



View from the Chair

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

Robust Discussion Continues as Project List Matures

June 3, 2014



Dear Patti:

By now you have probably heard the Governor has stated he cannot offer his support for a $\frac{3}{4}$ cent sales tax to support transportation, in light of sales tax cuts passed by the General Assembly. In his press release, however, the Governor said, "We can all agree on the need for robust discussion about Missouri's long-term transportation infrastructure needs." The Commission remains totally committed to facilitating that *robust discussion* for which the Governor called.

This is also consistent with the charge the Missouri General Assembly gave to the Commission as well. House Joint Resolution 68 provides, "...prior to any election in which this section shall be submitted to voters for approval, the commission shall approve its lists of projects, programs, and facilities, with a priority given to safety, on the state highway system and state transportation system that shall be funded from the proceeds for the additional sales and use taxes...."

Since the Governor has set the election for August 5th, the time for *robust discussion* is now. And I can assure you, that *robust discussion* is clearly in motion. Remember, this process of identifying the most critical transportation projects in every region of the state started some years ago. The list we will approve is the culmination of much hard work with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) which are comprised of local leaders and elected officials. In addition, MoDOT's long range planning effort, On The Move, held meetings in all 114 counties across the state to ensure we were obtaining feedback from ordinary citizens. Even before that MoDOT, gathered feedback as part of the Blue Ribbon Panel 2012 tour throughout the state.

I communicated today with one of MoDOT's planning partners who described the process as

follows:

“The existing long-range plan, adopted in 2010, was the starting point for the discussion regarding specific project priorities. The list was then updated and refined based on studies completed since that time. As part of this process, three public workshops were held to receive input on policy goals, financial investment strategies, and specific priorities. Committees were also engaged to provide additional input to project listings prior to formalizing initial project recommendations.”

This professional, thoughtful process gives me great confidence the project list we ultimately approve will represent critical needs of the state and facilitate the *robust discussion* the Governor has called us to do.

Onward!

Stephen R. Miller
Chairman

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