

**Missouri Department of Transportation (HQ) / ACEC Missouri
Liaison Committee Zoom Meeting**



**Tuesday, November 15, 2022
8:00–10:00 AM**

**ACEC
Missouri**

- MEETING MINUTES -

ATTENDING:

MoDOT Attendees:

Jeff Cremer, Professional Services Coordinator
Bryan Hartnagel, State Bridge Engineer
Ed Hassinger, Deputy Director/Chief Engineer
Travis Koestner, State Design Engineer
Eric Schroeter, Assistant Chief Engineer
Kenny Voss, Assistant State Design Engineer
Jay Wunderlich, Governmental Relations Director

ACEC Missouri Attendees:

Ed Alizadeh, Geotechnology, Inc.
Buddy Desai, Hg Consult
Dave Diestelkamp, ABNA Engineering
Kevin Fuller, CMT
Bob Gilbert, Bartlett & West, Inc., Cmte. Chair
Aaron Kober, Modjeski & Masters
Vicki LaRose, Civil Design, Inc.
Kevin Wallace, HNTB Corporation
Srinu Yanamanamanda, CBB
Morgan Mundell, ACEC/MO President

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1) MoDOT Staff Changes:

Brandi Baldwin was recently promoted to the State Construction & Materials Engineer position. She has a background in Construction with the NE and Central Districts, spent time in Central Office Design and most recently has been on Design-Build projects such as Champ Clark, Mineola Hill, Rocheport Bridge and most recently the I-70/63 Connector project. Those projects will be transitioned to others within MoDOT as soon as possible. The Asst C&M Engineer position remains unfilled and will be a priority for Brandi as she gets started. There was also discussion of inviting Brandi to our next HQ Liaison committee meeting.

Tim Schroeder recently retired as a Design Liaison in Central Office, and his spot has been filled by Jen Becker out of the St. Louis District. Jen's current role has yet to be filled.

2) Construction Letting Updates/Inflation:

During 2021, the construction lettings were 11% over the program budget, and so far, 2022 is looking like it will be 30% over the program budget (currently tracking at \$170M over with over \$1Billion to go in lettings – this includes two D-B jobs that are close to \$500M yet this fiscal year – the Chester Bridge and I-55).

The next round of STIP estimates is starting and MoDOT is grappling with what % inflation to assume in those estimates. Some good news on the asphalt pricing as of late, but diesel prices have risen substantially too, so it is hard to predict how the estimates will be finalized. MoDOT is also about to embark on another round of Unfunded Needs List public input meetings, and the current level of inflation could present challenges with getting some of those projects to the STIP.

Comments were made about how the first 3 years of the current STIP are already committed but the last 2 years leave more flexibility. ACEC members shared the concern about keeping the funding and flow of projects at a consistent pace (as opposed to lots of work for 3 years and then a drop off) so that staffing levels can be consistent. It is MoDOT's position that this is exactly what they want as well due to their own staffing and the ability to keep the workforce consistently working on the program. Consultant budgets are at \$75M this year and rising to \$90M next year and planned to be \$100M in the third year.

Another item of discussion was that the department's commitment to "taking care of the system" or "asset management" also is experiencing inflation so these types of projects still have to be the priority so those projects may take funding from other types of projects (such as expansion) that are currently in the later years of the STIP or on the Unfunded Needs List.

MoDOT asked that consultant use only the latest unit prices in estimates using Bid Tabs software, and the unit prices are supposed to be updated monthly for our use.

3) Timely Payment of MoDOT Invoices:

Comments were brought forward by ACEC firms about the slow payment of invoices, and MoDOT is aware and is asking for patience as they try to get through the backlog they have on invoices. Some comments were also made about firms who are subconsultants who are also waiting an additional 30-60 days after the prime consultant is paid. There do not seem to be many issues with invoice abnormalities or corrections, but it is just a volume vs. staffing issue. MoDOT is assuring the industry they are aware of the issue and working diligently to address it.

4) Any Insights on FAR O/H Rate Approvals (In Light of PPP Credits):

No issues were brought forward from ACEC or MoDOT on how the approval of the credited and non-adjusted O/H rates are going so far. Hopefully this is a sign of MoDOT simplifying the process, and ACEC member firms being informed of the process being used.

5) Legislative Priorities/Updates:

Currently, MoDOT is supplying data as requested to a group of interested parties who are advancing an effort to inform legislators of the need and possible solution to fix Missouri interstates with a one-time infusion of surplus state dollars. Morgan presented on several recent meetings and upcoming meetings with interested parties across the state and mentioned this will be a topic at the upcoming MFTI Policy Retreat.

The House and Senate Caucuses are currently meeting to set their legislative priorities so there was not much to report on the upcoming legislative season.

Jay Wunderlich discussed MoDOT's legislative priorities. They are 1) Dedicating revenues to a trust for ports that could help them plan for multi-year expenditures and 2) Safety related documents to help legislators and interested parties understand 18 different safety initiatives that the state is failing on right now and how we need legislative fixes such as primary seat belt laws, buckle up/phone down legislation.

As it relates to working with our legislators, Morgan provided a powerful statistic – that about 94% of all legislators who voted for SB262 and sought re-election have been re-elected. It is sometimes communicated to new legislators that if you vote for any tax increase you will not be re-elected, but the data about SB262 is proving this incorrect.

6) Update on MoDOT On-Call Status and Timelines:

Deadline for MoDOT On-Call categories is TODAY! LPA On-Call solicitation is also now out and is due December 15, 2022. Decisions about the MoDOT On-Call are expected to be communicated in late January and then the contracting process will follow.

For ACEC firms, you will receive ONLY ONE email from MoDOT about receipt of the On-Call submissions regardless of how many categories you submitted on.

