

**MISSOURI**

state rail plan



*Public Meeting Series 1  
Summary Report*

*Conducted  
October – November, 2011*

**December 2011**

Prepared for:



Missouri Department  
of Transportation

Prepared by:

**HNTB**  
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# Summary of 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 community leader workshops and public open house meetings 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 twenty years, so it is vital MoDOT heard from Missourians to incorporate their needs into this process.

A Statewide Rail Plan is necessary for Missouri to pursue critical federal funds for planning and constructing rail projects and prioritizes investments that will enhance the movement of people and goods, expand connections between all modes of transportation and support long-term economic growth in Missouri.

In addition to the seven open house meetings, MoDOT hosted an online public meeting from Oct. 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.

As work on the plan began, community leaders and the public 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 publically 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 was 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 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:

Date	Location	Workshop Attendance	Public Meeting Attendance
10/18/2011	Hannibal	29	4
10/25/2011	Jefferson City	20	21
10/26/2011	Kirkwood	15	50
10/27/2011	Cape Girardeau	10	6
11/1/2011	St. Joseph	12	15
11/2/2011	Kansas City/Independence	35	31
11/3/2011	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, with comments that included:

- Rail reduces truck and automobile traffic on Interstates and local roadways.
- Rail is a more fuel-efficient mode of transportation.
- Rail reduces emissions that 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.

### 3.1. 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 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.
- A 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.
- A significant 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**

Awareness of the role of freight rail in Missouri appears to be broad, deep and strong. 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 that Missouri has a rich railroading history;
- recognize that huge amounts of coal and intermodal freight move through the state; and
- 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 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, damage to state and local roadways and air pollution from emissions.
- The state should do more to seek out public-private partnerships that could result in moving more freight by rail and increasing economic development.

- More should be done to work with businesses that 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 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.

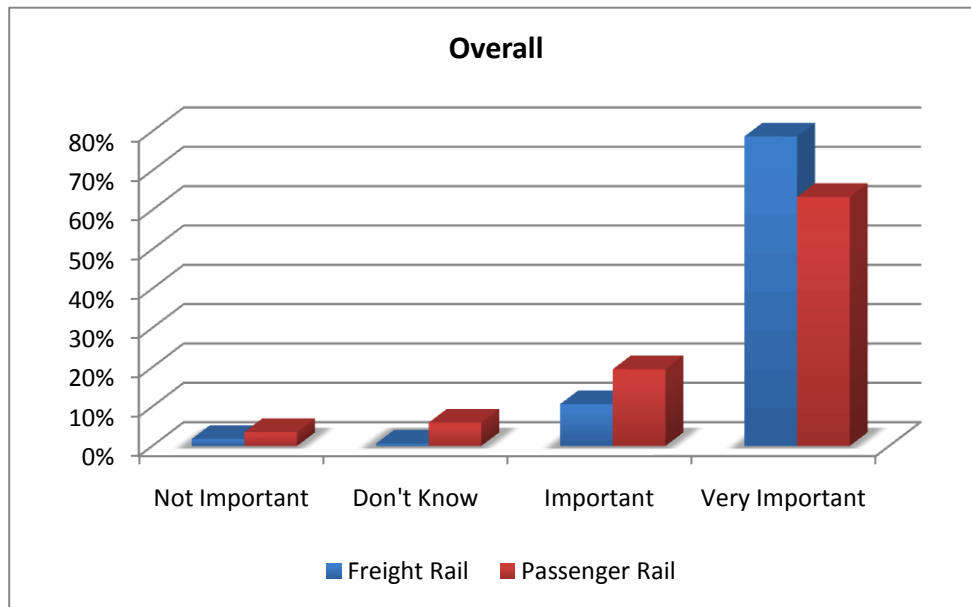
### **3.3. Observations: Funding Rail Improvements**

- 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 that 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 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.

#### 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 1 indicating least important and 4 indicating most important. The chart below indicates that most believed freight and passenger rail are important to Missouri’s economy.

