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## FAQs

### The study and evaluation of truck-only lanes

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#### **Why is MoDOT studying I-70 again?**

MoDOT is working now so that when funding for I-70 improvements becomes available, the best possible plan is in place. That means making sure that recommendations keep pace with new approaches to ensure safety and manage congestion, like truck-only lanes. The work in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement will build on the effort that MoDOT began in 1999 to plan for I-70's future. Not only does this work help create a plan that is efficient, effective and reflects public input, it also means that MoDOT has followed the federally-mandated steps necessary to seek federal funds should they become available. This study will focus on comparing the impacts of the recommended alternative of reconstructing and widening I-70 to six general use lanes versus constructing truck-only lanes.

#### **Why study truck-only lanes now? What's different from what was studied before?**

- Truck traffic continues to increase on I-70;
- Missourians have asked if cars and trucks can be separated;
- There are new technologies that make that separation more feasible; and,
- Missouri has an important role in the nation's ability to move freight and support the U.S. economy, as demonstrated by Missouri's designation within the federal "Corridors of the Future" program. Because of Missouri's important role, that program has funded MoDOT's SEIS evaluating the possibility of truck lanes on I-70.

#### **What are the benefits of truck-only lanes?**

- Safety – Separating long-haul trucks from other traffic offers the opportunity for safer travel for all by reducing the number of car and truck interactions.
- Freight Efficiencies – Trucks play an increasingly important role in our economy, and truck lanes offer Missouri's – and the nation's – businesses greater efficiencies and reliability as they serve Missouri's businesses, farms and families.
- Redundancy – By having essentially two sets of lanes going each direction (general use lanes and separate truck-only lanes) if either set of lanes needed to be closed for any reason, all traffic could be shifted to the other, allowing traffic to continue to flow on I-70.
- Constructability – We know that closing lanes on I-70 for construction would create significant congestion and delays. The construction of separate, truck-only lanes could be accomplished with

fewer impacts to travelers. There are also a range of design- and construction-staging components that could be expedited by constructing separate lanes.

### **Trucking's economic impact in Missouri**

- Eight-seven percent of Missouri's communities are dependent on trucks to deliver products and raw materials.
- There are approximately 36,600 tractor-trailer trucks in Missouri, each representing not only a job for a driver, but also jobs for those individuals who make their living maintaining or servicing those trucks.
- Trucks in Missouri pay taxes on the more than 900 million gallons of fuel purchased in the state.
- The majority of Missouri's stores, restaurants, manufacturers, farmers and other businesses depend on truck deliveries to deliver and ship products. In fact, 57% of Missouri's outbound and 53% of the state's inbound goods are carried by trucks.

## **Truck-lane operations**

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### **How would truck-only lanes work?**

Trucks could access most Missouri locations via interchanges that would serve both trucks and other vehicles. Trucks would move between truck-only lanes and general use lanes (where trucks would travel with other vehicles) on slip ramps. They would access interchanges from general use lanes. Some locations could have interchanges that would keep trucks separated from other traffic.

### **What locations would have separate truck and general-use interchanges?**

All traffic would be able to access all of Missouri's interchanges. However, separate truck and general-use interchanges could be constructed only where there is significant truck traffic. The SEIS will develop specific criteria for determining where there would be separate interchanges for trucks, including standards for the amount of truck traffic, the ability of the connecting road system and community to accommodate that traffic, connectivity to inter-modal centers and an evaluation of the impacts of the larger interchanges.

### **Can trucks still use the general-purpose lanes and local interchanges?**

Yes. There will still be some trucks mixed with passenger traffic. Trucks going short distances and those trucks accessing local interchanges will both travel in lanes with passenger vehicles.

### **Where would truck lanes be built? Will it impact my property?**

MoDOT anticipates that the majority of new truck lanes and interchanges could be constructed within the right of way approved in the Improve I-70 Second Tier Environmental Studies; the SEIS will evaluate any additional impacts and weigh that evaluation in the final recommendation.

**How would a “truck” be defined?**

In the transportation industry, trucks are generally thought of as commercial vehicles used for moving materials, having three or more axles and weighing 22,000 pounds or more. Based on initial conversations with the trucking industry, MoDOT believes there is strong support from drivers and companies for truck-only lanes and their designation for commercial vehicles. As much as 70 percent of the truck traffic on I-70 in Missouri travels through the corridor, without scheduled stops, pick-ups or deliveries in the state.

**What percentage of trucks are involved with accidents on I-70?**

Trucks are involved in 28% of the accidents and 40% of fatalities on I-70.

**How will truck-only lanes be enforced?**

As with all highway laws, MoDOT will look to state and local law enforcement officials to enforce laws relating to highway travel. Fines or penalties are possible for improper use of truck-only lanes, but those have not yet been determined or proposed to Missouri’s governing bodies for approval. Along with coordination and approval by Missouri’s law-makers, regulations will also need to be consistent with federal laws and guidelines.

