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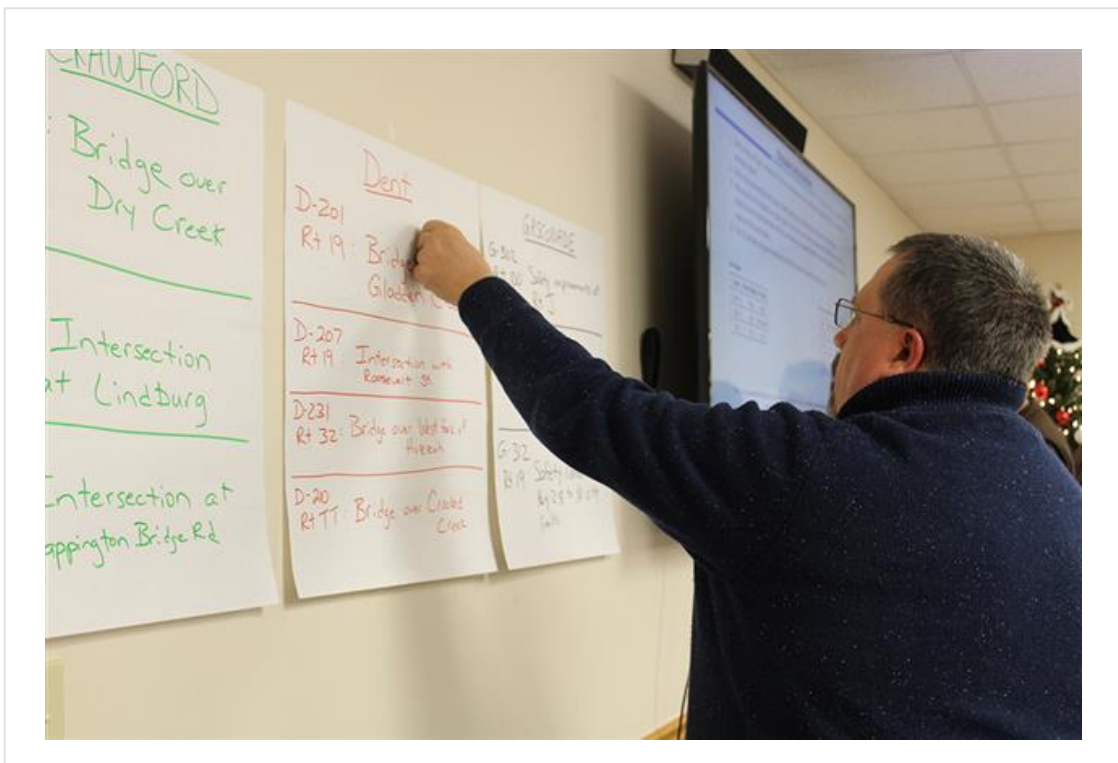
**TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS**  
A publication of the Meramec Regional Planning Commission  
Transportation Advisory Committee  
Representing Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Osage, Phelps, Pulaski and Washington Counties



Winter 2019

# Transportation Advisory Committee decides regional transportation priorities

*Highways 63 and 50 remain at top of list*



Transportation Advisory Committee Chair Ray Walden voted during the prioritization of the region's transportation needs.

ST. JAMES — The Meramec Region's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) confirmed that the expansions of Highways 63 and 50 to four-lane corridors remain the number one and two regional transportation priorities, respectively, at its December meeting. The proposed projects on Highway 63 and Highway 50 have topped the regional priority list for several years.

After determining that these two projects should continue to be top regional priorities, TAC members from each county shared the top three or four additional transportation needs from their counties. The TAC then voted to prioritize these additional needs on a regional level. The prioritized list was then approved by the TAC and recommended to the Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) board, who also approved the prioritized list later in the evening. The list will now be shared with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Central District office for consideration of inclusion in MoDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP is a five-year plan for design and construction projects.

In addition to the projects on Highways 63 and 50, other items topping the TAC's priority list as high or medium priority, in order of priority, are:

- Replace bridge over Frene Creek on MO 19 in Gasconade County;
- Address bridge concerns over Big River on Route C in Washington County;
- Address safety concerns on bridge over Gladden Creek on MO 19 in Dent County;
- Improve safety at the Y intersection of Hwy 63 and Hwy. 28 south of Vienna in Maries County;
- Replace bridge over Dry Creek on Route HH in Crawford County;
- Improve safety at I-44 to University Drive on US 63 in Rolla;
- Install passing and climbing lanes on US 63 in Osage County;
- Improve safety at intersection of Hwy. 63 and Route E in Osage County;
- Improve safety at Exit 159 on ramp on at I-44 in St. Robert;
- Add dual left turn lane on Missouri Avenue southbound to Eastlawn in St. Robert;
- Address safety and flooding concerns on Route 89 near the Gasconade River through Osage County;
- Make safety improvements and turn lane on US 63 through Westphalia;
- Improve interchange at US 63 and I-44 in Rolla; and
- Add southbound turn lanes on US 63 to Hwy. 28 near Vichy.

