

November 21, 2011

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

## **Holiday Traffic and Seasonal Traffic Signal Timing**

City of Springfield and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) staff at the Traffic Management Center of the Ozarks will be implementing transportation management strategies to help accommodate the traditionally higher traffic volumes experienced during the holiday shopping season. These include modifying signal timing and camera viewing hours; utilizing new Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) as needed; reminding motorists of traffic tips; and continuation of major roadway improvements in the Springfield area.

### Signals and Cameras

**Seasonal Traffic Signal Timing Plans** – Special seasonal timing plans will be implemented on Nov. 25, the Friday after Thanksgiving, and every weekend during the holiday shopping season. These traffic signal timing plans are designed to provide greater capacity in and around major retail shopping corridors to help accommodate higher holiday traffic volumes. Additionally, signals around major shopping centers will begin running special signal plans earlier and later, as needed, to cover extended shopping hours. Due to the high number of entertainment and dining opportunities in downtown, higher than normal traffic volumes are expected in the Center City area during the holiday season.

**On-Street Camera Monitoring** – Operators at the Transportation Management Center of the Ozarks will monitor traffic flows for congestion and vehicular incidents by using on-street traffic monitoring cameras placed near major intersections in the busy shopping areas of south Springfield. Operators will work the Friday after Thanksgiving, including Saturdays and Sundays until Christmas, as necessary to monitor traffic flow, respond to observed problems, and provide updated traveler information. Sources for traffic information are as follows:

**OzarksTraffic.info** – The camera images of roadways are available online at [www.ozarkstraffic.info](http://www.ozarkstraffic.info). The site allows users to view hundreds of images from nearly 70 roadside traffic cameras throughout Springfield and Southwest Missouri. The site also contains up-to-date information on current incidents, such as crashes and stalled vehicles that affect traffic flow in the Springfield Metro area. Motorists are encouraged to visit the site to check traffic conditions before beginning their travel in the area.

**Live Traffic Video** – CityView, the City's government access channel, will offer extended live video feeds from the traffic-monitoring cameras throughout the holiday season. Normal viewing times are 6:30 to 8:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. 24/7 access to traffic-monitoring cameras is available on digital cable channel 15.2 and 80.2.

Extended viewing will be available at the following times:

- Friday, Nov. 25 – 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.;
- Saturdays from Nov. 26 – Dec. 17 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.;
- Sundays from Nov. 27 – Dec. 18 - noon to 4 p.m.; and
- Saturday, Dec. 24 – 7:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Additional times may be scheduled as traffic or weather conditions warrant.

CityView is available to Springfield Mediacom subscribers on digital cable channels 80, 81 (with a converter box), and 15.1, 15.2, 80.1 and 80.2 (for QAM-tuner-equipped TVs) on Mediacom and on AT&T's U-verse channel 99. CityView also is available via videostreaming on the City's website at [www.springfieldmo.gov/cityview](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/cityview).

**Travel During Inclement Winter Weather** – TMC staff will work extended hours, when necessary, during periods of inclement winter weather to monitor traffic conditions and provide updated traveler information. When travel is necessary under such conditions, motorists should use extra caution by reducing speeds and increasing following distances. Extended viewing of live video feeds on CityView will be made available to show road conditions during these times. In the event of traffic tie-ups, the TMC will post alerts on [www.ozarkstraffic.info](http://www.ozarkstraffic.info) to aid local media in releasing traffic information to motorists to help them avoid major congestion.

An active LED warning message sign, which displays the message "Red Signal Ahead" alerts eastbound motorists approaching Lone Pine Avenue on Battlefield Road that they will need to stop for a red signal. Using this advanced warning at times when the roadway has snow or ice conditions will help motorists know when to exercise special care on the steep downhill slope as they approach the traffic signal at Lone Pine.

Similarly, "Ice on Bridge" signs are activated when needed on the Martin Luther King Bridge (on Benton Avenue). This season the Grant Avenue bridge will have static signs warning motorists that the 'bridge ices before roadway.'

### Shopping Traffic Tips

**Extended Shopping Hours** – Shoppers are encouraged to take advantage of extended shopping hours offered by many businesses to help reduce the peak traffic loads that are expected on the day after Thanksgiving and on weekends through the first week in January. Past experience indicates that the peak traffic on the three days after Thanksgiving occurs between noon and 2 p.m.

Other suggestions include:

- Before leaving your home, tune into local traffic reports on TV, then tune into the radio for additional traffic reports while you travel.
- Pre-plan your shopping route to help reduce the need to double back on the same roadway and pre-select lanes of travel for turns to better access to each business.
- Do not follow other motorists too closely.
- Be patient and courteous to other motorists.
- Plan trips to better utilize less congested roadways.

- Consider walking, carpooling, or taking the bus.
- If traffic does back up, do not block intersections.

### Major Improvement Projects

**Interchange/Roadway Improvements** – Several construction projects around Springfield will be noticed by traveling motorists during the holiday shopping season.

The widening of U.S. 65 to six lanes between U.S. 60 and Interstate 44 was completed several months ago. The addition of these lanes has proved to be beneficial in adding the necessary capacity needed to handle the growth of traffic on the east side of Springfield. Sound-wall construction on U.S. 65 north of U.S. 60 up to a point north of Sunshine continues. This work continues to cause delays on side streets adjacent to U.S. 65 in these areas.

The U.S. 60 (James River Freeway) and U.S. 65 (Schoolcraft Freeway) Interchange project is progressing and motorists are requested to exercise caution while traffic is maintained through the construction area. Highlights of this project include:

- The new northbound to westbound flyover has been completed and is open to traffic;
- The new eastbound to northbound flyover and the eastbound to southbound bridge/ramp are completed and opened to traffic;
- The westbound to northbound ramp has been completed and is open to traffic.
- Currently, head-to-head driving conditions exist on U.S. 60 between the railroad tracks and James River/Lake Springfield bridges to allow for the westbound bridge to be built over the railroad tracks and the westbound bridge to be built over Lake Springfield.
- A detour is currently in place due to the closure of the westbound to southbound cloverleaf ramp; and,
- The speed limit on southbound U.S. 65 is reduced to 50 mph due to a lane shift just north of the James River Freeway bridges.

The widening of Campbell Avenue from Republic Road to Plainview Road to six lanes is also progressing. Lanes on Campbell have been narrowed for work on the new outside lanes and within adjacent rights-of-way. Work locations vary along the entire corridor. The James River Freeway eastbound to Campbell Avenue southbound separate right turn lane remains closed for widening work between the eastbound ramps and the El Camino Alto signal. Motorist should drive slowly, use caution, and respect construction signage along the entire corridor.

The new intersection project at Campbell Avenue and Weaver Road continues; however, motorists should again use caution in this area due to narrow lanes on Campbell. This project includes a relocation of Weaver Road to the north of the existing intersection.

The Kansas Expressway bridges south of Division Street over the railroad yard are primarily complete and all lanes of traffic are open to motorists.

For more information, contact: Jason Haynes, City of Springfield, at (417) 864-1167; or Adam Humphrey, MoDOT, at (417) 829-8044.