

**MINUTES
OF
THE OZARK FOOTHILLS TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

JULY 23, 2020
OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

OZARK FOOTHILLS RPC, POPLAR BLUFF, MISSOURI**

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brian Polk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Open for Public Discussion

Attendance was taken as some TAC and MoDOT representatives were joining the meeting remotely via videoconference or teleconference.

III. Adoption of January 9, 2020 Minutes

The minutes of the January 9, 2020 TAC meeting were reviewed. The minutes were adopted on a motion by Jesse Roy, Ripley County, and second by Vince Lampe, Butler County.

IV. Missouri Department of Transportation Reports

Chris Crocker, MoDOT Southeast District, announced that at this time there is not expected to be a call for projects for the Transportation Alternative Program due to budget shortfalls from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Crocker also announced that the BRO program will be changing the distribution method for funding. While the exact method and distribution methods are still being decided, the funds will be distributed to MoDOT districts instead of individual counties. The requirements for bridges to be eligible for BRO funding will also be changing, and thus the district as a whole will move from approximately 400 eligible bridges to around 100 eligible bridges.

Joe Loyd, Reynolds County, asked if the determining factor is the condition of the bridges and if that is determined by MoDOT. Mr. Crocker stated that the funds will be distributed based on more quantitative data than qualitative, but the exact format, such as a call for projects or creating a priority list with a assistance from the RPCs is still being determined. Entities will still need a Person of Responsible Charge on staff, and the distribution of funds to the districts will mean cities and special road districts will need to apply. Soft match of 20% will still be required.

Dave Wyman, MoDOT Southeast District, stated that 80% of MoDOT's staff is currently utilizing the Shared Work Program, and only working 32 hours a week. This has changed some production goals, as employees are more spread out. Expenditures have been limited due to the pandemic, and MoDOT is operating on about \$1 million a month, down from the

\$6 million it usually takes to keep everything running. MoDOT has also issued a hiring freeze, so positions such as the Southeast District Engineer position, that was vacated when Mark Shelton retired earlier this year, is not being replaced at this time.

Mr. Wyman also mentioned that traffic volume is down 40%; however, fatalities are up 16% statewide and 9% in the Southeast District.

Mike Brandon, MoDOT Southeast District, provided a handout with work zone updates for the region. No new projects have been added to the work plan, as MoDOT did not produce a new STIP this year. Current projects were spread out another year to help control the budget, as MoDOT is still waiting to see just how severe of a financial strain has been caused by COVID-19. The first three years of the STIP are still fully funded, and projects identified in the STIP will be completed, but some have been delayed.

V. Transportation Planning Coordinator Report

Ozark Foothills Transportation Planning Coordinator Andrew Murphy informed the TAC that Carter County was awarded a Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grant for bridge replacement of a low water crossing where state maintenance of Highway E ends and County Road 236 begins. This project was awarded \$291,134 and leads to the National Park Service's Hickory Campground.

Mr. Murphy informed the TAC the Ozark Foothills RPC submitted an application to the MoDOT Traffic and Highway Safety Grant Program in February to provide technical assistance and educational opportunities for our school districts, cities, and counties to assist with seat belt ordinances and presentations.

Also, in February the planning commission submitted an application on behalf of the City of Piedmont to construct a walking trail to connect Handy and Ash Parks through flood-buyout greenway. The total project cost is \$127,666 with the grant request being \$89,466 and a 30% match with the city putting in \$37,200 and \$1,000 from Washington University. The project has been recommended by the State of Missouri to FHWA for funding approval.

Joint TAC/County Commission meetings were held in March to allow an opportunity for members of the public to meet with their local TAC members and provide feedback regarding the prioritization process.

Mr. Murphy announced the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which usually opens in January, have not opened yet, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications are expected to open during August with an October 1, 2020 due date.

The LPA Advisory Committee meeting for the month of April was delayed until May and the committee met in May and July via video conference. The biggest news to come from these meetings have been the decision to change the BRO funding distribution to a regional approach, and to utilize the planning framework process to see which projects receive funding each year. The exact method, and when this change will begin, has not been decided yet.

VI. Old Business

Mr. Murphy attended the Ag Expo on January 31-February 1, 2020 at the Black River Coliseum. Attendance was down and we received our lowest number of comments at a single event, down nearly 50% from the previous two years. The main comments received were widening or 4-laning Highway 53, 4-lane Highway 67 to Arkansas, widen and improve T Highway to Lake Wappapello, and the need of a city bus in Poplar Bluff.

VII. New Business

Mr. Murphy announced that TAC officer terms were coming to an end in 2020, with new four-year terms to begin in 2021-2024. On a motion by Jesse Roy, Ripley County, and second by Angela Smith, Wayne County, the reappointment of Brian Polk, Wayne County, as Chairman, and Vince Lampe, Butler County, as Vice-Chairman, was passed unanimously.

After discussion, each county submitted the county-wide priorities for projects, maintenance, and multi-modal needs. See attached list below.

VIII. General Discussion

The next TAC meeting will occur on September 24, 2020. Voting for this year's project priorities will be completed electronically, per the by-laws on electronic voting, and will be completed before the next meeting. The next meeting may be in the same format as tonight's meeting, or will take place entirely via video/teleconference.

