

**MINUTES
OF
THE OZARK FOOTHILLS TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**APRIL 9, 2026
OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

OZARK FOOTHILLS RPC, POPLAR BLUFF, MISSOURI

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brian Polk called the meeting to order at 5:56 p.m.

II. Open for Public Discussion

No public discussion ensued.

III. Adoption of January 8, 2026 Minutes

The minutes of the January 8, 2026 TAC meeting were reviewed. The minutes were adopted on a motion by Jesse Roy, Ripley County, and second by Michael Williams, Ripley County.

IV. Guest Presentation

Ashley Metelski, MoDOT Southeast District, representing the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, provided a presentation on the Coalition as well as regional safety statistics and initiatives:

- Statistics: In 2025, 63% of fatalities involved unbuckled occupants. As of March 31, 2026, fatalities are down about 35% compared to last year. Motorcycle fatalities have been on the rise since the repeal of the helmet law.
- Safe System Approach: The "Show-Me Zero" state blueprint follows the safe system approach to eliminate injuries and fatalities. The Southeast Coalition meets quarterly, in Sikeston and Willow Springs, and has over 200 members.
- Buckle Up Phone Down (BUPD): This initiative, started in 2017, has been adopted by other states and now has its own Buckle Up Phone Down Day, which will be recognized on October 28 this year.
- Legislation: The Siddens-Bening Hands-Free law took full effect with citations beginning January 1, 2025; initial data shows a decrease in related incidents.
- Programs: Various programs are available to communities, including the Arrive Alive Tour, BRAKES, and the Share the Road/No Zone Awareness Program.

V. Missouri Department of Transportation Reports

Kaitlyn Bower and Elquin Auala of the MoDOT Southeast District provided the following updates:

- Past Lettings: A \$2,531,000.00 contract was awarded in February 2026 to Pace Construction Company, LLC for pavement resurfacing on MO 34 (Reynolds County) and RT D (Carter County).
- Work Zone Updates:
 - RT B, Reynolds Co.: Bridge replacement over Logan Creek is reduced to one lane with signals.
 - US 67, Butler Co.: Freeway upgrades continue with all lanes currently open and no delays.
 - MO 158, Butler Co.: The road is closed for a bridge replacement over Craven Drainage Ditch with no signed detour.
 - US 60, Carter/Howell/Shannon Co.: Slide repairs are complete; currently waiting on seed growth.
- Funding Programs: Upcoming Cost Share application deadlines are July 10, 2026, and October 2, 2026. MTFC application deadlines are June 17, 2026, and August 18, 2026.

Mike Brandon, MoDOT Southeast District, stated MoDOT planning staff is currently wrapping up the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). They presented 275 projects to the executive team. The next STIP is estimated at \$8.5 billion and mostly asset management.

Joe Killian, MoDOT Southeast District, reminded counties they need to have all changes in for mapping tied to CART funds by the end of each year. Mr. Killian is still working with Carter County on addressing discrepancies tied to 911 addressing and suspects it will be later this summer before everything is worked out.

Chairman Polk asked if there were any estimates of funding amounts for the next round of BRO funding. Melissa Rose, MoDOT Southeast District, stated it will be similar to last year, and less than 20 projects will be funded.

VI. Transportation Planning Coordinator Report

Ozark Foothills Transportation Planning Coordinator Andrew Murphy announced FY26 CDBG applications are expected to open the last week of April, so now is the time to start thinking about projects.

The Delta Regional Authority's (DRA) States Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) Application Cycle usually opens in March with a late June due date. The Critical Infrastructure Fund (CIF) has been rolling in previous years. DRA has informed the RPC regarding the 2026 SEDAP and CIF application cycles that both FY26 NOFAs are pending final OMB approval. The application timeline will be determined upon final approval and more information will be provided as soon as it is available.