**Figure 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.



### 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 sites.

### 5.2. Meeting Displays

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

**Figure 2: Public Meeting Displays**

Welcome
Station #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Draft Goals</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> </ul>
Station #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missouri’s Existing Freight Operations</li> <li>• Missouri’s Existing Passenger Operations</li> </ul>
Station #3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Business Case for Rail</li> <li>• What We’ve Heard So Far</li> </ul>
Station #4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next Steps</li> <li>• Comments</li> </ul>

A “virtual” version of the public meeting and opportunity for comment was also available at [www.morail.org](http://www.morail.org).

### 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

*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

*Location:*

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

*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

*Consultant Team Participants:*

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

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

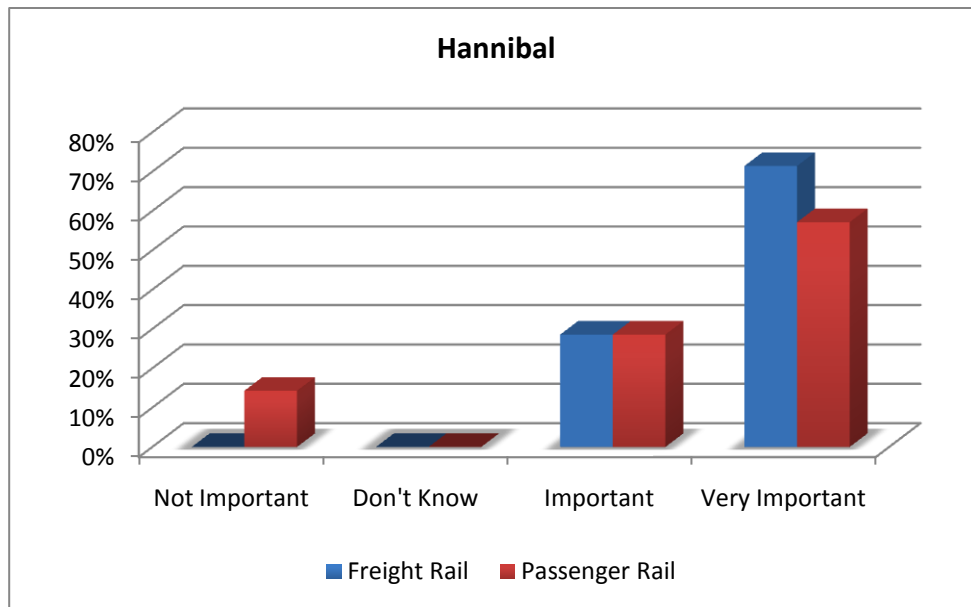
- Understand commodity flow data and the sensitivity of coal and how it might impact the flow in the future if use of coal for power generation is reduced

Questions MoDOT asked the audience:

- Q: Who knows how much freight moves in and out of the community?
  - There are 2 rail lines operated by 2 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% 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 that 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 STL
  - 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 3: Importance of Rail - Hannibal Meetings**



## 6.2. Jefferson City Workshop and Meeting Summary

### *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

### *Location:*

East Elementary School  
1229 East McCarty Street  
Jefferson City

### *MoDOT Participants:*

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Dave Silvester – Central District District Engineer
- Travis Koestner – Central District Assistance District Engineer
- Kristin Gerber – Central District Public Relations Officer
- Holly Dentner and Charlett Scott – Central District Public Relations Staff

### *Consultant Team Participants:*

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

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 that would help freight and passenger.
- Can you address bottlenecks that 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 train that 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?

