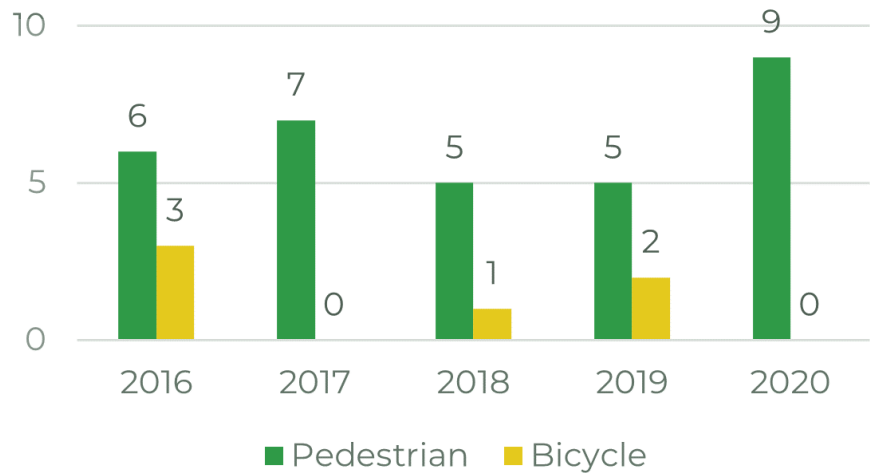


Safe Travels

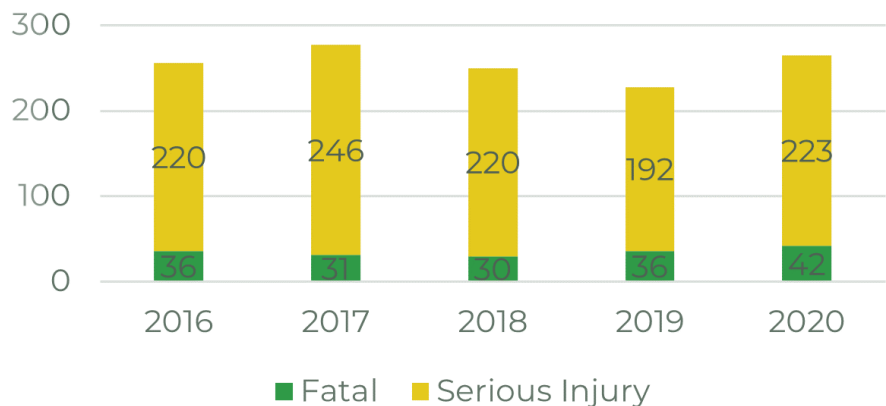
Fatalities were up in 2020 for pedestrian, as well as all crash types. Though not quite 2017 levels, serious injuries for all crash types were up in 2020 also. MoDOT has released Show-Me Zero, a new strategic highway safety plan, that plans for zero fatalities by 2030 and zero serious injuries by 2040. Show-Me Zero focuses on occupant protection, distracted driving, speed and aggressive driving, impaired driving, and special road users such as bicyclists and pedestrians.

SHOW-ME
ZERO
Driving Missouri Toward Safer Roads

Number of Fatalities



Number of Fatalities and Serious Injuries All Crash Types



People in Transit

In 2020, COVID-19 affected ridership for both City Utilities Transit and the Missouri State University Bearline. For CU Transit, unlinked passenger trips dipped below 1 million for the first time in over 20 years, and while MSU had 950,000 passengers in 2019, they had only 220,000 passengers in 2020. MSU ridership was greatly affected by the lack of students, faculty, and staff on campus, with many classes offered virtually.

CU Transit took several unprecedented measures to protect both employees and passengers from COVID-19, including modified service, masking enforcement, and the installation of both temporary and permanent driver barriers. CU Transit was recognized by the Federal Transit Administration and Missouri Public Transit Association for using FTA funds eligible under the Emergency Relief Program and partnering with a local upholstery company to fabricate plastic barriers. They also received a \$7.6 million grant for operations to offset revenue losses.

OTO continues to monitor housing growth within the OTO area and within the CU service area. Steady since 2017, 45 percent of OTO households are within a quarter-mile of a CU bus route. This is down from 46 percent in 2016 and 47 percent in 2010. While it's not changing quickly, this demonstrates that more housing units have been added outside of the CU service area than within it.

45% of OTO Households
are within a 1/4-mile of a
CU Bus Route



CU Transit 92% On-Time

Federal Transit Admin
@FTA_DOT

To protect its #bus drivers during the #COVID19 emergency City Utilities of Springfield, MO partnered with a local upholstery co. to fabricate plastic barriers on its fleet paid for with FTA funds eligible under the Emergency Relief program #AmericaWorksTogether



City Utilities and City of Springfield

12:53 PM · Apr 29, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Out and About



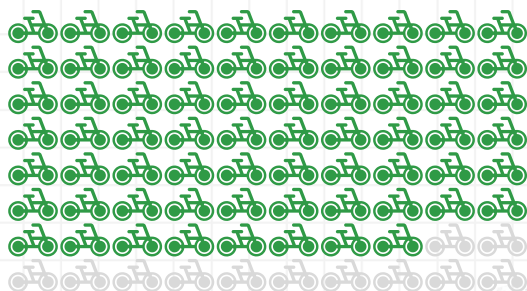
In January 2020, it was announced that Ozark Greenways was awarded Silver Bicycle Friendly Business status. With the onset of COVID-19, trail usage dramatically increased. The pandemic highlighted the importance of outdoor space throughout a community. Ozark Greenways developed a campaign to encourage distancing on busy trails.

