

Missouri Transportation Planning Committee

Meeting Notes

October 2018

The Missouri Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) Meeting was held in the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG) offices on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 2:00 pm.

Members in Attendance

Steve Ables, Municipal League of Metro St Louis
Rich Bradley, City of St Louis
Mike Henderson, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)
John Hicks, St Louis County
Jason Jonas, Jefferson County
Grace Kyung, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) representative
Ron Williams, Franklin County

Members Absent

Amanda Brauer, St Charles County Transit Authority representative
Maurice Falls, City of St Louis
Jessica Gershman, Bi-State Development (BSD)
Chris Poehler, Bi-State Development (BSD)
Greg Smith, St Louis Regional Chamber
Wesley Stephen, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)
Craig Tajkowski, St Charles County

Others in Attendance

Cynthia Davis, Bi-State Development (BSD)
Shaun Tooley, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)

EWG Staff

Larry Grither, Paul Hubbman, Jason Lange, Marcie Meystrik, Zak Mumuni, Anna Musial, Rachael Pawlak, Josh Schwenk, Melissa Theiss

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by John Hicks, Chair.

ITEMS

Northside/Southside Locally Preferred Alternative – Marcie Meystrik (EWG) presented a recap of the Northside/Southside MetroLink study. The study updated the 2008 locally preferred alternative to take into account new developments, such as the new National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) site as well as currently available funding. Staff held 48 meetings with key stakeholders, held open houses with 229 participants, attended 35 neighborhood meetings, and conducted an online survey with over 3,000 responses to gather public input on the plan. The study goals focused on neighborhood redevelopment and access to jobs.

The study found that Proposition 1 funding will bring in approximately \$12 million per year to fund the construction of the new line. Combined with anticipated federal funding, staff expects approximately \$700 million to be available to begin construction. Staff worked to identify an alternative that balanced cost with ridership within these funding constraints. The final locally preferred alternative runs from Grand Blvd & Natural Bridge Ave, through Downtown, and ending at Jefferson Ave & Chippewa St. This will have high-ridership bus lines on either end, include Downtown where the highest ridership is located, and extends as far to the north and south as possible while remaining within the funding constraints. Staff has maintained two alternatives near the NGA site, one along Cass Ave and one along N Florissant Ave.

Staff believes this alternative would be in the medium range when competing for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. Recommendations for improving the potential score include implementing more transit-supportive policies (such as Bi-State Development's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) study), increase employment near proposed stations, improving pedestrian facilities near proposed stations, and increasing system ridership.

Staff's financial analysis found that construction of this line would cost \$667.3 million (in 2017 USD). Operating and maintenance costs are not included in this estimate. Local funding could take the form of a federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan or city bonding. Approximately 16-20% of local funding has not yet been identified, which is consistent with other projects at this stage in development.

This locally preferred alternative was adopted by the EWG Board of Directors in August 2018. Next steps include allowing some time for Proposition 1 funds to build up, then beginning the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Staff anticipates 8-10 years before the line might open to the public.

Ron Williams (Franklin County) asked why operations and maintenance costs are not part of the study. Meystrik responded that this is the norm at this stage in the planning process. Additionally, local Proposition 1 funds are directed only toward construction activities, as operations funding will not be necessary until the line begins operating in 10 years. Paul Hubbman (EWG) added that new funding sources would need to be developed by regional leadership, staff has only identified the need.

Grace Kyung (BPAC) asked why the line does not extend south one more stop to Dutchtown. Meystrik responded that this was as far as the line could extend within the current funding limits, and the #11 Chippewa MetroBus line makes for a logical cutoff point due to its high ridership.

Additional information about the study, including details about the locally preferred alternative, is available at <http://www.northsidesouthsidesl.com/>

I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages Study – Shaun Tooley (MoDOT) presented a recap of the Envision I-70 Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. This study encompassed a 40-mile corridor through St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. This was a

separate study from the Improve I-70 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study conducted by MoDOT further to the west.

The corridor was divided into five segments with goals and strategies set for each segment. Since the last time the PEL was presented to the TPC, the final round of public engagement was held including meetings with the Senior and Technical Advisory Committees, EWG Board of Directors, and open houses. This allowed MoDOT staff to develop high-priority strategies for the corridor as well as for each of the five segments. MoDOT staff will use these strategies to evaluate projects along the corridor as to how well they meet the overall vision for the corridor.

MoDOT has also produced a memo on the I-70 reversible lanes. Alternatives include maintaining the current eastbound-only configuration, reestablish the reversible function, converting them to one express lane in each direction (with a design speed of 45mph), or repurpose the lanes for trucks, transit, or autonomous vehicles. This memo is currently under revision and will be released soon.

The PEL is currently being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). MoDOT anticipates the receipt of a Letter of Acceptance from FHWA acknowledging that the PEL followed federal guidelines. Next steps include adding these high-priority strategies to the long-range transportation plan. Proposed I-70 projects would then be ranked based on these criteria.

Additional information can be found at: <http://www.envision70.com/>

2017 Regional Congestion Report – Zak Mumuni (EWG) and Larry Grither (EWG) discussed the recent report on congestion in the EWG region. This is the third year for the annual congestion report, which is meant as a planning document to assist agencies in identifying congested corridors so they can work on improvements.

Staff identified 59 congested locations throughout the regional arterial system in 2017, compared to 38 locations in the 2016 report. There were 32 congested locations identified on the regional freeway system, compared to 37 in 2016. Similarly, queue lengths increased on the arterial system, primarily in the AM peak period, while queue lengths on the freeway system decreased. Projects were also ranked based on severity, total impact, and variability, and projections of future congestion were established for the AM and PM peak periods.

Shaun Tooley (MoDOT) asked for clarification about congestion on I-64. Grither responded that I-64 is congested in both directions during both peak periods.

Grace Kyung (BPAC) asked for the definition of total impact. Grither noted that total impact includes queue length and severity. Variability is a measure of the consistency of congestion in a particular location at a particular time of day.

The full report, as well as previous reports, is available at:

<https://www.ewgateway.org/transportation-planning/transportation-systems-management-operations/congestion-management-process/>

Reasonable Progress – Josh Schwenk (EWG) informed the TPC that Fiscal Year 2019 is beginning with 129 projects programmed, approximately 88% of the 146 programmed in Fiscal Year 2018. Additionally, 29 projects are programmed for right of way (ROW) which is more than double the number programmed in ROW last year. Staff will follow-up with these sponsors as new FHWA requirements have the potential to cause some delays in these projects obligating funds.

The most recent Reasonable Progress Update, as well as previous updates, is available here under Reasonable Progress: <https://www.ewgateway.org/transportation-planning/transportation-improvement-program/>

Other Business –

Jason Lange (EWG) informed the TPC that the EWG Annual Meeting will take place Thursday, November 15, 2018 at the Hyatt Downtown. Registration is available here:

<https://www.ewgateway.org/53rd-annual-meeting-and-awards-luncheonnovember-15-2018/>

Lange also reminded the TPC that EWG will be opening a Call for Projects for the Surface Transportation Block Grant-Suballocated (STP-S) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Programs in early December, with applications due in February. More information will be released soon.

Grace Kyung (BPAC) announced that data from Trailnet's bike counts would be available in approximately one month.

The next Missouri TPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 7th, 2018 at 2:00pm.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion – Jason Jonas, Second – Grace Kyung.