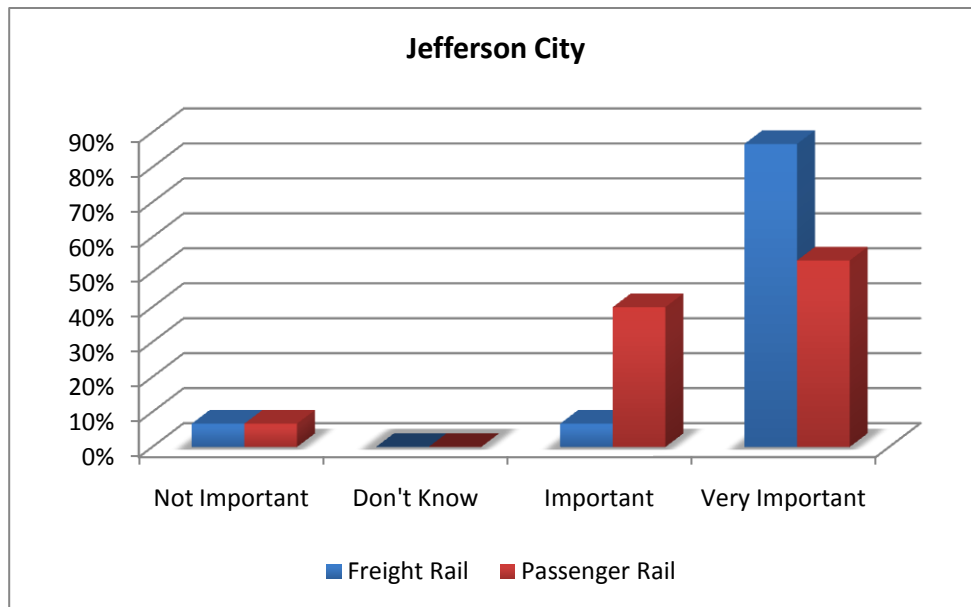
- Mr. Morrison (City of Jefferson) – City residents like Amtrak; freight very important to city; on-time performance is important.
- Can we talk with committees (such as RPC) to encourage communities to comment on this plan?
- Waynesville – high speed rail on East and West corridors.
- Versailles – Never 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 something like that?

*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 change that 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 4: Importance of Rail - Jefferson City Meetings**



### 6.3. Kirkwood Workshop and Meeting Summary

*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

*Location:*

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

Public Meeting: Kirkwood Amtrak Train Station  
110 West Argonne Drive

*MoDOT Participants:*

- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Marie Elliott – St. Louis District Public Relations Officer
- Tom Blair – St. Louis District Assistant District Engineer
- Wesley Stephen – St. Louis District Planning Manager
- Judy Wagner, Kristy Yates and Deanna Venker – St. Louis District Area Engineers
- Alan Lane and Chris Bain – Facility Operations Staff

*Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias – HNTB

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 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 of that?
- 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 that consider commuter rail, i.e., St. Louis to Kirkwood or St. Louis to Alton. Any consideration for that here?
- 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 that will impact business.
- The train's connectivity to the Katy Trail and wineries is also a great attraction.

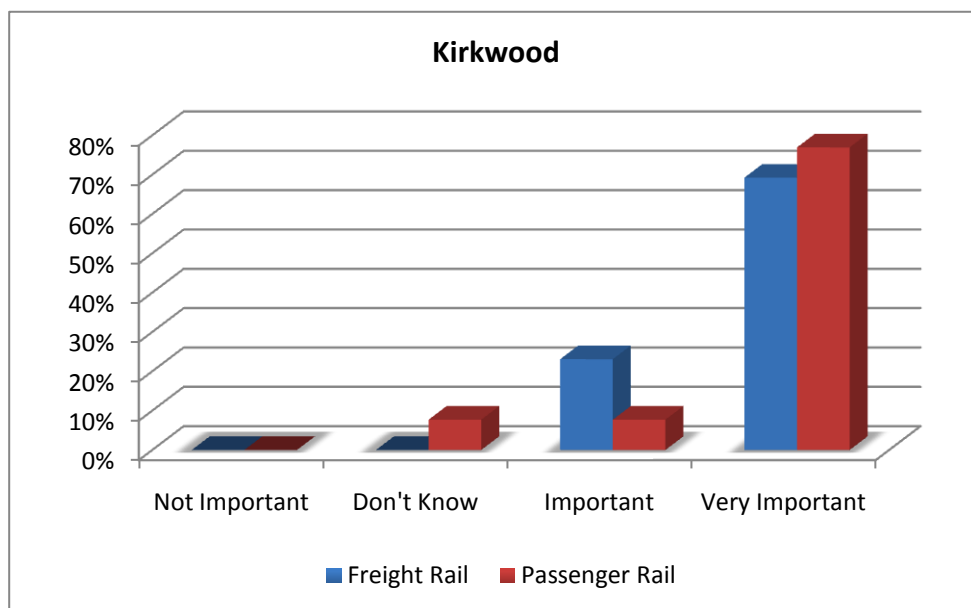
*Public Meeting Comments:*



- 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 that 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 provided info that currently Missouri subsidizes Amtrak with \$8 million.
- 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 5: Importance of Rail - Kirkwood Meetings**



