

MoDOT Southeast District / ACEC Missouri
Liaison Committee Meeting



MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 30, 2024



Attending from MoDOT

Benji Philpot – District Construction Engineer
Curt Woolsey – Project Manager
Elquin Auala - Area Engineer
Donna Philpot - Project Manager
Mark Croarkin – District Engineer
Michael Brandon – District Planning Manager
Pete Berry – Project Manager (Virtual)
Katie Bower - Utilities Engineer
Craig Compas – District Traffic Engineer
Jason Williams -Assistant District Engineer
Chris Crocker – Project Manager
Tom Farris – Transportation Project Designer

Attending from ACEC-Missouri

Andy Potthast – HDR
Jeff Smith – HNTB (Chair)
Adam Rutz - TWM
Ryan Phelps - Klingner
Barry Horst - BFW
Steve Hicks – Smith & Co.
Eric Chamberlain – HR Green
Jeff Rensing – Oates Associates

Discussion

1. MoDOT / ACEC Updates

Staffing

MoDOT provided some staffing updates. Tim Pickett is the new District Design Engineer, Chris Crocker replaced Tim, and Curt Woolsey and Donna Philpot also moved to Project Manager roles recently. The District is looking to fill a Resident Engineer position in Park Hills and they have several program delivery positions they hope to fill in the coming months. The District is hopeful that they will be able to hire some of their interns for full-time positions after May graduation.

General Discussion

Overall, the construction bids have been good. Asphalt bids continue to get better and are about 10% less than last year. There has been a fair amount of low-volume road projects and with the better bid environment, a few additional projects were able to be added to the program.

The District provided an update on the Microsoft Project scheduling software roll up. The SE District has entered the FY 2025 projects into the system. This is currently being limited to internal use only. There is a pilot project in the St. Louis District. The main goal of the project is to lock in and deliver on schedule.

There are a few concerns that were discussed. The capacity of the contractors to handle the upcoming workload including the availability of the DBE community. There have also been some aggregate quality concerns around the state that are being monitored.

On the design build front, there are no immediate projects on the horizon in the SE District. The search to replace the MoDOT Director is in progress and will be completed by the end of the year. No other updated information was available.

In the spring, the D43 MoDOT contract was updated and rolled out to the engineering community with some language changes that were not insurable. ACEC notified MoDOT and requested the “defend” clause be removed immediately while the rest of the contract is reviewed by a committee. MoDOT removed the “defend” language, but not before the contract had been signed by several consultants. MoDOT and ACEC are currently working together to finalize the new agreement.

Statewide, MoDOT is monitoring the construction quality control, specifically the pavement issue that occurred on I-44 near Rolla.

2. Projects Discussed

- US Route I-57/67 from Poplar Bluff to the Arkansas State Line
 - Public meeting was held for Phase 3 & 4
 - The District may pull out a project from Phase 3
 - MoDOT is meeting with Arkansas about the connection at the state line
 - Current funding will run out near Neelyville
 - See MoDOT project website for more information
 - Funding level - \$150M appropriated (\$60M from general revenue, \$90M from Road Fund / Fuel Tax - this assumes there will be federal participation)
 - Road fund is controlled by the Commission with appropriations set by the legislature, federal grants go into the road fund.
 - I-57 is one of the largest projects using general funds outside of the I-70 and I-44 projects.
- EA draft is done for US Route 412
 - The last 20-mile section between Walnut Ridge AR and Jackson TN to be upgraded to a multi-lane highway.
- Other projects
 - 7 intersection upgrades
 - 40 ADA / 45 signal upgrades
 - J-Turn safety projects
 - Jackson – Intersection at Donna Drive
 - Several Bridge bundles (2-4 bridges each)
 - A few intersection projects
 - Project from Alton to Wynonna
 - Oregon County, Route 19 in a sensitive environmental area. FY '27 solicitation
 - Potential Poplar Bluff road diet project – (not received well by the City of Poplar Bluff but safety would be increased significantly with the improvement)
- The six-month project list was just updated on the website

3. Miscellaneous

- Consultant Deliverables – The District did not identify any issues at this time. Continuing to work together to meet project schedules.
- ACEC mentioned that they have approached MoDOT about utilizing lump sum contracts for design. ACEC and MoDOT are currently discussing and reviewing the concept and reaching out to other states who use the contract type. No resolution at this stage.
- The unfunded needs list was discussed. Eight bridges were added and the current list totals approximately \$100M in the SE District.
- On the LPA side
 - There are 10-14 BRO bridges
 - One more round of TAP Projects
 - LPA increased the on-call limit to \$200,000
- State On-Call Structure
 - The new structure is working well
 - It is a quick option for the District but isn't enough to completely design most projects.
 - It is an opportunity to try new firms
- The construction assistance program needs are similar to other Districts. They are looking for consultants to help follow paving contractors and work at asphalt plants.
- Next meeting will be in April 2025. The date will be determined later.