

# HIGHWAY MM: *CORRIDOR OF OPPORTUNITY*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Highway MM: *Corridor of Opportunity* will enhance **safety**, **reduce congestion**, and add **capacity** to a rural route that has become the top regional transportation infrastructure project for the Springfield, Missouri Metropolitan Planning Organization.

### Project Description at a Glance

- Widening of Highway MM to 4-lanes from 2-lanes
- Widening of bridge over MO 360 to accommodate 4-lanes and pedestrian facilities
- Add ADA sidewalks along corridor
- Pedestrian crosswalk and signal at Haile Street

Hwy MM is a nexus of intermodal freight facilities, warehouse distributors, and entities reliant on the Magellan pipeline located along the corridor. The corridor is growing with companies that provide above average wages with manufacturing, construction, and warehouse employers. Destinations along the corridor are heavily frequented. Location data software Placer.ai ranks Convoy of Hope's Global Distribution Center #35 on a list of 251 most visited industrial properties in Missouri.

Originally built in 1921, Hwy MM is a 3.95-mile north/south rural minor arterial with two 12-ft wide lanes with no existing sidewalks that connects to US 60 at its south end and to I-44 at its north end. The 2024 AADT was approximately 13,658 vehicles per day based on data provided on MoDOT's Datazone website. The project location between I-44 and US 60, as well as the access it provides to existing and future traffic generators, make it subject to **elevated levels of future freight congestion**. Construction has accelerated along the corridor with new residential properties and commercial facilities such as Cox Health Center (medical center), Amazon STL3 Fulfillment Center (major warehouse employer), Walmart "Center Fill" Pharmacy Facility, and Convoy of Hope World Headquarters (humanitarian aid distribution center). Additional commercial, retail, housing developments, and a 78-acre Republic School District campus with two new schools are currently being constructed along the corridor.

Missouri Highway MM is significant because it connects Interstate 44 to MO 360 and US 60. Additionally, Hwy MM serves as a vital link to the surrounding communities Republic, Willard, Clever and Nixa through its connections to MO Highways B and ZZ. Future regional improvements to these state highways as well as Hwy 14 will only increase Hwy MM's use. To improve community connectivity and accommodate growing traffic, the project will upgrade the current two-lane arterial into a **divided four-lane road with a raised median**. These improvements will enhance traffic flow, better manage commuter and truck traffic, and create a safer corridor for residents and businesses.



The City of Republic is one of the fastest growing regions in the state of Missouri and projects population growth from 20,144 in 2023 to approximately 33,000 people by the year 2040 (City of Republic). Hwy MM serves as a primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport as well as the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. It is a major north/south connection for the region connecting Christian County and the west side of the City of Springfield to I-44. The Republic area serves several of the regional outlying communities as both a commercial and employment center. Because of its unique logistical advantages, the project corridor has experienced rapid and sustained economic development that continues to generate traffic, especially freight traffic, along the corridor.

The Hwy MM corridor has four planned phases to include a 3.61-mile four lane facility. This BUILD application is only for **Phase II** of the Hwy MM Corridor project. Phase I is for Hwy MM from US 60 to Haile Street Intersection which is already funded. Phase II consists of Hwy MM from Haile Street Intersection to I-44. Phase III is for Wilson Creek Boulevard extension from the US 60/Hwy MM Intersection through Hwy M. Phase IV is planned for I-44 and Hwy MM Interchange improvements. A continuous four-lane corridor of opportunity and safe connectivity cannot be completed without **BUILD funding**.



## STATEMENT OF WORK

MoDOT completed location and corridor studies in February 2022. The studies provide necessary information to identify needed improvements and ensure that those improvements are adequate in the future. Preliminary Plans are approved with Right-of-Way plans are in final development. NEPA has begun with all sections cleared except a final determination to be made for cultural resources.

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) classification is Primary Arterial. The project will be designed for:

Design volume of 31,600	82-ft Roadbed Width	Curb and Gutter
Operational (Posted) Speed - 45 miles per hour	130-ft Right-of-Way width	Storm water facilities
4-lane with medians	5-ft wide ADA sidewalk facilities	

Preliminary Engineering Bid Sheets are included in the Supporting Documents Index and at <https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/highway-mm-corridor-build-grant-2025>.

### **Phase II (BUILD Request)**

#### **I-44 to MO 360 (Grading, Drainage, and Paving) 1.66 miles - \$19,878,044**

Project adds lane capacity (two-lanes to four-lanes with raised median). Project adds ADA sidewalk accommodation along the corridor. Currently the preliminary design work is 40 percent complete.



