

ST. JOSEPH AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
March 25, 2009

A special meeting of the Coordinating Committee for the St. Joseph Area Transportation Study was held at 10:30 a.m. in the 4th Floor Conference Room, City Hall, St. Joseph, Missouri, on March 25th, 2009. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss TIP amendments requested by MoDOT for re-decking two bridges over I-29.

Voting members present:

Dan Hausman, Chairperson	Buchanan County
Billy Kretzer, Vice Chairperson	City of Savannah
Julia Levinn	Village of Country Club
Vince Capell	City of St. Joseph
Bill Falkner	City of St. Joseph
Cyndee Merritt	Andrew County
Mike Hirter	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
Don Wichern	MoDOT
Kenneth Reeder	Citizen
Kurt Janicek	City of St. Joseph
Mike Fisher	City of Savannah

OPENING REPORTS

Chairperson Hausman directed the meeting.

Roll Call. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes. Minutes of the February 12, 2009 meeting will be submitted for approval in the next regular meeting June 11th.

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

NEW BUSINESS

FY09-12 TIP Amendments. Below are listed proposed projects to place in the TIP that could potentially receive stimulus package funding.

- Transit. Mr. Janicek said \$1.3 million in capital improvement projects include ITS technology (\$800,000), with the remaining \$500,000 for building maintenance and repairs, including \$200,000 to repair/replace the shelters at HyVee and North Wal-Mart.
- Felix Streetscape. Ms. Marr reported \$285,000 has been requested for Felix Streetscape improvements between 7th and 10th Street. It is not certain funds will be allocated.
- Port Authority. Mr. Wichern noted that a \$1.3 million port authority project, already committed to receive funds from the stimulus package, will create a concrete staging area along 759 Highway for grain trucks, and pedestrian improvements for Nestle-Purina which includes a signalized intersection with AGP and 759 Highway. Funds must be obligated by March 2010.

MoDOT sponsored projects.

Intersection access at 36 Highway and Riverside Road. Mr. Wichern reported this “clean up” project will build right turn lanes and resurface all of Riverside Road. Mr. Hirter asked if the improvements will reduce traffic delays. Mr. Wichern responded that two lanes will flow directly into the outer road that feeds into Altec.

759 Highway. This roadway will be resurfaced and shoulder improvements made.

North Leonard & Pickett. Mr. Hirter asked if there are plans to widen the intersection of North Leonard and Pickett. Mr. Wichern said only another foot or two, with sidewalks on both sides.

Urban Trail. Ms. Marr said the city programmed money to help pay for a trail on the north side of the Pickett Road bridge to connect on the west to the urban trail. However, the STIP programmed funding is coming up short, so the City is requesting more funds to complete the trail connection, which includes a substantial retaining wall. Mr. Falkner said he had no problem with the request.

Mr. Falkner asked about projects for other communities. Ms. Marr said there were some for Doniphan County, but Kansas has a different process for using their funds.

Chairperson Hausman asked if the amendment can be approved if the stimulus funding hasn't been approved. Ms. Marr said it can be accepted in advance of approval. If it comes through, \$285,000 will be split up between project sponsors in this area.

Route 169 project. Mr. Hausman asked about the ARRA project. Mr. Wichern said adding a 2' shoulder and rumble strips help prevent fatalities when drivers run off the road.

Mr. Capell said methods are not available to get stimulus money to local projects in the LRTP as they are not “shovel ready”. If they were ready, is there flexibility by MoDOT to use stimulus funds for local transportation projects? Do MoDOT districts handle the funds differently?

Mr. Wichern said out of \$787 billion in the stimulus plan, transportation nationwide received \$48 billion (6%). Missouri received \$788 million for all modes of transportation (1.6% of what was given to all states). Deducting funds devoted to other transportation modes, it left \$525 million. The state has been spending \$1.4 billion a year to improve highways. Stimulus money equates to only one-third of what MoDOT spends each year. While it is money they didn't have, it is not a lot to spread around. Federal law required chunks to go to large MPOs, Springfield, Kansas City and St. Louis. The Highway Commission decided to spend it on state roads. They had to obligate one-half in 120 days and the rest by March 2010. Because it was a small amount, they spent it on their own work (State Highway Commission).

Mr. Capell said St. Joseph's hopes were high that some of the projects would be in St. Joseph.

Mr. Capell moved that these project be approved: MoDOT Pavement Maintenance; City of St. Joseph, Transit Capital; and City of St. Joseph, Felix Streetscape. Ms. Levinn seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Marr said a vote is needed to amend the TIP to increase funds for the urban trail connection to the Pickett bridge. With no further discussion, **Mr. Capell moved to approve a funding increase of \$138,000.00 for the urban trail connection. Mr. Hirter seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Marr explained two more TIP amendment requests related to the N. 169 bridge over I-29 and the Bs. 71 bridge over I-29. The 30 day comment period has expired. This is the original request to: 1) re-deck the Bs. 71 bridge; and 2) re-deck the Rt. 169 bridge and provide for a sidewalk on the north side of the bridge. She didn't have a recommendation.

