

## ST. JOSEPH AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Committee

Wathena City Hall

February 13, 2013

### Voting Members Present:

Dustin Smith	City of St. Joseph
Ty Nagle	City of St. Joseph
Roger Sparks	City of St. Joseph
Dan Hausman	Buchanan County
Shannon Kusilek	MoDOT
Abraham Forney	City of St. Joseph
Andrew Clements	City of St. Joseph
Scott Gatewood	City of St. Joseph
Kenny Lance	City of Savannah
Jim Richardson	City of Wathena

### Other:

John Cluck	City of Wathena
John Hontz	City of Wathena
Elaine Buckner	City of St. Joseph
Michael Rinehart	MoDOT
Paul Cockram	ATU Local #847

**OPENING REPORTS - Roll Call of Voting Members.** A quorum was present.

Approval of December 12, 2012 meeting minutes. **Mr. Sparks moved, and Mr. Lance seconded, that the minutes of the December 12, 2012 meeting be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

Opportunity for Public Comments. No comments were given.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None.

**NEW BUSINESS** – INVEST-Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool. Mr. Clements explained that Federal Highway/US DOT has allowed voluntary participation the first two years of the program. He offered the MPO to take part in the national pilot program of 100 MPOs. He expects it to become a mandate. The federal government is asking MPOs nationwide to look at sustainability, the one big thing coming out of the new transportation bill. Affording to maintain what we buy or build is now a thought process that must start from the very beginning of a project.

Mr. Clements felt that entering into the second year of updating the Long Range Transportation Plan is a good time to consider these new requirements. The MPO will need to establish how much weight to give the sustainability process. The emphasis will shift from mostly efficiency

to include things like economic, social and environmental impacts. Mr. Sparks felt this will increase the overall cost of projects.

Mr. Clements said a group from MoDOT, St. Joseph and Buchanan County will form a committee to apply these concepts.

Safe Routes to School – Presentation of a segment of the St. Joseph School District. Mr. Nagle updated the committee on the project. The cities of Wathena, Elwood and Savannah have adopted resolutions of support. Next, the school districts in those areas will be asked to support the plan. He went on to say that St. Joseph has 32-33 district schools, not counting private schools.

Mr. Nagle introduced the plan and showed examples of schools. The mission statement is to “provide opportunities to make walking and biking to school safer for children”.

He explained that sidewalks within a two-block radius of each school were evaluated. Sidewalk conditions were rated 1-5 with \$2.50 to \$9/square foot cost to fix attached to the evaluation. The nine schools in this group ranged from \$300,000 to \$850,000 to improve.

Mr. Kuselik questioned ADA requirements. Mr. Nagle said the evaluations include indicators where ADA ramps are needed. Mr. Clements said they will be required, as well as a sidewalk width of 5’ when federal funds are used.

MoDOT’s Missouri On the Move – Information on Program. Mr. Mike Rinehart, Area Engineer for the northwest part of the district, explained that “On the Move” is an effort MoDOT employees have undertaken across Missouri to seek information from residents to determine transportation priorities for the future. He noted that Missouri has the 7<sup>th</sup> largest road system, and 6<sup>th</sup> largest bridge system, in the nation. The state also has 53 major bridges ranging in cost from \$50 - \$100 million each to replace. To contrast the size of Missouri’s transportation system, northwest Missouri’s 20 county district is larger than 11 other entire states. In fact, Missouri’s road system is larger than Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa combined. Its large and complex transportation system includes airports, railroads, transit and river traffic.

Two years ago, MoDOT undertook their “*Bolder 5 Year Direction*”. Many positions were eliminated and costs reduced in order to save \$512 million between 2011 and 2015. \$355 million has already been saved to put in the highway construction program. In 2010, MoDOT had the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest administrative cost per mile in the nation. 95% of those projects were completed on time or early. The Northwest District’s Safe and Sound bridge program improved 800 bridges in Northwest District. The “*Better Roads, Brighter Future*” initiative resurfaced major roads that carry 80% of the traffic and added a 2’ minimum shoulder. In St. Joseph, the Belt, Loop 29, I-229, Pear, and St. Joseph Avenue were resurfaced. Guard cable was installed on I-29 and a turn lane at Mitchell and Woodbine. In the latest customer rating poll, MoDOT received a customer service ranking of 85%.