**If the number of trucks continues to increase, how long will two dedicated truck lanes last?**

The SEIS will evaluate the usefulness of truck-only lanes for the foreseeable future. Beyond a typical planning horizon of 20 to 30 years, projections become less and less reliable, as they are founded on local land use plans and economic forecast data for job creation, development and the like. MoDOT is evaluating improvements to help ensure that investments in design and construction serve the state of Missouri for as long as possible.

**What will happen with truck traffic in St. Louis, Columbia and Kansas City?**

- In St. Louis, MoDOT will be conducting a feasibility study to identify options for continuing separated truck lanes from I-70 west of St. Louis to I-70 in Illinois.
- In Columbia, the SEIS will evaluate if there is enough space for both the additional needed capacity and separate truck lanes on the current I-70 alignment, as recommended in the Second Tier studies.
- In Kansas City, MoDOT is conducting a special study to see where trucks are traveling to and from, and with that information, identify and evaluate general options for trucks leaving the truck-only lane system.

**When will construction start?**

There is currently no funding for design or construction, so a start date cannot be estimated.

## Other alternatives

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### **If multi-modal transportation is so important, shouldn't we be looking at improvements to the rail system instead?**

The earlier Improve I-70 Studies looked at the utility of Missouri's rail system for both passenger and freight rail travel to help reduce congestion on I-70. That research, including discussions with the rail industry, indicated Missouri's rail lines are also at or near capacity. MoDOT factored both existing and planned rail services, including ridership estimates, into the conclusion that traffic on I-70 will continue to increase and with that, the recommendation to widen and reconstruct I-70. This SEIS is focused only on evaluating truck-only lanes in comparison to the recommendations from the Second Tier studies that six lanes of new pavement be constructed across most of Missouri.

### **What about a high-speed rail corridor down the center of I-70?**

The high-speed rail option was one of several possibilities identified in the Improve I-70 studies. Because of challenges related to high-speed rail, including establishing safe connections to other rail facilities, there were significant environmental and community impacts, as well as costs, associated with the option and it was not identified as a preferred alternative.

### **Couldn't trucks travel on other highways?**

MoDOT has explored diverting traffic to other highway facilities, but as part of the national interstate highway system, long-distance and local travelers will continue to use I-70. Even significant improvements to other east-west corridors in Missouri would not draw enough traffic off I-70 to reduce the need for improvements to the interstate.

### **Is the study looking at bypass options in Columbia?**

In Columbia, the SEIS will evaluate if there is enough space for both the additional needed capacity and separate truck lanes on the current I-70 alignment, as recommended in the Second Tier studies. If there is not sufficient space, the SEIS will review other options to provide appropriate capacity, although development to the north of Columbia presents significant challenges in creating a bypass in the potential locations previously identified. Additionally, if a bypass alternative is indeed necessary, there will need to be careful consideration of how trucks serving Columbia businesses would access those locations, and the associated needed improvements to the local road and highway system, including U.S. 63.

## **Funding**

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### **How will improvements to I-70 be funded? What are the funding options available and will they be considered in the SEIS?**

Funding for either type of improvement to I-70 – truck lanes or rebuilding and widening – has not been identified. There are a range of initiatives at both the state and federal level to fund highway improvements. MoDOT does not have a preferred funding method, but is preparing to hit the ground running with design and construction when those funds become available. The SEIS will only evaluate the general impacts of a range of funding sources; it will not make a recommendation for a preferred method.

### **What role does tolling play in all of this?**

Tolling is one option being considered in the Missouri legislature, but tolls on Interstates and state highways currently are not allowed under Missouri state law. If tolls were to be allowed in Missouri, they would first have to be approved by voters in a public vote, giving their approval for tolling and with that, their approval for rates and guidelines.

## **Beyond Missouri**

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### **What is the “Corridors of the Future” program, and how does that effort affect Missouri?**

Nationally, there is growing emphasis on ensuring safe, efficient movement of freight. Designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as a “Corridor of the Future,” I-70 is recognized as a critical artery in getting goods to customers and keeping the U.S. competitive in a global economy. The “Corridor of the Future” designation, and the I-70 SEIS, enables MoDOT to study the benefits and impacts of truck-only dedicated lanes in more detail. Completing this additional analysis will position Missouri at the head of the line should more state and federal transportation funds become available.

**How does I-70 in Missouri fit into national transportation plans?**

Other states included in the I-70 Corridors of the Future program include Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. These states, along with Missouri and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), are working together to look at how to improve this 800-mile corridor. Because its previous efforts have developed detailed, long-term strategies to improve I-70, Missouri is several years closer to implementing long-term improvements than the other three states.

**What other states have truck-only lanes?**

This innovative solution has emerged recently as a way to deal with truck safety and congestion issues. While there are truck-only lanes that travel short distances in New Jersey, California and Texas, Missouri and Georgia are the first states in the U.S. to look at state- or corridor-wide strategies to separate truck traffic for long distances, but no states have yet implemented truck-only lanes through entire corridors. Because of MoDOT's planning strategies, Missouri is leading the nation in the evaluation of the impacts, costs and benefits of truck-only lanes.