

ST. JOSEPH AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
October 11, 2007

A meeting of the Coordinating Committee for the St. Joseph Area Transportation Study was held at 12:00 noon in the 4th Floor Conference Room, City Hall, St. Joseph, Missouri, on October 11th, 2007.

Voting members present:

Billy Kretzer	City of Savannah
Ed Chrisman	Village of Country Club
Dan Hausman	Buchanan County
Vince Capell	City of St. Joseph
Bill Falkner	City of St. Joseph
Gary Roach, Vice-Chair	City of St. Joseph
Mike Bozarth	City of St. Joseph

Staff members present:

Bruce Woody	City of St. Joseph
Andy Clements	City of St. Joseph
Kelsy Marr	City of St. Joseph
Elaine Buckner	City of St. Joseph

Others present:

Shannon Kusilek	MoDOT
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OPENING REPORTS

Gary Roach, Vice-Chairperson, directed the meeting. A quorum was present. **Committee member Hausman moved to approve the minutes of the June 14th, 2007 meeting. Committee member Kretzer seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.**

Opportunity for public comment. No member of the public appeared to comment.

OLD BUSINESS

LRTP Update. Ms. Marr reported that five firms responded to the request for qualifications. She and Andy Clements reviewed the submittals and selected URS, the firm which performed the 2005 update. Providing that scope of work and fee negotiations are successful, updating the plan should begin in early December.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of new Village of Country Club Representative. Ms. Marr introduced Mr. Ed Chrisman, the new Village representative. He also serves on the Long Range Transportation Plan Steering Committee.

Functional Classification Map. Ms. Marr explained the yellow areas on the map were upgrades requested in 2006 but were not processed until the summer of 2007. Forms were submitted this year to District I for review, but now there are two of those routes which MoDOT is not agreeing to upgrade

on the map. Consequently, the routes will be left as they are pending continued development in the area. The routes are “Cook Road Extension east of Riverside Road” and “Woodbine Road, Cook Road to County Line Road”. Cook Road east of Riverside is being requested to be upgraded to arterial to make it consistent with the area and because it provides a connection to Rt. W. Woodbine Road is already a collector south of Cook Road and is being requested to be upgraded to collector north of Cook Road to County Line Road. These requests were based on the FHWA functional classification manual.

Chairperson Roach asked what happens next in the disagreement. Ms. Marr said it will be discussed at the federal level and she will continue to work with MoDOT in following the functional classification manual.

Mr. Clements said the request to upgrade is tied to operation. What purpose does the road serve and what type of traffic uses it? To develop a new street, it should be recognized how it needs to be built so that it can be built correctly. Mr. Capell said as a road is upgraded, the cost of construction would increase. Cook Road is already on the LRTP from Riverside east to the 102 River bridge. Mr. Clements said the road should be classified as a collector so that the County will be working with people to build it to that specification. Mr. Capell noted it should be built as a collector all the way to Rt. W. Committee member Hausman said “If so, does it remain a county road? The County does not maintain that kind of road”. Mr. Clement said the MPO is only recognizing needs. Mr. Woody said if a developer comes along and has plans and wants to plat, if it is classified as an arterial or collector, it requires more right-of-way.

Mr. Clements said the MPO’s job is to say “Here are the routes you need to have worked on”. On funding, you work with units of government to let them know what the MPO wants and ask them what they have budgeted. If they say they will not budget it, the MPO doesn’t include it. Mr. Capell asked for clarification that the Plan doesn’t compel a jurisdiction to do any kind of maintenance or construction. Mr. Woody agreed that the plan is fiscally constrained. Projects start and stop based on jurisdictional lines or how much money will take the project how far. Mr. Clements said development will not be allowed to continue beyond the road improvement. The MPO’s business is to say what roads need to connect and to advise the jurisdiction that they need to see about funding them.

Mr. Capell moved to direct Ms. Marr to continue to negotiate with MoDOT to upgrade the functional classification of Cook Road, Riverside Road east to Route W, to “arterial” classification and Woodbine Road, Cook Road to County Line Road, to “collector”. Mr. Roach seconded the motion. The vote was approved 5-1, with committee member Hausman voting no. Mr. Capell asked for updates at future MPO meetings.

Mr. Capell said there hasn’t been a big event to show that street designations in the Bike/Ped Plan are inconsistent with the City’s Land Use Plan. With the Bike/Ped Plan updating, there might be differences in the years between updates, but we need to be on the same page with street designations.

Mr. Clements said opening it up to look at the bigger picture is important. The final document should be ready for viewing in December.

FY 08-11 TIP. Ms. Marr reported that the update is complete and signed.

Enhancement Awards Ms. Marr reported that the top nine enhancement applications were selected and awarded. The only one which did not get funded was riverfront lighting for the City of St. Joseph. MoDOT also applied for funds to build a sidewalk on the south side of the Mitchell Avenue bridge, but it was not funded.

Mr. Capell asked Mr. Kusilek about the status of funding for the Felix Street Project, Phase II, in the amount of \$230,000. The City was notified that it was approved and now the City has been told it is under review. Mr. Kusilek said Mr. Wichern is still working on it and will get back with the City. Mr. Capell said he spoke with Mr. Wichern and thought it would have been decided by now.