The priority list is an annual planning exercise for the TAC.

Additionally, the TAC prioritized spot projects on Hwy. 63 that MoDOT has identified as projects that would significantly improve the flow of traffic. The projects ranked from highest to lowest were:

- Build a northbound passing lane north of Vienna starting approximately 0.5 miles north of Route AA and extending 2.4 miles in Maries County;
- Build a northbound passing lane starting at Route 28 near Vichy and extending for 3.3 miles in Maries County. This includes turn lanes at Route 28 on Hwy. 63;
- Build a northbound passing lane north of Freeburg starting at Route JJ and extending for 1.7 miles. This would include a southbound left turn lane at Route JJ in Osage County;

- Build a southbound passing lane south of Freeburg starting approximately at city limits and extending for 2.2 miles in Osage County;
- Extend the southbound climbing lane south of Westphalia to Route T in Osage County;
- Build a two-way left turn lane from County Road 511 to Mill Street in Westphalia;
- Rebuild the Hwy. 63 and Route E intersection in Osage County; and
- Extend the southbound climbing lane at Route A to go around the corner ending at the straightaway in Maries County.

MoDOT representatives reported to the TAC that six Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP) projects from the Central District were funded. Five cities submitted applications from the Meramec Region and these were reviewed and ranked at the October TAC meeting. Four of the six Central District projects funded were in the Meramec Region and will focus on ADA self-evaluation plans for the cities of St. Robert, Salem, Hermann and St. James. The two additional projects out of region were for Fulton and Lebanon.

James Beattie was also introduced as the new MoDOT project manager for the region.

Persons needing more information on MRPC's Transportation Advisory Committee may contact MRPC at (573) 265-2993. For more information on Transportation needs in the region or other programs offered by MRPC, follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/meramecregion](https://www.facebook.com/meramecregion) or visit [www.meramecregion.org](http://www.meramecregion.org).

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## **Veteran MoDOT Employee Named Central District Engineer**

Mabelle Watkins, Jefferson City, has been named the district engineer for the Missouri Department of Transportation's Central District. The district covers 18 counties and includes the cities of Jefferson City and Columbia, as well as the Meramec Region and Lake of the Ozarks area. She replaces David Silvester, who left the position to become the district engineer for MoDOT's Kansas



### **Missouri Center for Transportation Innovation Unveiled**

MoDOT and the University of Missouri System announced the formation of the Missouri Center for Transportation Innovation - a research collaboration that will benefit both organizations and the citizens of Missouri.

"At the rate that transportation technology is changing, if you can't stay ahead of the curve with your research initiatives, you'll quickly be passed by others," MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna said. "With Missouri's historical position as a nationwide leader in transportation, we can't let that happen. The creation of MCTI positions us well for the future."

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City District.

"My goal is to continue to build upon the great partnerships MoDOT and our planning partners have cultivated, to date," Watkins said. "Our regional planning commissions and metropolitan planning organizations play an important role in providing the regional perspective in statewide transportation decision-making."

A registered professional engineer, Watkins has spent her entire career at MoDOT. After graduating from Tennessee Technological University with a civil engineering degree, Watkins worked in a variety of highway design and traffic engineering positions in MoDOT's Southeast and Central districts.

She also served one year as a Mercury Team Member, where she helped to implement improved plan scoping, project delivery and budgeting processes. After that, she served in a variety of roles in MoDOT's Planning and Design divisions, before becoming director of Transportation Planning in 2006.

"I am honored to take on the role of district engineer for MoDOT's Central District," Watkins said. "I look forward to working with the district employees and community leaders to build upon their hard-earned successes. Working together, I believe we can create an even better tomorrow for transportation in our region."

Watkins and her husband, John, have a son and a daughter who are both students at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

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**Governor Parson's cost-share program**

Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) assisted two communities within the region - St. Robert and Potosi - with cost-share applications under Governor Parson's cost-share program.

In St. Robert, the community was proposing to construct a new 3,850 foot roadway and sidewalk to access available commercial and industrial lots off of Business Highway 66.

In Potosi, the cost-share application was aimed at assisting with the development of a 35-plus acre tract of land just south of Potosi into a new residential subdivision and commercial park known as Stonecrest Estates Subdivision.

Neither application was funded. For more information on the cost-share program and a full list of funded projects, click the button below.

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