



Northeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission

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NORTHEAST MISSOURI

Transportation Advisory Council

Evan Glasgow – Chairman / Mari Macomber – Vice Chairman

NEMO TAC Exec Board Meeting, Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room, 121 S. Cecil, Memphis, MO

Attendance: Attendance sheet attached.

Meeting was called to order by Evan Glasgow at 1:00 P.M.

Previous Minutes: Motion to approve previous meeting minutes of the 11/17/2021 meeting was made by Wayne Blum. Duane Ebeling, seconded. All were in favor.

TAC Update: Chris Feeney presented the TAC update for the 1st quarter of 2022.

- He presented updates on a pair of ongoing port projects in the region.
 - NEMO RPC is working with the Clark County Commission and has commissioned a strategic plan and market study for a potential Mississippi River port in Clark County. The project is being funded in part by a portion of the NEMO RPC EDA CARES grant. An official call for proposals resulted in five potential providers. The project has been awarded to Decision Innovation Solutions. NEMO RPC is working to secure a MASBDA grant to fund the remainder of the project cost. That grant application deadline is in April. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year.
 - NEMO RPC is also partnering with Lewis County Port Authority in efforts to potentially prepare an application for a federal Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) grant. The new federal transportation bill allocated \$450 million annually each of the next five years for the PIDP program. A minimum of 25% of the funds are reserved for small projects (\$11.25 million or less) in small ports. Feeney and Ralph Martin are working with Mrs. Branden Villalona, the Acting Director Inland Waterways Gateway office.
- Correspondence from the City of Kirksville was presented to the TAC members thanking them for their efforts in prioritizing the Baltimore Street project in Kirksville which is nearing completion. The city council members thanked the TAC for supporting Build Baltimore Better, a \$4.9 million project that made significant improvements between Illinois and Patterson Streets on the former Highway 63 route through the city. The project included improved sewer systems, drainage, new curbs, storm water inlets, sidewalk improvements and road resurfacing.

- MoDOT's Amy Crawford gave an update on the project, which is nearing completion but has been hampered by the main contractor declaring bankruptcy. She indicated it was the first time in more than 20 years she had faced that situation.
- Feeney gave an update from the Annual State Transportation Planner Meeting held in February. He shared information from the meeting including updates by MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna.
 - He noted that Director McKenna indicated the state expects to get through 20-25% of the unfunded needs list thanks to increased revenue.
 - The director shared a MoDOT Report Card that gave the department A's for road conditions, customer satisfaction, administrative costs and project management, while resulting in failing grades (F's) for bridge conditions, revenue and employee turnover.
 - The A grade in road condition is only for National Highway System Roads (doesn't include low volume routes). Governor Parson is calling for a \$100 million infusion of state's ARPA funds to address lettered routes. This is in addition to the \$25 million MoDOT is allocating in the Asset Management Deficit program.
 - Rep. Danny Busick was in attendance and praised the efforts of the governor to include the budget allocation for lettered routes, noting he was hopeful the bulk of the funds would be coming to north Missouri where the conditions are the worst.
 - The director highlighted MoDOT's employment issues, reporting employee turnover in FY2022 already at 444, with MoDOT experiencing turnover from FY2016 – FY2021 of 3,660 of its total 5,111 employees.
 - Mari Macomber asked if the turnover figures include natural attrition such as retirement, and Crawford said it does. She added that MoDOT had an 80 and out retirement plan until about 10 years ago, when it was transitioned into a 90 and out.
 - The state transportation financial outlook was also discussed at the annual meeting and shared with the TAC. MoDOT reported a \$2.5 billion package for the 2016-2020 STIP, with the 2022-2026 able to expand to \$6.09 billion. MoDOT has projected that figure will grow to \$9.05 billion, a 52% increase, thanks to new revenue from the state fuel tax increase (SB262) combined with added funding in the federal transportation bill. If the fuel tax is repealed, those numbers could drop to \$4.8 billion, reflecting lost fuel tax revenue as well as the corresponding loss in federal funds that the state would not have the funds to match to be able to draw down.
 - TAC Chairman Evan Glasgow asked about the status of the proposed repeal of the state fuel tax increase. Rep. Busick stated he believed it was simply a political ploy, as the bill's sponsor is running for a federal office, and that he didn't expect the bill to gain any real traction. MoDOT's Rob Freese noted that the bill had been voted out of committee, so there was potential for concern. Busick said he was not a fan of taxes, but felt this was more of a user fee and was the fairest way to fund transportation so he would continue to support SB262. In addition to working to keep SB262, the representative noted there are battles looming to suspend both the state and federal fuel taxes because of the current high fuel prices.
- The TAC launched efforts to start the next rounds of needs lists rankings for MoDOT. Discussion centered around methods to produce added public engagement to help local transportation needs.
 - Mari Macomber asked about the TAC calendar and potential deadlines for new projects to be considered.

