

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (SE)
and ACEC/MO 2023-24 LIAISON COMMITTEE**

**April 15, 2014
10:00 AM - SE SK District Conf Room**

MEETING MINUTES

- Welcome and Introductions
 - see attached list of invited attendees.
 - icebreaker activity – favorite/most interesting project you have worked on.

- MoDOT SE District Updates
 - Funding

MoDOT is going through STIP currently and has a few million that was added to existing jobs for items like safety funds. That was less than 1% of changes that they are seeing.

Inflation costs are tracking about 12% inflation, but the bulk of inflation was from estimate guesses rolling into STIP is left over from last year. It appears about 8% was from last year and about 4 % is actually this year's inflation. Example given – Asphalt bids last year went out early, so when the STIP was updated last year prices went from 60 to 80 per ton, but the SE was seeing bids at \$90-\$100.

Some money was consumed by the change from 1.5" to 2" of asphalt overlay thickness.

All this was to say very few projects were able to be added, but we feel much more confident in estimates than we did last year.

- Staffing

Donna Philpot is newest project manager. Tammy Hefner is recent promotion to assistant district engineer replacing Chris Rutledge. Melissa Rose joined today and just accepted a Transportation Project Designer position to oversee LPA projects. Kaitlyn Bower was working for design division remotely in SE and is coming back to the district to be the district utility engineer. SE has not had a Geologist for over a decade but was recently able to advertise for one and Duncan Noack accepted the position as District geologist. Duncan plans to move to the district from Jefferson City.

District has had fair success recruiting every position besides engineers. They only have 9 interns signed up for this summer, which is a little less than half the usual. There are 5 engineering positions that have been open for 6 months.

Industry partners shared it has been particularly difficult finding surveyors, and the industry is adding classes to make it more difficult to become licensed. MoDOT contributed success recruiting surveyor's to Benji Philpot teaching at Three Rivers, and Benji mention Three Rivers is working to add the additional classes required.

Consultants also shared problems with recruiting and interns. Consultants are having retention problems along with recruiting. Kansas City especially has a lot of competition. Mentioned that contractors are pushing mentorships. Some engineering consultants have mentoring programs.

- Delivery of current projects

If projects are late, it is a big deal to move them to next fiscal year. District has had problems with unforeseen environmental or other issues. 85% of LPA program delivered in last month of the fiscal year and it's critical projects be delivered as committed. If any projects are going to be late communication needs to happen as soon as possible to look for ways to mitigate delays.

The main reasons for project hold-ups are environmental and ROW. Consultants should always try to beat due dates on projects so they can overcome challenges. Look at the schedule as worst-case scenario.

- ACEC Missouri Updates

I-70 funding is reappropriated and there were no significant challenges on this item.

\$727 million has been appropriated for 3 sections of I-44.

The \$20 million for EIS on I-44 has been reappropriated.

\$10 million for right of way along US Hwy 67

\$5 million for an EIS on improvements to Highway 63

The budget now heads to the Senate, where it will be taken up by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Representative Mayhew introduced bill which proposes changes to the fuel tax monies, provides a standard deduction for the motor fuel tax and changes the refund process for SB262. It was referred to committee, but not heard. ACEC continues to express concerns to legislators over the bill.

- Project Work

On call contracting is still hard to use because of the \$200K cap.

District understands that sometimes consultants have to say no to on-call, LPA, or other projects due to fee caps, even with surveying and geotechnical being performed up front by solicitation.

On any job that they are buying ROW, the SE district is asking consultant to get title commitments. Some have acted surprised by this; it is listed under the survey section. It is a big benefit to do it early in the process. Be aware of that when looking at scope on new projects.

MoDOT's new scheduling software was discussed, each project manager carries over 100 projects so SE will also be looking to consultants to input and manage scheduling details within MoDOT's system in the future, when available.

- Major project updates

Benji discussed the Route B over I-57 at Bertrand benefits, which should be highlighted in MoDOT's connections as a TSMO project in May. It has mini traffic circles to slow traffic, which allowed the bridge to be raised without creating unacceptable site distance using the existing ramps in place. Benji discussed there should be a video included in the story with ag equipment crossing it.

- Upcoming solicitations

Tim P. – Rte. 67 corridor and next two phases have been moved to Sep/Oct. letting. Tim will have 3 more bridge bundles coming out. One in Cape/Perry counties later this year for FY 26/27. Rte. K (Cape County) widening project coming up. Initial study on roundabout at that location.

Pete B. – EA study ongoing on Shannon Rte. 19, two bridges on park service land. One of bridges is on STIP for 26. Route 95 is another current project with a widening and a two roundabouts. New projects – all bridges spoken for except Shannon 19. Will have a few overlay bundles. Will have a bridge bundle on the list next year.

Curt W. - Doing an EA on Rte. 412 in Dunklin Co. to upgrade to multi-lane facility. Upcoming: One signal bundle; 2-mile Turn lane on Rte. 53 outside Poplar Bluff; J Turn project in Madison County on US-67.

Donna P – A couple of bridges (26) will be the last bridges for this year. Also, a sidewalk bundle.

Bull Shoals bridge - bridge is 1900 ft. long +/- . Will have deep foundations. Looking at soliciting for an owner's consultant in the next month or two. \$80M project Potential to build new bridge offline with design build. Solicitation will be similar to Chester but will have more environmental work.

- LPA program updates

There are roughly 75 active projects. Want to see more detailed scoping on applications. Changed guidance on section 106 clearance. Every project will require the 106 reviews. SE district has approximately 4.6 million in federal funding for the FFY26 TAP call.

- Use of alternative delivery

District explained engineering costs have been relatively smaller on D/B bridge bundle projects and wanted to discuss why engineering costs have been rising. District feels that engineering costs are going up more quickly than construction costs. There have been a few projects lately where the proposed consultant engineering costs were a significant fraction of the actual construction costs. Good discussion on many factors suggested experienced engineers are in high demand with salaries going up and new engineers are being trained rapidly with oversight, so temporarily we are in a spot where projects have more hours charged than traditionally.

- Consultant Deliverables

- Performance Feedback / Areas for Improvement

Strive to be on time and on budget. Important to hit deadlines for LPA because tolerance to shift money is going down, must obligate federal funds every year. The last update SE received said as much as \$252million is up for grabs for August

redistribution of funds. This can only be redirected to transportation if we are obligating the funds within the federal fiscal year.

Communication is important, District wants on time and on budget but can help if problems arise and communication is early enough.

Discussion of starting to enter projects into MS Project, ACEC was hoping to get MoDOT to go over process in the near future. MoDOT is looking at using AI to group projects for bidding – probably get started with overlays.

Project Managers have an annual meeting next week and expect to learn more on when the MS Project may get rolled out to consultant.

- Set date for next meeting.
 - Probably in October.

**Missouri Department Of Transportation (SE) / ACEC MO
Liaison Committee**

List of Tentative Attendees

Name	Organization	Email Address
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