DRA's focus is on Transportation Infrastructure, Basic Public Infrastructure, Healthcare, Workforce Development, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Tier 1 projects must meet each of the following three federal priorities, as outlined in the Eligibility Guidelines: 1) job creation and/or retention utilizing a participation agreement, 2) include other sources of public and/or private funds, and 3) have a regional impact. Each state will be required to spend 50 percent of the state allocation on Tier 1 projects, before recommending Tier 2 projects for

funding. Tier 2 projects will encompass all other eligible projects.

The CIF looks to make investments that support projects that address flood control, basic public infrastructure, and transportation infrastructure improvements. The applications are accepted on a rolling basis and projects are competitive in the entire DRA region. Projects can request up to \$2 million.

Mr. Murphy provided an update on the Federal Lands Access Program applications for Butler and Carter Counties. Recently, the planning commission discovered a significant technical discrepancy at the federal level. While our office submitted three applications via email—and a neighboring Regional Planning Commission submitted one as well—FHWA reports they did not receive them in their planning mailbox. This appears to be a systemic issue, as these four missing applications represent over 20% of the total submissions known to have been sent from Missouri.

Mr. Murphy was in direct contact with FHWA leadership to resolve this. Unfortunately, FHWA followed up about a month after the initial discovery and stated they did not receive the applications, they did not score them, and therefore cannot be considered as projects for this round as projects have already been funded. They encouraged resubmittal during the next call for projects. FHWA staff admitted the issue appears to be on their side, but there is nothing they can do at this stage.

Mr. Murphy announced Butler County submitted a BUILD application to the FHWA for Butler County Road 321 for paving, widening, drainage, etc. The total project cost is estimated at \$7,259,210 with the grant request of \$6,959,210. The roadway connects Highway 142 with an outer road off of the current Highway 67 and future I-57 and is traveled heavily by large trucks.

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.

VII. Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Rachel Coleman, OFRPC Project Officer, provided an update on the progress of the SS4A project and its continued alignment with FHWA goals. Ms. Coleman informed the committee that the introductory phase of the SS4A project has concluded with the final task force meeting in Wayne County. The public survey is performing well with 112 submissions; she thanked the clerks and members for sharing the link and noted it would stay open for several more months. The next round of task force meetings is set for the second half of April, and the committee will soon begin selecting locations for community walk audits. The project is currently on track to bring a draft to the TAC this October for a January approval.

VIII. Old Business

For the City of Doniphan's Active Transportation Plan, public surveys just closed this past month. Results from those surveys were provided at the City Council meeting on April 7, 2026. The next step will be scheduling a walk audit in the community.

IX. New Business

In late February, the University of Missouri contacted the RPC regarding High Obesity Program (HOP) funding for the development of Active Transportation Plans. Ripley and Wayne counties have been identified as eligible for this program. Because current fiscal year funds can be carried over and supplemented by next year's budget, the University is offering to fully fund two regional plans. The RPC is currently exploring partnerships with the cities of Piedmont and Williamsville. A formal work plan and budget are currently under development.

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

X. General Discussion

No general discussion ensued.

XI. Adjournment

Vince Lampe, Butler County, moved to adjourn. Chairman Polk adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

TAC Project Priority List

2026 Identified Needs by County

Butler County

1. 4-lane Highway 67 from Highway 160 to the state line
2. Move and straighten Twin Springs Hill on Route M
3. Add shoulders on PP Highway from Roundabout to Highway 60

Carter County

1. Turning Lane, west bound Highway 60 at both Business 60 and James Street in Van Buren
2. Overlay and add shoulders on C Highway from Highway 60 to county line
3. Widen Pike Creek Bridge on M Highway

Reynolds County

1. Straighten Curve on 72 Hwy, ½ mile from 21/72 junction for approximately 5 miles
2. Guardrails on Highway 106 west of Ellington
3. Widen shoulder on Highway 106

Ripley County

1. Turning lane on Highway 21 turning east onto Highway 160
2. Highway 21 South at Briar Creek – Bridge Replacement
3. Low water crossing on Highway K between County Road K-5 and K-6