- Rob and Amy from MoDOT noted that ideally the rankings could be completed by the TAC in time to be utilized for the annual creation of the state unfunded needs lists which are compiled at the MoDOT district level in September and October.
- Previously the NEMO RPC TAC calendar had called for the final rankings to be completed in December, so the calendar will be updated to move each quarter's work schedules up one quarter. Instead of having the rankings completed in December, the TAC will not complete that process in August or September.
- Chairman Glasgow noted that while the process requires plenty of engagement from the TAC members, that is hard to argue with the results, as a number of projects from the list are getting completed. RPC Executive Director Derek Weber added that with a number of asset management projects being addressed, the region may soon be able to turn its attention to more expansion and economic development priorities for the transportation system.
- As part of the new needs list, the group reviewed the region's bridge status, both at the state and local level and also discussed the new \$26.5 billion federal funding package for bridges. Missouri is expected to receive \$484.3 million over the five-years of the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). There are 11 poor rated bridges in Adair County, with 8 of the 11 being addressed in the FARM Bridge program or the MoDOT STIP. Clark County has one poor rated state bridge and Knox County has three. Four of the six poor rated bridges in Lewis County are being addressed thru FARM or the STIP, while seven of the eight in Schuyler County and all seven of the bridges in Scotland County are as well. All told, 26 of 36 bridges have been programmed, leaving 10 to be addressed as priority needs.
 - Mark Shahan asked about the MO 11 bridge projects in Adair County and discussed the MoDOT detour policy with Amy Crawford.

NE District MODOT: Amy Crawford reported on Work Zone Awareness week in April. She advised the group the Missouri Highway Commission monthly meetings may be attended virtually or viewed later on line.

Rob Frese updated the TAC on the STIP schedule, with the draft version now being considered by the Central office before heading to the Highway Commission in May. There will be a 30-day public comment period in June before it receives final approval by the commission in July.

Rob and Amy introduced Lori Smith, the new Local Public Agency (LPA) contact for the northeast district. She is replacing the retired Bob Mantzke.

Commissioner Duane Ebeling asked about the Route D bridge project in Scotland County. It was originally included in the FARM program, but was not completed due to funding cuts. Rob and Amy indicated that those bridges were removed from the STIP in anticipation they would be completed by FARM, but are required to be returned to the STIP.

Clark County Commissioner Buddy Kattelmann reported meeting with Rob and Amy earlier in the week and suggested the TAC consider supporting resurfacing, improving and even potentially creating a shared three-lane on Highway 136 across the entirety of north Missouri.

Legislative Update: Rep. Danny Busick pledged to do his best to fight the repeal of the gas tax. Bryan Nichols from Rep. Sam Graves' office gave an update on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and noted that they are working on oversight of the huge spending program to ensure the money is being spent where it supposed to be, noting concerns that rural, traditional transportation needs are being ignored by the administration which is instead shifting spending toward environmental and alternative modes special interests. Payton Ruddy from Sen. Blunt's office highlighted some of wins for the region in the BIL that Sen. Blunt was instrumental in securing.

Adjournment: Wayne Murphy, Jr. made a motion to adjourn at 1:54 p.m. Jim Werner seconded the motion. Meeting concluded at 1:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Chris Feeney, Transportation Planner, NEMO RPC