**MO 360 to Haile Street (Grading, Drainage, Bridge, and Paving) .87 miles - \$13,975,583**  
Project adds lane capacity (three-lanes to four-lanes, currently three-lanes due to Amazon's safety investment). Project adds ADA sidewalk accommodation along the corridor. There is currently a diamond interchange with MO 360. This bridge will be widened to accommodate four-lanes and pedestrian accommodations. Pedestrian signal and crossing will be added at the Haile Street Intersection. Currently the preliminary design work is 40 percent complete.

### Phase I (Currently in Progress)

#### **Haile Street to US 60 (Grading, Drainage, Bridge, Paving-New Construction) 1.08 miles**

This funded project will realign Hwy MM from the current US 60/Hwy MM Intersection, to replace at grade railroad crossings with grade separated crossings. A four-lane road will be constructed between US 60 and Farm Road 160 with new signalized intersection at US 60. The project will permanently close and remove three at-grade railroad crossings. Project adds new ADA sidewalk accommodation along the corridor. A new overpass over the BNSF railroad is included with bicycle and pedestrian access. A 10-foot shared use path is proposed along the new alignment for community connectivity and multimodal travel options. A two-lane roundabout intersection at Farm Road 160 will accommodate the anticipated development growth and pedestrian safety. This project is scheduled to begin construction October 2025.

## TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

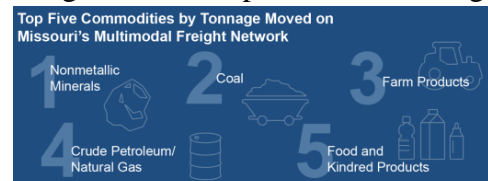


**Figure 1 Missouri Project Location & Freight Connections**

Southwestern Arizona to the Atlantic Ocean in Virginia. These key corridors transport vital products to the whole nation. Missouri is a national crossroads of highway, rail, and pipeline networks. With the logistic challenges faced by the nation during the COVID pandemic, a strong freight infrastructure has become even more important for transporting necessary supplies. Hwy MM is a primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport.

Hwy MM connects I-44 and US 60, two major corridors. Interstate 44 has been identified as a critical Tier I high priority freight corridor in the State of Missouri. <sup>1</sup>

US 60, a 2,655-mile (in total) east/west route which runs the entire length of Missouri connecting Oklahoma to Kentucky. US 60 also a major east-west route connecting



**Figure 2 2022 MoDOT State Freight and Rail Plan**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ozarkstransportation.org/highway-mm-corridor-build-grant-2025>



Hwy MM is already experiencing poor levels of service and when current and future development is modeled, the route will quickly be unable to manage the growing demand. Sections of the corridor are already performing at a level of service (LOS) D or F (*Greene County Route MM/ZZ Study*). Most of the corridor is a two-lane facility. There is one three-lane section on Hwy MM that has exceeded capacity.

Most of the corridor lacks adequate shoulders, turn lanes, and pedestrian connections. Frequent conflicts with large trucks and passenger vehicles cause serious crashes as shown by the documented crash history.



## ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

This project will address the following challenges that will be explained further in the Merit Criteria Narrative:

- Adding capacity to the roadway to manage the freight transports and commuters.
- Adding ADA sidewalk to allow pedestrian access to the corridor that previously did not exist. These sidewalk connections will connect to area trail/sidewalk system to provide needed walkability to the new schools, residential housing, and employment centers.
- Reducing truck-passenger car conflicts by adding center turn lanes and raised medians.
- The planned project addresses both existing and future concerns due to growing traffic volumes within the corridor. The project has been designed to accommodate freight and commuter traffic through 2050.



## PROJECT HISTORY

In 2005, the City of Republic, Missouri made an innovative decision to consolidate the Village of Brookline into Republic, approximately 2,560 acres, to facilitate the development of the Brookline Business Park. The City of Republic has made historic infrastructure investments in water, sewer, and fire protection totaling over \$169.5 million. The Springfield, MO utility, City Utilities, also believed in the vision to bring quality jobs to the region and invested in electric and natural gas infrastructure. What once was open land with great connections to essential road freight corridors, rail, and the airport has become a booming freight corridor with businesses moving in rapidly.

