

MoDOT SW District / ACEC Missouri Liaison Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 26th, 2025

1:30-3:30pm

In person option:

MoDOT Southwest District, 3025 E. Kearney Street (Conference Room 2), Springfield, MO 65803

Microsoft Teams option: Meeting ID: 266 282 845 832, Passcode: k2fr6ro2

Attendees:

MoDOT:

Stacy Reese
Greg Chapman (Online)
John Sanders
Kristi Bachman
Johnny Teegardin (Online)
Ray Cook
Cindy Dunnaway
Alvin Nieves-Rosario (Online)
Jeff Cremer (Online)

Warner Sherman (Online)
Craig Switzer (Online)
Marc Lewis
Kara Richart
Brittany Mitchell (Online)
Marvin Morris (Online)
Shannon Kellner
Frank Miller

ACEC/MO:

Jason Haynes, HDR, Cmte Chair
Mike Dusenberg, Bartlett & West
Reid Catt, Olsson
Dane Seiler, TEC
Sean Matlock, OWN
Chris Tepen, Benesch
Steve Prange, CMT

Minutes

1. Introductions
 - Jason H. started the meeting and introductions were made.
2. ACEC Updates – President and CEO Morgan Mundell
 - Morgan M. was unable to attend so this update was skipped.
3. MoDOT Leadership Updates / Key Initiatives
 - Stacy R. discussed initiatives. First, MoDOT is placing staff in key leadership positions. Ed H. has taken the Director position. Eric Schroeter is now the Deputy Director and Chief Engineer. Mark Croarkin is now Assistant Chief Engineer. SW District has an Assistant District Engineer position open.
 - A groundbreaking ceremony for I-44 improvement in Springfield is scheduled for April 4th at 10:30 at Crossway Baptist and is open to the public. A press release will be issued tomorrow, March 27th.
 - In March MoDOT has been in the process of updating its current Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and State Freight and Rail Plan (SFRP). Information can be found at: <https://www.modot.org/lrtp-sfrp>.

- MoDOT continues to focus on litter control.

4. District Updates / Staffing Changes

- John S. stated that Kara Richart is taking Kristi Bachman's projects since Kristi is now managing the I-44 project. Cameron Sooy is now a Project Manager and taking the NE area of the District. The District Utility Engineer has been filled with Ryan Greer, and he currently has no staff. There are two open TPD positions because Julie Stiles is retiring, and Cameron Sooy is transferring to a project manager. This is an open Highway Designer position in Joplin. There is a new graduating student starting in the Springfield design office. Also, they are hosting two interns for the summer.
- Johnny T. noted that Eric Bruss is the new Resident Engineer in the Clinton/Nevada area. There are seven (7) open positions in the Construction Engineering group.
- Frank M. said that Joe Diciolla is handling LPA duties including Taylor Gammill (formerly Reynolds) and Josh Dugan. Jacob Wimsatt and Zach Young are performing development reviews.
- Cindy D. reported that their summer intern from 2024 is starting full-time soon.
- Marc L. said there are no staffing changes at the TMC except for a summer intern for 2025.

5. Upcoming Planning/Scoping Items

- Frank M. said there was not a lot added to the STIP this year. There were a few key bridges added for 2030. The Kearney & US-65 bridge was added to the STIP. Projects being solicited include:
 - i. Hwy 249 conversion to Interstate east of Joplin including a W. Corridor Study for Joplin. This will be solicited before the end of April. The study should identify the best use of investment dollars.
 - ii. Craig S. – District-wide sign truss inspections and maintenance will be solicited before the end of April.
 - iii. Shannon K. – District-wide MSE wall inspections and maintenance will be solicited before the end of April with the list to be completed by January 2026.
 - iv. Kara R. – District-wide High-Mast Lighting structure inspections and maintenance.
 - v. Shannon K. – Ft. Scott Street RR Overpass Study will be solicited soon.
 - vi. Bud S. – US 65 Passing Lanes from Buffalo to Warsaw that includes eight total passing lanes. Project is funded with \$38M in GR funds. Project will be solicited in April or May and include design services from Preliminary through Final PSE.
 - vii. Jeff C. stated he is receiving six-month outlooks for consultant needs from Districts this week and will put the list on the solicitations page on Monday, March 31st.

6. Future Design Build Projects

- Frank M. noted that a DB bridge bundle is coming for 2030 and includes some more difficult bridges.

- Stacy R. stated the DRAFT STIP will receive comments in May and will go to the Commission in July for approval.
- Kristi B. said that a groundbreaking ceremony will be held for the I-44 Springfield project on April 4th as previously discussed. Work began recently on the 4.5-mile project and is scheduled for completion in May 2027.

7. Latest Information on I-44

- Kristi B. noted that the larger I-44 DB project has \$347M in GR funds and \$125M in STIP funds, resulting in an overall budget of \$472M. This project combines 11 projects into 3 projects. Currently, work is progressing on the Environmental Assessments, Risk Assessments, and possible delivery methods.
- Greg C. stated that Forward 44 is nearly complete. FHWA in Washington DC has reviewed and provided comments. Responses are being sent back today. The final study report will be released this spring.

