



Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Policies

Category: HIGHWAYS
Subcategory: Highway Beautification
Sub-Subcategory: Rest Areas

The Commission first authorized the construction of rest areas along Missouri's Interstate Highway System on December 17, 1962. While state statutes permit the use of condemnation to acquire property needed for rest areas, it prohibits the use of state funds for rest areas. Prior to the 1982 Surface Transportation Act, federal law prohibited commercial activity in rest areas. State statutes continue to prohibit the Commission from operating any commercial facilities in rest or recreation areas; however, the statutes give preference to the Bureau of the Blind to operate vending machines on state property.

In 1987, the Commission outsourced maintenance of rest areas to sheltered workshop. In 2004 the Commission expressed its endorsement of agreements with the sheltered workshops, not only to save money on rest area cleaning, but also to provide meaningful, productive work for Missourians whose employment opportunities may be limited. This positive arrangement continues today.

In keeping with a rest area renovation plan developed in cooperation with the Division of Tourism, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and the Missouri State Highway Patrol, old rest areas are being converted to new welcome centers or truck parking only facilities. Since 2002 available parking for commercial truck drivers has increased to 1027 spacing, nearly double the previous capacity. When the plan is complete, motorists will be able to take advantage of 24 facilities at 16 different locations along the interstate; however, completion of the plan is dependent upon future funding.