

# Transportation

## Roadways

Transportation is a high priority in Springfield and Greene County. The City of Springfield’s Capital Improvements Program funds high-priority transportation needs through a ¼-cent sales tax with a three-year sunset provision. This provision holds the City accountable for fulfilling its pledges before seeking renewed taxpayer support. More than \$400 million in capital improvement projects have been completed in the past six years. Renewed in February 2004, the sales tax raised \$26 million to widen streets, improve intersections, add school sidewalks and traffic signals, and fund other projects such as neighborhood improvements.

The City of Springfield and Missouri Department of Transportation partner to use a ⅛-cent sales tax for such improvements as dual left-turn lanes on state roads within the City. This renewable sales tax was approved in 1996 and renewed in 2000 and 2004. It allows the city to move more quickly on projects without having to wait for state funding to become available. (<http://www.ci.springfield.mo.us/transportation/transportation.html>)

Springfield’s average commute time is comparatively low. In 1990, the commute time was 15.7 minutes and in 2000 the average commute time was 17 minutes. The upward trend is expected to continue with the increasing population and traffic volumes. All major streets are experiencing increasing traffic volumes, which means additional roadway improvements will be needed.

Safety is a top priority for the region (and for the state). Springfield and Greene County monitor accidents and make intersection improvements to decrease accident rates at major intersections.

- 20 intersections improved since 2000; 19 intersection improvement projects are planned.
- MoDOT’s safety campaign focuses on corridors with high accident rates.
- Concentration on engineering, enforcement and emergency response to reduce fatalities on Missouri’s roads.

Springfield, in conjunction with MoDOT, has developed a state-of-the-art Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), which uses technology to monitor and improve the flow of traffic in the area. The efficiency of Springfield’s system was highlighted in *USA Today* on April 20th, 2005.

- Traffic signals are connected by a loop system so they can be timed for the most efficient movement of traffic.
- This Advance Traffic Management System uses traffic signals, CCTV cameras, vehicle detectors, roadside electronic message signs, a traffic information website, and coordinates with Springfield-Greene County Emergency Communications (911) and other emergency response personnel.
- Dynamic message boards alert drivers of major delays and upcoming roadway construction.
- Most major intersections have cameras that feed real-time video to the traffic management center, to verify accidents and monitor traffic.
- Planned ITS advancements include additional cameras, dynamic message boards, vehicle detector stations, and related communications equipment.
- A new Regional Traffic Management Center Construction Project began in summer 2005 in the lower level of Heer’s Tower on Park Central Square downtown; this facility will allow City and MoDOT personnel to actively manage the regional roadway network through traffic signal control, roadway incident response, and traveler information.

Comparison Cities	Average Commute Time (minutes)
Peoria, IL	16.6
Springfield, MO	17.0
Wichita, KS	18.1
Chattanooga, TN	19.8
Little Rock, AR	19.5
Lexington, KY	19.3
Kansas City, MO	21.9
St. Louis, MO	25.1
Phoenix, AZ	26.1
Dallas, TX	26.9
Atlanta, GA	28.3

Source: 2000 census

## Pedestrians

Providing transportation opportunities for pedestrians has been a focus of capital improvements in the Springfield area.

- 3.22 miles of new sidewalks constructed by Springfield and three miles by Greene County, primarily near public schools, since 2003.
- Ozark Greenways provides important pedestrian connections for the area, especially for important recreational areas including the Springfield Nature Center, area parks, a golf course, Springfield Lake, and the James River. A future

Greenway connection to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is planned.

The Springfield Public School System, due to budget constraints, can no longer provide bus service to students who live within 1½ miles of school.

- Partnership with City Utilities has helped fill the gap; CU provides public transit service to each high school in town, six middle schools, and many elementary schools.
- The sidewalk programs of Springfield and Greene County have improved safety for students walking to school.
- Ozark Greenways provide connections to six area public schools with additional connections planned.

**Bicycles as Transportation.** The many active bicyclists in the Springfield area use an extensive on-street bicycle network; many improvements to the network are planned.

- Over two miles of bicycle lanes have been constructed in Springfield and Greene County.
- More than 50 miles of “Share the Road” routes exist.
- About 62 miles of Greenway trails exist, with many more miles planned.
- All CU buses have bike racks; the Park Central bus transfer station offers free secured bicycle storage.
- Bicycle Parking Racks are required on new commercial construction.

**Transit and Paratransit.** City Utilities operates a fixed route and paratransit (for disabled passengers) bus system. The fixed route system operates on a fixed schedule seven days a week (see <http://www.cityutilities.net> for the schedule). Ridership has increased by 6,000 passengers since 2003. There are 26 fixed route buses and five paratransit buses (for disabled passengers) in the fleet.

CU and the City of Springfield have partnered to reduce bus and automobile congestion by constructing bus turnouts on major roadways. Since 2000, 25 bus turnouts have been constructed (seven in 2004). More than 30 additional turnouts are planned in the next few years.

### CITY UTILITIES BUS SYSTEM

	2001	2002	2003	2004
CU Total Passengers	1,515,611	1,509,686	1,539,264	1,545,267
CU Bus Miles	1,127,665	1,215,805	1,229,100	1,191,807

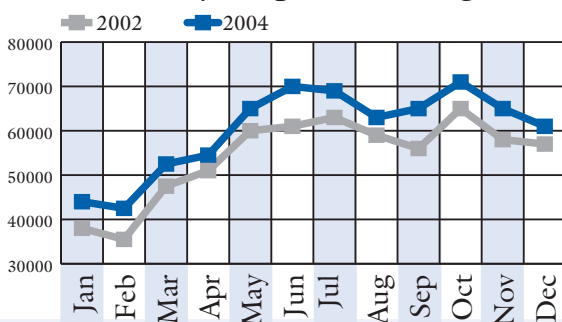
Paratransit service gives those who, due to a disability, cannot access the fixed routes. CU Access Express provides curb-to-curb service by reservation. Older Adults Transportation System (OATS) provides service both inside and outside of the city limits. Several not-for-profit agencies also provide paratransit services to their clients, including Eldercare Transit Service's door-through-door service.

However, there is a growing need for door-through-door service for the many elderly and disabled individuals without transportation, and Eldercare cannot accommodate everyone who needs help. The high costs of liability insurance for door-through-door paratransit service contributes to this shortage. Additional funding is needed to meet the increasing paratransit demands. In addition, coordination is needed among the more than 20 not-for-profit transportation providers that currently offer a variety of transportation services with little coordination among the various groups.

**Airport.** The Springfield-Branson Regional Airport serves as the primary airport for the region. The total number of airport passengers is increasing and the airport is growing.

- In 2004, 721,958 passengers flew into or out of the airport, surpassing the previous, pre-9/11 record from 2000.
- Non-stop service to nine cities is offered (up from six in 2000), with two more planned by the end of 2005 ([http://sgf-branson-airport.com/about\\_us/index.htm](http://sgf-branson-airport.com/about_us/index.htm)).
- The number of available daily seats is 1,802, up from 1,217 in 2000—an increase of 67% in five years.
- Departure studies consistently find about 60% of passengers traveling for business and 40% for leisure.
- The current terminal is operating at capacity; a new mid-field terminal, now being designed and expected to be completed by late 2008, will accommodate increasing demand for many years.

SGF Monthly Airport Passenger Trend



SGF Total Airport Passengers