Wayne County

1. Bridge on Hwy 49 over railroad just off 34/49 intersection and state highway shed
2. Highway 34 East of CR236 approximately 300 yards, small bridge replacement over Gizzard Creek
3. Safety Shoulders on D Highway

TAC Maintenance Priority List

2026 Identified “Maintenance Needs” by County

Butler County

1. **Resurface Route O**
2. **Widen Township Line**
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 72 Highway from 72/21 Junction to 72/32 Junction**
2. **Repair bridges over Black River on Highway 21 at Centerville where bridges connect with the highway**
3. **Secondary Roads overlay and chip & seal Highway A (Highway 49 to County Line), Highway U from Highway 21 to end of State Maintenance, and Highway W from Highway K to end of Maintenance**

Ripley County

1. **Overlay A Highway**
2. **Add Shoulders on Highway 160 W from Doniphan to C Highway**
3. **Overlay O Highway**

Wayne County

1. **Highway 49: Resurface from Piedmont to Iron County Line**
2. **Overlay Highway P from Highway E to County Line**
3. **Overlay Highway EE from Highway 67 to gravel**

TAC Multi-Modal Priority List

2026 Identified “Multi-Modal Needs” by County

Butler County

1. **Extend the Poplar Bluff airport runway**
2. **Improve Regional Airport terminal capacity**
3. **Pedestrian Overpass over UP Railroad along Highway 53**

Carter County

1. **Sidewalks in Ellsinore from intersection of Highway A & V (Post Office) to East Carter Schools to US Highway 60**
2. **Sidewalks from College Ave to Commercial Drive in Van Buren**
3. **Construct new helipads**

Reynolds County

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

Ripley County

1. **Sidewalks on Highway 142 E (Walnut Street) and west on Washington Street to Courthouse**
2. **Sidewalks from the Courthouse to Highway 160 on Jefferson Street**
3. **Finish Sidewalks on Walnut to Highway 160 and then on Y Highway to Leroux St.**

Wayne County

1. **Sidewalk construction from French to Winn Street to accommodate a crosswalk on Highway 34 in Piedmont**
2. **Sidewalk repair/construction in City of Greenville**
3. **Sidewalk repair/construction along AA Highway in Williamsville.**

TAC ATTENDANCE ROSTER

April 9, 2026

Mr. Alan Lutes	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Andrew Murphy	Ozark Foothills RPC
Ms. Rachel Coleman	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Vince Lampe	Butler County
Mr. Ralph Stucker	Butler County
Mr. Larry Wells	Butler County
Mr. Jeff Darnell	Butler County
Mr. Gary Pride	Butler County
Mr. Bill Robison	Butler County
Mr. Ron Keeney	Carter County
Mr. Tom Wilder	Carter County
Mr. Steve Chitwood	Reynolds County
Mr. Darrell Dement	Reynolds County
Mr. Craig Foster	Reynolds County
Mr. Jesse Roy	Ripley County
Mr. Gary Emmons	Ripley County
Mr. Michael Williams	Ripley County
Mr. Jarret Ficke	Ripley County
Mr. Freddie Leroux	Ripley County
Mr. Brian Polk	Wayne County
Mr. Doug Wood	Wayne County
Mr. Chad Henson	Wayne County
Mr. Tylar Pinkley	Wayne County
Ms. Barb Potter	Wayne County (alternate)
Ms. Elquin Auala	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Katy Bower	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. Joe Killian	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. Mike Brandon	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Melissa Rose	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Ashley Metalski	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Gloria Dement	Guest
Mr. Randy Potter	Guest
Ms. Lesley Rone	Missouri DED

THOSE NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Eric McSpadden	Carter County	Mr. Jordan Collins	Carter County
Mr. Randal Jenkins	Carter County	Ms. Ashley Newson	Carter County
Mr. Eddie Williams	Reynolds County	Mr. Larry Pogue	Reynolds County
Ms. Alicia Baker	Reynolds County	Mr. Dennis Cox	Ripley County
Mr. Bill Kirkpatrick	Wayne County		
Mr. Lee Hillis	Wayne County		