

River, Road, & Rail Committee

2026 Action Summary

Purpose

The River, Road, & Rail Committee brings together transportation agencies, economic development organizations, port partners, and community leaders to strengthen communication, improve regional coordination, and share information on transportation issues that affect the Tri-State region. The committee serves as a forum for collaboration across state and jurisdictional boundaries while helping communities better understand transportation priorities and opportunities.

The Opportunity

Tri-State Development was officially founded following the Flood of 1993, when communities recognized that transportation infrastructure and economic activity do not stop at county or state lines. Roads, rail, river transportation, and freight networks connect the region's workforce, businesses, and communities every day. The committee recognizes that while transportation priorities are established through state and local planning processes, opportunities exist to strengthen communication, encourage collaboration, and improve understanding of projects that have regional significance.

2026 Highlights

Strengthening Transportation Partnerships

The committee strengthened relationships among transportation partners across the Tri-State region, including the Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa Departments of Transportation, Mid-America Port Commission, Corn Belt Ports, Amtrak, economic development organizations and community leaders.

Understanding Transportation Priorities

Committee discussions provided members with a better understanding of how transportation priorities are identified and advanced within each state. While each state and community has unique needs, the conversations reinforced the value of regional awareness and cross-state communication.

Refining the Committee's Role

Through these discussions, the committee recognized that its greatest value is not duplicating existing transportation planning efforts but serving as a regional convener—bringing partners together, sharing information, and fostering collaboration on issues that affect the broader Tri-State region.

Convening Regional Partners

The committee supported regional dialogue through its meetings and the Annual River & Port Meeting, creating opportunities for transportation partners to share updates, discuss emerging issues, and strengthen relationships across state lines.

Providing Transportation Resources

State and local transportation agencies have well-established processes and expertise for transportation planning and project prioritization. Rather than attempting to duplicate those efforts, Tri-State Development serves as a regional partner by strengthening regional communication, convening transportation partners, and sharing information and resources that support communities throughout the Tri-State region.

The committee also highlights resources that help communities better understand the region's transportation network, including annually updated regional transportation maps generously provided by **Klingner & Associates, P.C.**, whose continued support helps make these resources available.

Looking Ahead

During its first year, the committee gained a clearer understanding of where it can provide the greatest value. Building on the relationships established this year, the committee will continue strengthening regional communication, convening transportation partners, and sharing information and resources that support communities throughout the Tri-State region.

Beginning in 2027, the committee will meet quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled as needed to address emerging transportation issues and opportunities. As new transportation needs arise, Tri-State Development will continue serving as a regional convener—bringing partners together, facilitating information sharing, and connecting communities with available resources and expertise.

Partner with Tri-State Development

Communities and organizations are encouraged to contact Tri-State Development when regional transportation data, research support, or connections to transportation partners may be helpful.

Additional Resources

- Transportation Maps