7) Federal/State Grant Opportunities:

MoDOT currently has all state funds that are available committed to the first 3 years of the STIP, so it's not currently making sense to apply for federal grants that have less matching money than the current 80/20 split on current STIP projects.

Some of the federal grants available are setup for more direct recipients (say LPAs typically). This means some LPAs are looking for MoDOT to issue letters of support. LPAs should ask for these letters through the

Districts, but these will eventually need to be reviewed by Central Office as well. MoDOT will want to see the full application to understand the project and the requested support. Please help your LPA clients plan for this in their application deadlines.

This further results in LPAs needing more consultant support for administration of projects, as MoDOT and FHWA do not have enough workforce to administer. This led to more discussion about construction inspection needs as well. ACEC firms were expressing a desire to keep certifications for construction services easy to acquire through reciprocity from other states. One ACEC member firm stated that MoDOT does allow reciprocity and made it easier than other neighboring states, but it's important to make sure we have access to the part of the workforce to do the job for MoDOT or LPA clients.

8) **Consultant Advisory Committee:**

It's ACEC's turn to develop the agenda. Buddy Desai is working on that and scheduling the next meeting.

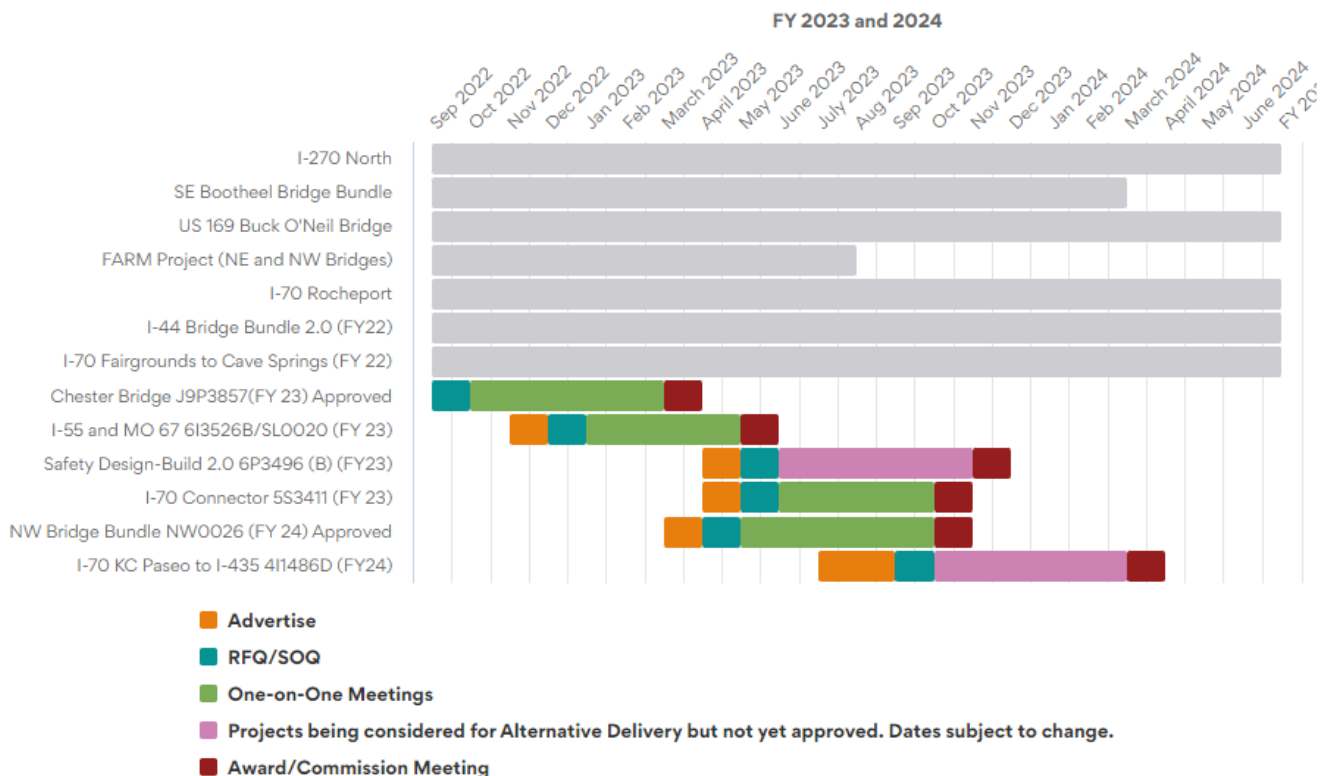
The 6-month outlook from MoDOT is scheduled for release this Friday, so be on the lookout for this and distribute to ACEC firms when it is out.

9) **Design/Build Project Updates:**

The schedule for D-B projects is on the MoDOT website, and a helpful chart has been added to see the procurement schedule for known projects (see below). The I-70 project in KC is planned to go before the Commission for approval as a D-B job in December.

UPCOMING DESIGN-BUILD PROJECTS

September 2022-June 2024 (Dates subject to change)



10) **Miscellaneous Discussion:**

The two new Commissioners will be at the December Commission meeting in KC. They are still going through some orientation to the department and will be seeking legislative concurrence on their appointments during the next session.

MoDOT discussed the new Buy America requirements that go into effect with the November letting. These provisions were approved in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and will need to be in contracts with federal funding. The JSP that includes language is in the link below (you'll need to scroll down to the bottom and look for "Buy America")

[JSP1801.docx \(mo.gov\)](#)

The AASHTO Committee on Bridges and Structures will be held next year in KC in May 2023.

NEXT HQ LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING: TBD February 2023