

# Green Hills

## Regional Planning Commission

### Transportation Newsletter - August 2023

#### **Transportation Advisory Committee of the Green Hills Region Spoke at Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Meeting in Chillicothe, MO**

On August 2nd at the Litton Agri-Science Learning Center in Chillicothe, MO the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission of MoDOT gathered for their monthly meeting. The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Green Hills Region requested time to speak during this month's meeting. The Green Hills TAC requested time on the agenda and were allotted a ten minute window to express the concerns that are of special importance to this region.

Three of the members of TAC spoke during this time. Phillip Ray, Presiding Commissioner in Grundy County; Robert Munden, Presiding Commissioner in Putnam County; and Carl Carder, Green Hills RPC Transportation Advisory Committee Chairman.

They mentioned that Economic prosperity and growth are integral to the success of our region. However, there were some concerns about the increased amount of traffic due to tourism surrounding the Roy Blunt Lake and Little Otter Creek. Additionally it was brought to the committee's attention that these are concerns that will need to be planned for in the future. As traffic due to tourism increases so too will the demands on the roadways.

They also outlined the priorities for the Green Hills Transportation Advisory Committee.

- Overall Road Conditions: While some of area's roads are being fixed it is not enough. Some of our roads were simply not designed to carry the loads of hog operations, rock quarries, and large farm equipment.
- Bridge Rehabilitation and Construction: Unfortunately, the budget is simply not big enough to meet the needs of this region. While there is great work being done our need is bigger than the budget allows.
- Signage: The new signage is a great improvement. However, some of the signs need maintenance and if installed correctly would better withstand the weather.
- Equipment: A reduction of equipment has hurt the rural areas. In the case of snow removal, areas are to share equipment. This could be especially concerning if there was a large portion of the area trying to remove snow from the roadways. There is no plan in place for an especially significant storm. It was suggested that perhaps there should be better planning in the event that such a weather event were to occur.
- Culvert Replacement: The concern is that proper compacting is not taking place which will lead to future issues.



The commissioners thanked the speakers for their comments. They indicated that they understood the needs of the region as well as the entire state. While there is good work being done, they acknowledged that budgetary concerns were preventing all of the projects that need to be done from being completed. They did give credit to Governor Parsons for allocating more financial assistance from the state and expressed that this could be a "turning point" for our roadways in Missouri. It was noted that an "under investment in the state" is something that went on for too many years, and it will simply take time to complete all of the necessary repairs in the state as well as our region.

## Public Meeting Scheduled to Discuss Unfunded Transportation Needs in the Northwest Region

The Missouri Department of Transportation has invited the public to attend a meeting to discuss the unfunded transportation needs in the Northwest Region. This meeting is to be held at the Maryville Public Safety Office on Tuesday August 8<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 3 p.m. The Maryville Public Safety Office is located at 101 N. Vine St. in Maryville, Missouri.

The Missouri Department of Transportation, working with its regional planning partners, has outlined a draft High Priority Unfunded Needs listing, which has identified \$1.1 billion in annual unfunded transportation needs in Missouri. This meeting will address the draft of the updated High Priority Unfunded Needs list for transportation in Northwest Missouri.

The staff of MoDOT as well as the regional planning commissions throughout the state have worked together to develop the list of high priority unfunded road and bridge needs. This draft list includes \$4.7 billion in road and bridge needs in three tiers.

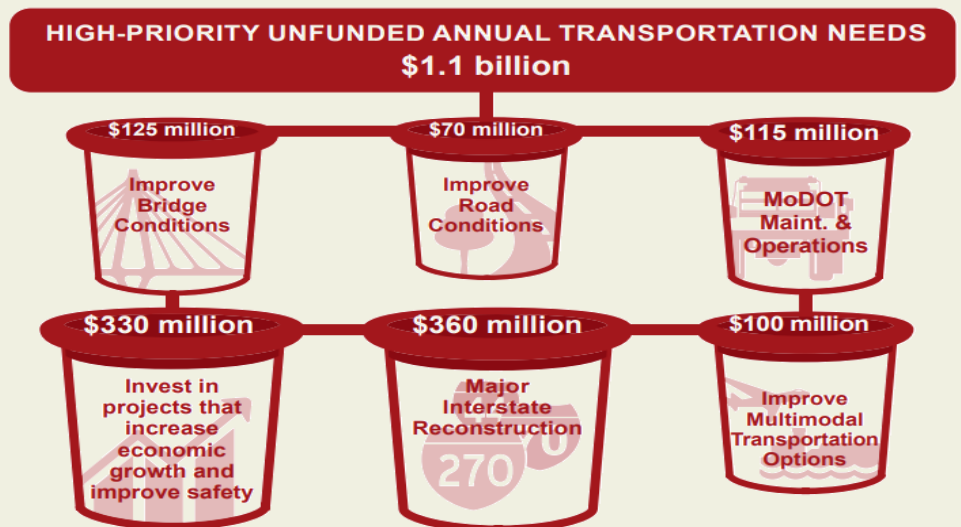
The first Tier includes \$552 million. This encompasses needs that could be accomplished within the time of the current five-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as the federal and state funding levels increase. These needs have good estimates.

Tier 2, which has broader estimates, is worth \$2.1 billion and includes needs beyond the current STIP timeframe. Tier 3 includes \$2 billion of needs also beyond

the current STIP timeframe with even broader estimates. Additionally, MoDOT staff worked with planning partners to identify \$1 billion in multimodal needs.

The presentation materials and a comment form have been made available online at <https://www.modot.org/unfundedneeds>. For more information, call MoDOT at 888-ASKMODOT (275-6636) or visit <http://www.modot.org>.

According to MoDOT the number one priority of Missourians is that the existing system of roads and bridges need to be taken care of. Due to this, the majority of taxpayer dollars for transportation is currently invested in asset management projects. The current funding levels are only sufficient to maintain the transportation system in its current condition. This disparity leaves many transportation needs unfunded. The following graphic, obtained from MoDOT's website, illustrates the annual \$1.1 billion budget and how it will be applied.



## Area Bridges Now Open After FARM Bridge Replacement Project

The FARM Bridge Program (Fixing Access to Rural Missouri) received a \$20.8 million grant from the Federal Highway Administration and an additional \$5.2 million from MoDOT. Thanks to this program a total of 31 rural bridges in northern Missouri will be replaced.

The FARM Bridge Program will replace deficient bridges on low-volume routes that met the following criteria:

- Weight-restricted
- In poor condition
- On timber pile
- One-lane but carry two-lane traffic

MoDOT recently announced that two of our regions bridges that were being replaced under the FARM Bridge Project are now completed and reopened. The Chariton County Route D bridge over the East Fork of Bee Branch, located 1/2 miles west of Route 129, was reopened the evening of July 26th. The Grundy County Route N bridge over No Creek, located northeast of Trenton, is now completed. It was reopened to all traffic the evening of July 25th.

There is an additional bridge on Route D that is still closed for replacement. This is the Clark Branch Bridge, which is located approximately 1 mile east of Missouri Route 5. The MoDOT website indicates that they expect this bridge to remain closed for repair through early October.

