



December 8, 2023

Patrick K. McKenna
Director, Missouri Department of Transportation
105 W. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Subject: US Bicycle Route 51 and 251 designations from Arkansas through Southwestern Missouri

Director McKenna,

Missourians for Responsible Transportation (MRT)—a partnership between Trailnet in St. Louis, BikeWalkKC in Kansas City, Ozark Greenways in Springfield, Local Motion in Columbia, and rural communities across the state—is writing you to extend our support for the designation of the proposed U.S. Bicycle Route 51 and U.S. Bicycle Route 251 (USBR51/251).

MRT's mission is to be the leader in fostering strong communities by aligning advocacy efforts for streets, roads, and trails that work for all Missourians. Founded in 2018, MRT serves as an umbrella partnership that brings together communities and grassroots organizations from urban and rural areas to advocate with one voice at the state level for a fiscally responsible, safe, and equitable transportation system. We have worked extensively in communities along the proposed routes, and learned from our partners Ozark Greenways in Springfield, that there is a deep desire to capture the economic opportunities through tourism and support of small, rural businesses that would be enhanced with these proposed routes. Additionally, we recognize immense opportunities for USBR51/251 to increase the health and overall safety and visibility of the community members who rely on bicycle riding as a legitimate transportation option to access daily destinations such as housing, work and school, grocery stores and pharmacies, and recreation.

In a car-dependent landscape, a safe and economically vibrant alternative route through USBR51/251 will provide enhanced access to everyday destinations, benefiting the overall traveling public—car drivers and bicycle riders alike. Therefore, MRT wholeheartedly expresses its support for USBR51/251 and requests that the appropriate officials nominate the routes for AASHTO designation as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taylor March".

Taylor March
Executive Director, Missourians for Responsible Transportation