Mr. Rinehart said that funding will not keep up with needs, therefore prioritization is important. MoDOT wants citizen input. He explained the reason for the decline in fuel tax, which amounts to two-thirds of their funding. Costs of construction have skyrocketed and revenue is declining.

A listening session is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> in St. Joseph. The listening session will divide people into smaller groups to encourage participation. He distributed copies of the “*On the Move Campaign*” and asked for input. Comments can also be given at [missourionthemove.org](http://missourionthemove.org).

Mr. Rinehart went on to say that a separate initiative is moving forward from transportation leader Mike Keyhill who submitted a 10 year, 1% sales tax to generate \$7.9 billion to upgrade I-70 to six lanes, with 10% of the tax received returned to cities and counties. District I would receive \$24 million extra which would double what they are getting now to spend on any transportation project, not specifically roads or bridges.

Mr. Nagle asked what came out of the “*Blueprint for Progress*” meetings. Mr. Rinehart responded that results based on estimate of needs indicated \$600-\$800 million/year is necessary. What the legislature proposed amounts to \$790 million.

TIP Call for Projects. – Submit by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Nagle sent out a call for projects in early February due back to him by March 1. The full TIP update is needed back by September. For the April meeting, TIP amendments will be accepted for projects in place by September. New TIP amendments will now be required to have a signature page stating that the local match is available.

Establish AFV (Alternative Fuel Vehicle) Committee – Regarding progress in compressed natural gas in St. Joseph. Mr. Clements reported what he has learned about the economics of using compressed natural gas in fleet vehicles. Savings on fuel will usually pay for a vehicle in three years or less. In Transit it could help with replacing fleets. A local committee will be formed to work with staff from the Clean Energy agency to look through various scenarios. Individual governments will have to determine if it is feasible. St. Joseph Transit uses 500,000 gallons of fuel a year and puts nearly one million miles a year on vehicles. The typical useful life of a bus is 10-12 years. It may be possible to save enough to replace a fleet at the same cost per gallon. There will need to be some retrofitting of transit parts and fueling stations built. The more users on board, the lower the cost. Mr. Hausman suggested a fueling station at the south end where where MoDOT could use it. Mr. Clements said I-29 could be a fueling corridor and part of the Kansas City compressed natural gas coalition. Chairman Smith suggested one fueling station location just east of the Street Department on Cedar Street.

Update from Wathena - John Cluck, City Councilmember. Mr. Cluck reported that the city has applied for KDOT enhancement funds for a downtown streetscape project between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The grant will pay for utilities, lighting, park benches, and ADA compliant upgrades. It will look similar to what was done in Lawrence, Kansas. Another part of that project will take it to Highway 36 and across to the city park. Part two of the application is for a pedestrian trail, the city’s primary objective to getting a safe route to the city park. The total project amount is \$310,000 with Wathena paying the \$87,000 match. KDOT will match 20% for engineering fees and land acquisition. The estimate for the streetscape for two blocks is \$960,000 (city part

\$260,000). If approved for both, the city will have a brand new streetscape and a 10' wide multi use path to the city park.

The city also wants to be part of the rails to trails project which would connect both high schools. Mr. Cluck said the city of St. Joseph has done a fabulous job with trails and the city of Wathena wants to run with it. At a recent Wathena City Council meeting, 20 people showed up with interest in the rails to trails project. Their Council agreed to put it up for a public vote. The city would have to pay \$350,000. It would be bonded out and a one-fourth cent sales tax assessed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. at City Hall, St. Joseph. Mr. Hausman invited the MPO to meet at the Buchanan County Court House after the restoration project is completed. Mr. Clements suggested meeting at the airport café sometime soon. He introduced Abraham Forney, new airport general manager. Mr. Forney said he was glad to be here and asked that everyone let him know what they need.

**OTHER/ADJOURN** – The meeting adjourned by motion at 11:45 a.m.