Mr. Capell said as a result of a debate concerning rules and procedures the MPO is following, he asked Ms. Marr to provide a 3-ring binder of bylaws and procedures for voting members. Updates will be provided. Ms. Marr distributed copies to those present and noted the type of information contained.

Ms. Marr said at the request of Chairman Hausman she recently met with him and MoDOT staff members. She discussed the meeting in a factual memo she distributed to those present at this meeting. She said some of the issues discussed may need to be discussed in a future meeting. Chairperson Hausman said perhaps down the road the members can examine the manual and make changes if desired. He suggested voting members bring their copy of the manual with them to MPO meetings.

Mr. Falkner moved to approve the two bridge projects. Mr. Hirter seconded the motion.

Mr. Capell said there were competing ideas for the projects. He asked clarification on the motion made. Chairperson Hausman said the Bs. 71 bridge is for a deck replacement with only the shoulders striped. The Rt. 169 bridge is a deck replacement with a sidewalk only on the north side, not the south. Mr. Capell said at one time it was discussed that there would be sidewalks on both sides of the Rt. 169 bridge. Chairperson Hausman said the present plan allows a re-deck without removing the substructure. Mr. Capell asked if a sidewalk could be added later if/when pedestrian traffic justifies

one? Chairperson Hausman said this proposal has one sidewalk and a center turn lane. Mr. Wichern said the bridge was built for four lanes in 1962. A sidewalk can be provided without modifying the substructure. Signals on both ends allow traffic to get to the north side. There is the capacity to stripe four lanes which should be good for 20 years. At a future date, if development comes, they can add a fifth lane and a sidewalk on the south. The ramps are 400' from the bridge. They can accommodate a left-turn lane.

Mr. Capell said it was his understanding that if the MPO voted for sidewalks on both sides it would delay it to the point where a bridge re-deck may not actually happen. Mr. Wichern said in order to work on 802 bridges, MoDOT had to avoid any sidewalks unless a local entity paid for them. This bridge is the only one of the first 100 bridges in the state where MoDOT is adding a sidewalk because of the available bridge width. A second sidewalk would cost \$300,000 because the bridge would have to be widened. Ms. Marr noted that \$300,000 is the total amount the MPO receives for a year.

Mr. Hurst asked if \$800,000 for a bridge re-deck would be lost if the MPO didn't agree to one sidewalk. Mr. Wichern said MoDOT could use state funds if they have to. They could lose money to another region because they decided not to use it. Rt. 169 will be totally state funded. He got information from the last meeting that they will not lose their federal funds on it if they are forced to spend state funds on the bridge alone.

Mr. Wichern contended that traffic studies never specified the bridge must be widened. It is not the most practical thing to do when re-decking. Mr. Capell said he remembers a meeting where MoDOT engineering staff fought to move the first intersection further to the southwest because of traffic concerns. During TIF discussions, MoDOT fought hard in endless meetings because the developer wanted to put the intersection too close to the ramps. He doesn't remember a discussion on sidewalks. Ms. Levinn said she believes one sidewalk would be sufficient. She sees very little bike and pedestrian traffic. Mr. Capell said yes, for now, but development will occur. Mr. Hausman agreed it will occur, but with signals adding safety, it is not worth \$300,000 to correct. Mr. Capell said he feels backed into a corner with threats of losing money if the MPO held out for sidewalks on both sides. There was no time to talk about it in an orderly fashion. **The motion passed.**

Draft of FY10 UPWP and final document. Ms. Marr noted that the current year is year three of the LRTP update. Highlights for 2010 include continuing the public involvement process, holding steering committee meetings, conducting public opinion surveys, and updating the coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. The big ticket item is bike & pedestrian program planning. Money was added for a potential coordinating study between Savannah and the Village of Country Club. A consultant will look at the feasibility of linking a bike connection between the two cities.

Ms. Marr said work will continue on the Safe Routes to School Plan. The St. Joseph School District and City of Savannah will have needs identified and a cost estimate compiled.

Mr. Hausman remarked that MoKan has looked at the program and has a complete map of six counties. He suggested contacting Jackie Spainhower for their information. Ms. Marr said school bus routes and limitations would be helpful. Three infrastructure grants were applied for two years in a row and only a non-infrastructure grant was awarded. Money has been programmed for the TIP. Some has also been set aside for Title VI/Environmental Justice Planning.

Ms. Levinn moved to approve the FY10 UPWP. Mr. Hirter seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. Ms. Marr said once fully complete she will distribute copies.

Mr. Hausman suggested the Coordinating Committee begin their meetings at 10:30 a.m. instead of noon. This can be an agenda item at the next meeting.

OTHER/ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 11th, 2009 at 12:00 noon.