New facilities in 2020 include:

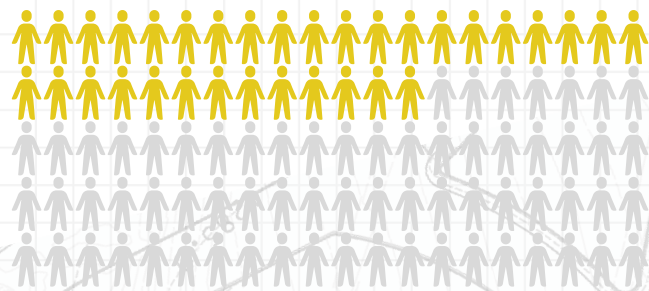
- Fulbright Spring Greenway trail between Lost Hill Park and Truman School
- Mount Vernon Bridge over Jordan Creek making room for future trail under Mount Vernon Street
- Jordan Creek Trail through West Meadows
- Sidepath along Fremont between Sunset and Battlefield
- New Riverside Bridge with walk/bike path
- South Creek Trail extension
- Bike lanes on Primrose and Jefferson



In Springfield, July 26, 2020 was declared Disability Awareness Day in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ADA and the City of Springfield installed signage to raise visibility of street crossings for people with disabilities.



68 Miles of Trail for Transportation



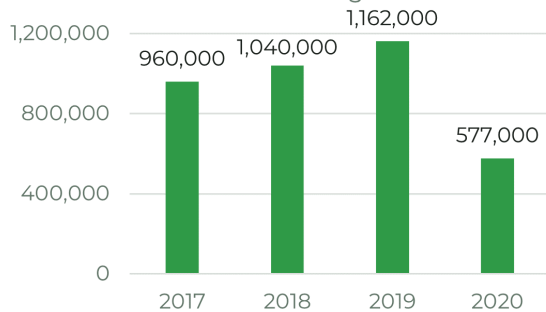
32.64 percent of roads with sidewalk

Delivered

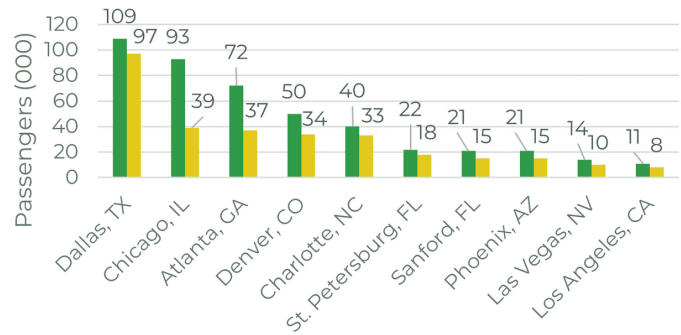
The Springfield-Branson National Airport was ready for 2020 to be another record-breaking year, following two years of 1 million+ passengers. Early in the year, construction finished on 750 additional parking spaces. Airlines had added 8 percent additional capacity in 2019. By the conclusion of 2020, though, total passengers were half of 2019. Cargo was less impacted by COVID, with weights in 2020 less than 2019, but higher than 2017 and close to 2018. Recovery in the freight sector is expected in 2021.

Dallas remains Springfield's number one destination airport and was not as impacted by COVID as the other destinations, per the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Destinations not in the top ten list include Destin and Houston.

Springfield-Branson National Airport
Annual Passengers



Top 10 Destination Airports



Learn More

The OTO website is a great resource for learning about our transportation system and for providing feedback in a central location. OTO shares all public comment with its Board of Directors and with all relevant agencies. Check out these direct links for more information:

<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/>

<https://www.giveusyourinput.org/>

<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/our-resources/maps>

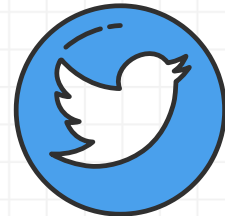
<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/our-resources/reports-and-studies>

<https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/what-we-do/long-range-transportation-plan>

Find us on Facebook and Twitter!

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Attributions

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- Vectplus from the Noun Project - Aircraft
- MoDOT/CMT - Roundabout design
- League of American Bicyclists - Bicycle Friendly Business Shield
- Ozark Greenways - Let's Be Togetherish
- City of Springfield - Wheelchair SGF Yields Sign
- Airline Data from Bureau of Transportation Statistics
- Masked Pinkley from Springfield-Branson National Airport
- Vectto - Facebook Icon, Twitter Icon



OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

This report was prepared in cooperation with the USDOT, including FHWA and FTA, as well as the Missouri Department of Transportation. The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration.

Ozarks Transportation Organization

2208 W. Chesterfield Boulevard, Suite 101

Springfield, Missouri 65807

(417) 865-3042

(417) 862-6013

www.OzarksTransportation.org