The City of Republic previously applied for a TIGER Discretionary Grant in 2009 and 2017 (Republic Regional Business Corridor) and MDPG Rural Grant in 2024 for this corridor in anticipation of this growth. The Ozarks Transportation applied in partnership with the City of Republic and MoDOT for a RAISE Discretionary Grant in 2022, 2023, and 2024.

The project became a high priority in 2020 when the Convoy of Hope World Headquarters and Amazon STL3 Fulfillment Center were built. In 2021, Amazon constructed over \$4 million in transportation improvements to the Hwy MM corridor by upgrading a three-lane roadway from MO 360 to Farm Road 160. Two public roadway intersections were improved including Farm





Road 156, which serves commercial development, and Haile Street, which serves residences. Finally, traffic signals were added to the northern interchange ramp of MO 360, Farm Road 156, and Haile Street. While Amazon made the improvements needed to facilitate the demands of traffic they caused, the remainder of the corridor is still experiencing congestion. Amazon has also contributed \$436,266 towards intersection improvements that are part of the Phase I project.



## PROJECT LOCATION

Rural/Urban	Latitude	Longitude	Length
Rural	37° 10' 53.57" N	93° 25' 25.52" W	1.66 Miles
	Hwy MM @ 1-44	Northern Limit	
Rural	37° 09' 52.588" N	93° 25' 27.147" W	0.87 Miles
	Hwy MM @ Haile Street	Southern Limit	

Figure 3 Project Coordinates

The proposed project is designated as **rural** (per the 2020 census). The project is located three miles from the major population center of Springfield, MO and connects the City of Willard commuters to the City of Republic community. The project is in the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Southwest District, the Springfield Missouri Urbanized area, and in the city limits of the City of Republic.

### Area of Persistent Poverty

The project is in the 48.05 Census Tract of Greene County, Missouri. Greene County is not identified as an Area of Persistent Poverty. However, this project will increase access to jobs and education in the area. Jobs created in this corridor provide opportunities for persistent poverty communities in Census Tracts 17, 31, 32, 33, 48.02, 58.01 and 58.02.

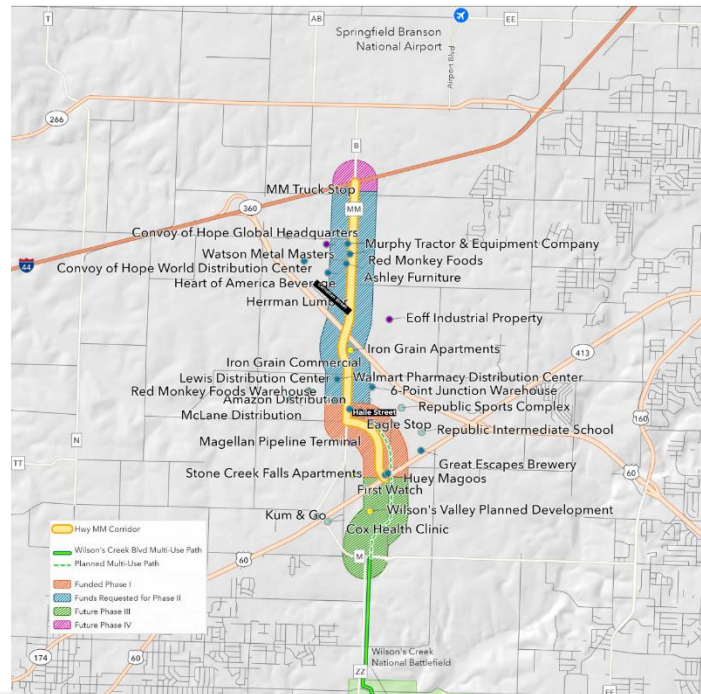


Figure 4 Project Location Map

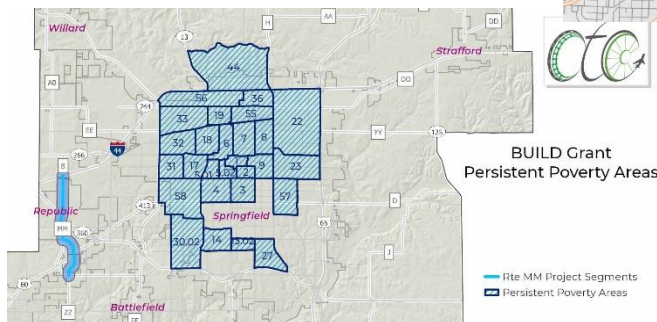


Figure 5 Persistent Poverty Areas