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

*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

*Location:*

The Osage Centre

1625 North Kingshighway

Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

*MoDOT Participants:*

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

*Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias, HNTB

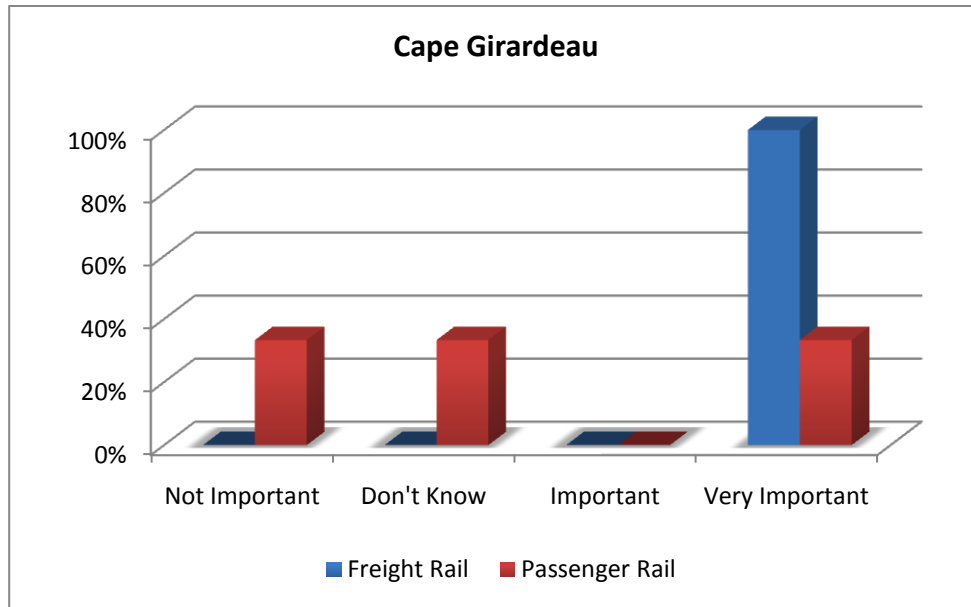
During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

- 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 3 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 6: Importance of Rail - Cape Girardeau Meetings**



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

*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

*Location:*

MoDOT District Office Training Conference Center

3602 North Belt Highway

St. Joseph, MO 64506

*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 - Northwest District Area Engineer
- Adam Watson – District Utilities Engineer

*Consultant Team Participants:*

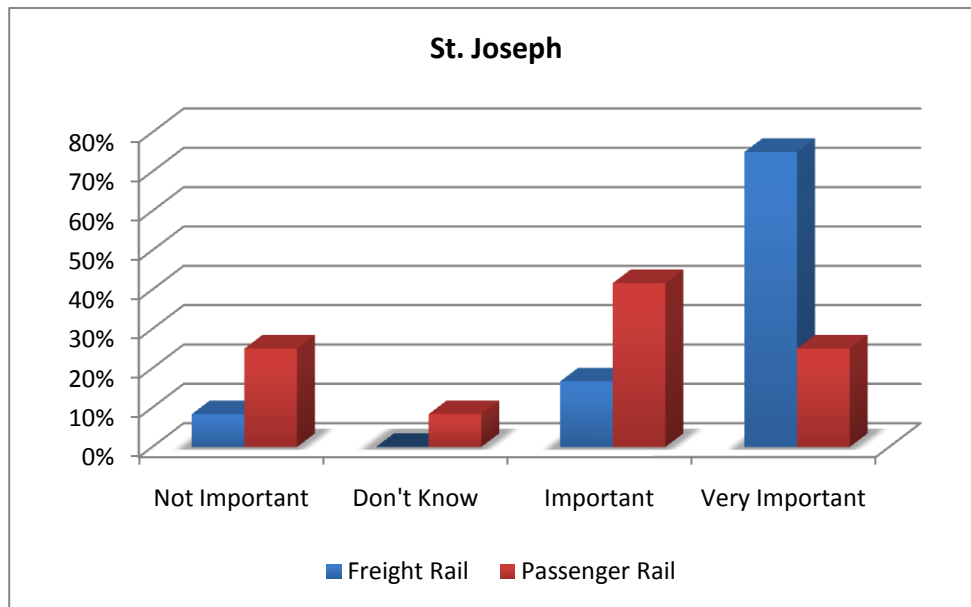
- Alan Tobias – HNTB
- Tom Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC
- Debra Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC

