



View from the Chair

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

Commission Adopts “Missouri’s 325 System”

February 6, 2015



Dear «GreetingLine»

On Wednesday, the Commission adopted “Missouri’s 325 System” as proposed last month by MoDOT. “Missouri’s 325 System” is MoDOT’s answer to managing our highway system with only \$325 million for contractor awards starting in fiscal 2017. Director Dave Nichols reviewed the grim realities: Missouri has the seventh largest transportation system but ranks 46th in revenue spent per mile. Missouri spends a little more than \$14,000 per mile on our highways and bridges. By comparison, sister states to our east and west spend more than \$70,000 per mile.

Perhaps most distressing is the fact that by 2017 we will no longer be able to match federal funds meaning that \$167 million dollars could go to other states. By 2018 and each year thereafter, that number grows to approximately \$400 million. That means that federal gas taxes and general revenues that Missourians pay to Washington, D.C aren’t coming back home – they will be sent to other states who are investing in transportation.

With only \$325 million available for a system that requires \$485 million to just keep it in its current condition, MoDOT must prioritize. The focus will be on roads that serve primarily to connect communities across the state. The \$325 million in contractor awards will only be enough to allow MoDOT to maintain approximately 8,000 miles in its current condition. The other approximately 26,000 miles of supplementary roads, primarily serving local traffic in both urban and rural areas, will receive a reduced level of service. This means that roads will become a patchwork of repairs, resulting in a rough ride for motorists and bridges will be weight-restricted or closed, causing lengthy detours for travelers, freight delivery, emergency services, school buses and farm

equipment.

Dave Nichols showed a video depiction of the decay that will result. You may view it at http://youtu.be/-kIc_7B_nWk. He also presented photographs of deteriorated road conditions in various districts which will become more numerous and widespread. Additionally, Dave highlighted pictures of the deterioration on four bridges that have been closed. I have posted these road and bridge photographs below. Currently there are more than 1,300 bridges throughout the system with weight restrictions and almost 600 bridges are in critical condition. MoDOT predicts this number will grow to 1,500 by 2024.

The comments MoDOT received in recent weeks acknowledged the necessity of implementing such a program. "This is a terrible but necessary plan to deal with the shortage in funding," remarked one customer. Another warned, "The 325 Plan may be the best that can be done with the current funding, but it will be detrimental to safety and economic development."

In adopting "Missouri's 325 System," the Commission noted that MoDOT would continue to discuss the details of the plan with its partners, given these two criteria: (1) approximately 8,000 miles is all MoDOT can afford and that number will not be increased (for any road added there must be a corresponding reduction); and (2) roads on the primary system must be roads that connect communities across the state and not roads that primarily serve local traffic.

Following approval of "Missouri's 325 Plan," Nichols outlined possible new funding proposals that could address the problem. More on this topic in the next "View."

Onward!

Stephen R. Miller
Chairman

If you would like to communicate with the Commission, you can always reach us at MHTC@modot.mo.gov.



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County**



**St. Louis
County**



**Laclede
County**



**Jackson
County**



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**Rte H Wyaconda River Bridge, Scotland
County**



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