8. State of Transportation Funding (Federal & State) (State legislative priorities)

- Stacy R. stated that at the Federal level they are waiting to see what the next Federal Transportation funding bill will look like. They are evaluating additional needs for the unfunded needs list. The entire state is conducting this evaluation right now. STIP projects shaded grey are projects that cannot be completed in the state gas tax funding from several years ago is repealed.
- Steve P. asked if there are any known changes to federal funding mechanisms such as INFRA, MEGA, BUILD, RAISE. Nothing is currently known about changes.

9. Consultant Inspection Services Upcoming Needs

- Johnny T. stated that the SW District will not be soliciting for an XXXX-hour inspection contract like what has been done recently in the KC and ST Districts. Currently inspection needs from Consultants are still being managed through supplements. They have no current plans to use the On-Call list for inspection but if they did the projects would have to be short duration (less than one construction season) to stay under the maximum contract price.

10. MoDOT Consultant On-Call List Opportunities

- John S. stated that young internal staff are working on smaller projects so there are no currently planned opportunities for consultants.
- Jeff C. stated that there are currently many uses of the On-Call list statewide. The next iteration of solicitations for the On-Call list will have some changes. There are too many consultants currently on the list and there is discussion to reduce the number. They will be keeping all the current categories. Solicitation for the next round will be out this Dec-Jan. Currently there are over 150 MOU's statewide performing over \$10M in services.
- Mike D. asked if the maximum contract price could be increased over \$200k. Jeff C. said there is no current discussion to do that by the new Executive Leadership team, but it has been discussed in the past.

11. Other Discussion Items

- Reid C. stated that recently the KC District lost some project funding but found a way to still fund the project using Federal Community Project Funding. Frank M. stated that no current MoDOT SW District projects are utilizing those funds.
- Sean M. noted that a lot of easier projects are complete, and TAP projects have set budgets so there becomes a challenge to get Environmental approvals on those projects. So, the TAP budgets are exceeded due to Environmental approvals. He stated that it appears that standards and specifications are not fully checked until final design, which also causes additional costs. Frank M. noted that Section 106 approval is required if dirt is moved. Sean M. noted that supplements for TAP projects should be timely since construction staff move to other priorities to stay busy. Frank M. stated that he would investigate the process and ways to streamline.
- Steve P. offered condolences for the loss of Laurel McKean.
- Steve P. noted that I-44 GR funds will have to reauthorize one year from now. Kristi B stated that they cannot get the I-44 funding under contract before then. She stated that the project is already on an overly aggressive schedule. Steve noted that ACEC is educating legislatures on I-44 progress. Stacy R. noted that Bud Sherman's US-65 Passing Lanes funding will need reallocation.
- Jason H. noted that the December meet-and-greet went well and MoDOT staff concurred. Everyone agreed it would be good to do it again this upcoming December but find a different, larger space. ACEC SW District Liaison members will assist with finding that space.
- Reid C. stated that recently Jeff Glenn with MFTI shared the Reason Foundation's annual Missouri report with us yesterday while in Jefferson City. MoDOT ranked 9th. Here is the link to the report: [Reason Foundation Annual Highway Report](#).
- Sean M. encouraged everyone to attend the Engineer's Day at the Capital and to be involved.
- Steve P. asked if there is anything that the consultants can do better. Cindy D. noted that Bud S. has been concerned with keeping schedules. It was decided to add this as an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Greg C. noted that the MoDOT PMs are to focus on putting projects in MS Projects and are adding later STIP projects to better plan. He also noted that it is important to hit milestone dates.
- Stacy R. emphasized that they want to continue to build upon the success of their Public Involvement (PI) since they have been getting more vocal opposition on projects.
- Stacy R. said that they are more often seeing development projects going to legislatures and ultimately it circles back around to SW District staff anyway. They want to promote partnerships and want to sit down and talk about projects with developers and help them to find solutions. Steve P. said that the consultants need to continue to educate their developer clients because we understand that MoDOT is charged with protecting the public. Stacy R. said that they could possibly host a lunch-and-learn with developers if there was interest. Reid C. recognized that it is important for consistency in responses from MoDOT when reviewing development plans.

- John S. noted that all SW District projects are loaded in MS Projects. Jeff C. noted that the St. Louis District will soon use Consultants to update projects in MS Projects. He noted that he has licenses to issue to Consultants. Currently everyone is learning best practices with MS Projects. It is important to keep up with 2025 and 2026 projects and get a handle on projects in 2027-2029. Once the new STIP is approved, then they will enter them into the MS Projects baseline templates.

12. Next Meeting Date & Location

- Jason H. indicated that two meetings per year seems to be working fine and that a second meeting could be held in September/October 2025. Everyone agreed with that potential schedule. Jason H. (or the next Chair) and John S. will coordinate to schedule the next meeting.