Mr. Capell asked if St. Joseph's project is the only one being reconsidered? Which project becomes funded if St. Joseph's doesn't get funded? Mr. Kusilek responded that St. Joseph's is the only one being reconsidered and there are two on the contingency list: the City of Maryville and City of Hamilton. Mr. Capell said he doesn't understand the allocation process. The City of Maryville already has three projects. The City of St. Joseph is potentially going to lose out on \$230,000 in funding. He asked Mr. Kusilek if any other projects were being reviewed. Mr. Kusilek answered "no".

Vice-Chairperson Roach asked in what form was the confirmation received? Mr. Capell responded that a letter was received from MoDOT saying it was approved. Based on that approval, the city moved money around to approve Phase I, only to find out that MoDOT is re-considering the funding. If the City knew it was tentative, he is not sure the downtown streetscape project would have proceeded. Mr. Wichern is questioning whether the city applied properly. Mr. Capell said he questions if all other cities receiving funding applied properly? MoDOT put it out for comment by those who rated these projects. The problem with that is that other communities will say St. Joseph violated the rules in order to improve their chances of getting funds. He said it isn't right to seek the opinion of a city who is next in line to receive St. Joseph's funding. Ms. Marr said the original argument by MoDOT was that the City of St. Joseph was "double dipping". After looking at the cost breakdown, it showed St. Joseph was not double dipping and no one's opinion of the project changed.

Mr. Capell said he is concerned that the City is not getting a full and fair hearing. Mr. Wichern had already notified the City that the full amount had been approved. Does the MPO set back and wait for MoDOT to decide? Ms. Marr said Roger Sparks, City of St. Joseph; Bill Kretzer, City of Savannah; and Mary Montgomery, Village of Country Club, were on the review committee. Mr. Clements said they took their recommendations to the MPO so the MPO could officially say if they liked certain projects. If they set priorities in this way, and another group doesn't fund them in that fashion, then the MPO will say "we wanted this project and not fund the others". Formally, the MPO can draft a letter from the Board expressing its concerns. The MPO could be heavy-handed and block all of the enhancement projects, but he isn't sure that is the correct approach for the MPO. Mr. Capell said the Coordinating Committee has been advised and he thinks something fishy is going on which the MPO has no control over, and the City could suffer the consequences. He asks that MoDOT rule quickly on

it in case the city needs to make other arrangements. Vice-Chairperson Roach asked if the committee would like to send a letter. He would hate to see those communities below St. Joseph on the scoring list get awarded the funds. Mr. Capell said there is no harm in the MPO expressing support for funding for St. Joseph as the City relied upon when MoDOT approved the contract for the first phase of the Felix Street project. If MoDOT wants to change the evaluation criteria, it should not do so in mid-stream, after issuing a letter of acceptance. They should do so in an all new funding year. He said Mr. Wichern said he doesn't disagree with him, he just wants to make sure the City has not violated a federal regulation. Mr. Capell said it is a stretch to suggest that. He thinks St. Joseph is being singled out on this particular application. Mr. Wichern admits the instructions are vague and subject to interpretation. It comes down to Mr. Wichern's decision, unless it goes to the Highway Commission. The City is doing a \$1.3 million project, of which the \$230,000 grant was a significant part.

Mr. Capell suggested writing a letter to Pete Rahn, MoDOT Director, Jefferson City, and copying Don Wichern. Mr. Hausman said he did not believe that Mr. Rahn would intervene. Mr. Hausman suggested sending the letter to Mr. Wichern, rather than to Mr. Rahn, and to send the letter from the City, not the MPO. Mr. Capell asked if another member of the MPO had a similar issue, would the MPO not weigh in, or would the MPO leave each individual city to stand on its own. The issue is for our region. Vice-Chairman Roach said since the MPO was involved in the review, he didn't see a problem with the MPO writing a letter. Mr. Clements said it is important that MoDOT understands that the MPO takes an interest in the outcome. Previously, the MPO weighed in to assist the Country Club Village with Andrew County, and it helped. Committee member Kretzer stated the MPO should continue its support as it has already endorsed the project. Vice-Chairperson Roach said the MPO should carry it through and send MoDOT a letter.

Mr. Capell moved to write a letter to Don Wichern asking for the project status and expressing support for leaving the rating as is. Mr. Kretzer seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Title VI/EJ/ADA and Public Involvement Policy Annual Review. Ms. Marr said the annual report is the first one since the Title VI policy was adopted. As part of our Title VI document we are required to provide informational materials to the public. She has created brochure prototypes to print, both in English and Spanish, and distribute to libraries, city halls, and county court houses. The information is also on the MPO's website. Vice-Chairperson Roach suggested taking brochures to "City Talk" meetings.

Update on Revised Version of Bicycle and Pedestrian Masterplan. Mr. Clements said the MPO's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan was adopted in 2001 and the update is nearly complete. A controversy about the parkway has opened up in St. Joseph and it impacts bike and pedestrian issues. The MPO may need to get involved regarding whether it is the City of St. Joseph or the counties which need to work in a coordinated fashion.

OTHER/ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 13th, 2007, at 12:00 noon.