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



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

### *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

### *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

### *MoDOT Participants:*

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

### *Consultant Team Participants:*

- Alan Tobias – HNTB
- Kip Strauss – HNTB
- Tom Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC
- Debra Shrout – Avvantt Partners, LLC
- Kiran Rangarajan – Missouri S&T

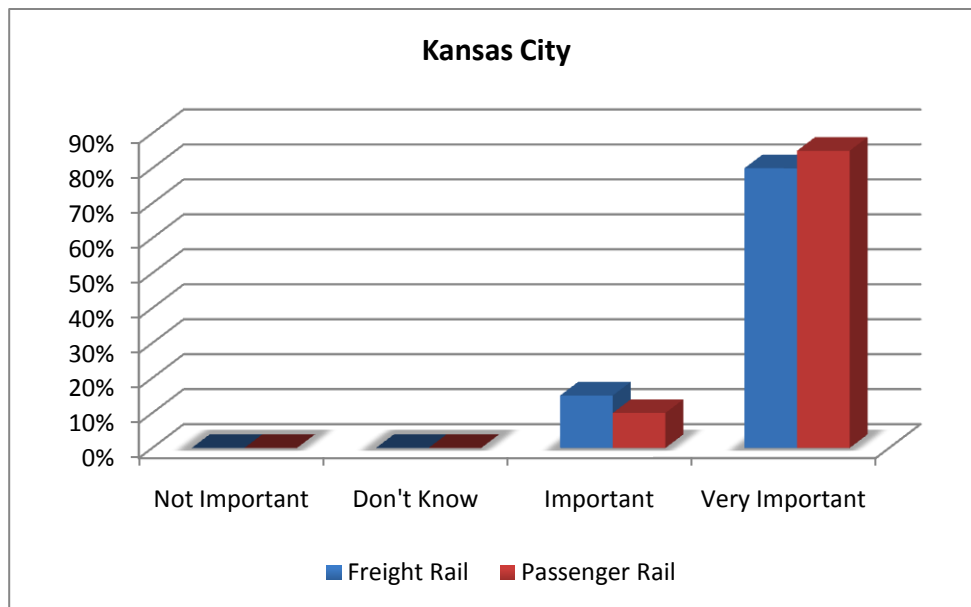
During the presentation/Q&A sessions, the following comments were made:

- 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 RiverRunner route in about 2 years.
- Funding
  - State looking for projects that 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 that serve 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 Kansas City. The comments reflected these same themes. Respondents indicated that 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 8: Importance of Rail - Kansas City Meetings**



## 6.7. Springfield Workshop and Meeting Summary

### *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

### *Location:*

Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

202 S. John Q. Hammons Parkway

Springfield, MO



*MoDOT Participants:*

- Rudolph Farber, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner, Vice Chair
- Eric Curtit – Administrator of Railroads
- Kristine Jamison – Rail Operations Manager
- Bob Edwards – Southwest District Public Relations Officer

*Consultant Team Participants:*

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

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 that have 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 that referred to a national plan which indicated a goal of having 80% 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: 5 hours and 90%)
- If you could travel it in 4 hours with a 95% 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 that 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 9: Importance of Rail - Springfield Meetings**