IX. Adjournment

Vince Lampe moved to adjourn. Chairman Polk adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

TAC Project Priority List

2020 Identified Needs by County

Butler County

1. 4-lane Highway 67 from Highway 160 to the state line
2. Route T: 2 foot asphalt shoulders from Butler County line to Highway 60
3. Route M 2 miles west of Route 67 – Add Shoulders and level hill or reroute County Road 459/M Highway Junction and straighten Twin Springs Hill

Carter County

1. Overlay and add shoulders to D Highway
2. Route A: Eliminate narrow bridge in Ellsinore
3. Route N: Widen and eliminate one-lane bridge over Middle Brushy Creek

Reynolds County

1. Highway K: Ellington to Annapolis, add shoulders
2. Add bike lane for TransAmerica Bike Trail on Highway 76 Bike Route
3. Guardrails on Highway 106 at landslide area

Ripley County

1. Highway 142 West at Gatewood – Narrow bridge
2. Repair Highway 21 South at Briar Creek – Dip in Road from flooding
3. Highway 160 – Repair poor construction so people do not get sea sick

Wayne County

1. Low Water Dip on C Highway approximately 1 mile northwest of C & E Junction
2. Safety Shoulders on Highway 49 from Highway 67 to Mill Spring and Piedmont to Iron County line and widen existing box culverts
3. Repair small bridge on A Highway (1/2 mile west of Highway 67) with large box culvert

TAC Maintenance Priority List

2020 Identified “Maintenance Needs” by County

Butler County

1. Resurface Route O
2. Repair/Resurface Butzen Drive
3. Resurface Route NN

Carter County

1. Redesign median crossover of Highway V & Highway A at Highway 60 in Ellsinore
2. Overlay Highway V & H in East Carter County
3. Add Shoulders and rumblestrips to Highway 103

Reynolds County

1. Overlay O Highway
2. Repair 3 bridges over Black River on Highway 21 where bridges connect with Highway
3. Highway 72 overlay from 72/21 Junction to 72/32 Junction

Ripley County

1. Add Shoulders on Highway 160 W from Doniphan to C Highway
2. Overlay EE Highway
3. Overlay T Highway

Wayne County

1. Highway 49: Resurface from Williamsville to Iron County Line
2. Overlay Route 49 from Highway 67 to west junction of Route A
3. Overlay Route A from west junction of Highway 49 to US Highway 60 East

TAC Multi-Modal Priority List

2020 Identified “Multi-Modal Needs” by County

Butler County

1. Extend the Poplar Bluff airport runway
2. Improve Amtrak Depot service facility
3. Pedestrian Overpass over UP Railroad along Highway 53

Carter County

1. Construct new helipads
2. Improve road to the Van Buren Airport
3. Ramps for various sidewalks in Van Buren

Reynolds County

1. Add bike lane for TransAmerica Bike Trail on Highway 76 Bike Route
2. Sikewalk repair/construction in City of Ellington
3. Sidewalk repair/construction in Bunker on main and 4th Streets

Ripley County

1. Add/repair sidewalks on Walnut Street, from Summit to Highway Street, and Highway Street, from Lafayette to Walnut Street, for safe pedestrian and wheelchair access to north end of shopping center
2. Sidewalks on Highway 142 E (Walnut Street) and west on Washington Street to Courthouse
3. Ellington to Van Buren to Grandin to Doniphan bike trail extension that ties in with TransAmerica Trail in Ellington

Wayne County

1. Extend pedestrian trail to tie Handy Park to existing trail system in Piedmont
2. Sidewalk construction on Cemetery Road in Williamsville
3. Sidewalk repair/construction in City of Greenville

TAC ATTENDANCE ROSTER

July 23, 2020

Ms. Crystal Jones	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Andrew Murphy	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Vince Lampe	Butler County
Mr. Don Anderson	Butler County
Mr. Dennis LeGrand	Butler County
Mr. Jeff Darnell	Butler County
Mr. Bill Robison	Butler County
Mr. Ron Keeney	Carter County
Mr. Wayne Gibbs	Carter County
Mr. Joe Loyd	Reynolds County
Mr. Doug Warren	Reynolds County
Ms. Renee Horn	Reynolds County
Mr. Darrell Dement	Reynolds County
Mr. Jesse Roy	Ripley County
Mr. Gary Emmons	Ripley County
Mr. Dennis Cox	Ripley County
Ms. Rickie Maples	Ripley County
Mr. Brian Polk	Wayne County
Ms. Angela Smith	Wayne County
Ms. Kathy Street	Wayne County (alternate)
Mr. Mike Brandon	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. David Wyman	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. Chris Crocker	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Elquin Auala	MoDOT Southeast District

THOSE NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Jordan Collins	Carter County
Mr. Tom Wilder	Carter County
Mr. Eddie Williams	Reynolds County
Ms. Tami Hale	Ripley County
Mr. Bill Kirkpatrick	Wayne County
Mr. Chad Henson	Wayne County
Mr. Doug Wood	Wayne County