



## MVPO Transportation Technical and Citizens Committees Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 – 10:30 a.m.

MVPO Conference Room

**Members Present:** Charles Schreck, Brian Wieland, Cody Chrisman, Tim Schumm, Robert Seaman, Sheri Rychener, Todd Roth, Mike Saneholtz, Will Burns, Jerry Zielke, Jerry Hayes, Matt Davis, Warren Schlatter, Frank Onweller, Denise Dahl, Dennis Miller, Ellen Smith, Emma Kirkpatrick

**Others Present:** Rod Maas (ODOT District 1), Marty Crossland (City of Napoleon)

### Meeting Notes

1. **Introductions/Convene Meeting**
2. **RTPO Program Activities Update**
  - a. Technical Assistance Activities
    - i. MVPO is continuing to help communities in the region with items related to transportation. MVPO is finalizing a letter of interest for a TAP application, which will involve paving a portion of the Wabash Cannonball Trail from the Lucas-Fulton County Line to State Route 109.
    - ii. MVPO is the process of developing a new map for the Wabash Cannonball Trail in order to place within their kiosks at trailheads.
    - iii. The Transportation Improvement District (TID) projects that received grant funding through ODOT are moving forward. The Fayette Industrial Parkway Project is about to advertise for bids, and the Paulding Project is moving forward with final design.
    - iv. MVPO is also working with the Village of Swanton in Fulton County to update their School Travel Plan so they can apply for Safe Routes to School funds.
  - b. Proposed Maumee River Water Trail Project
    - i. The Toledo Metroparks are applying for ODNR funds to designate the Maumee River as an Ohio Water Trail, which will provide signage and other benefits. MVPO has aided Metroparks in collecting letters and resolutions of support from the Villages and Townships in which the Maumee River traverses within the Maumee Valley Region. Public meetings will be held towards the end of January and in February for Defiance, Henry, Wood, Paulding, and Lucas Counties.
  - c. State and US Bicycle Route Designation Project
    - i. ODOT is continuing work on their proposed project to designate US and State bike routes throughout Ohio. MVPO is moving forward with

gathering resolutions of support along the proposed routes in the Maumee Valley Planning region and ODOT is planning to apply for designation of the routes in April.

### 3. ODOT Safety Program Comments

#### a. Overview

- i. *Handout: ODOT Safety Program Ideas*
- ii. The Safety Program manager for the State of Ohio has asked for all ODOT Districts to provide feedback on proposed safety ideas to help Ohio reduce fatal crashes. Traffic deaths have risen in Ohio over the past 3 years and the top 5 contributing factors are roadway departure, unbelted drivers and passengers, alcohol, speed, and young drivers. In the MVPO region, fatal crashes have been on an upward trend recently, similar to the State of Ohio. In 2013, there were 28 fatal crashes, 27 in 2014, and 36 in 2015. There are 32 confirmed fatal crashes for 2016 (which are not yet finalized). Typically, 60% of fatal crashes in Ohio occur on rural roads so ODOT is trying to formulate new strategies to help locals improve safety on their roads, especially in rural areas. The handout lists systematic safety improvements that require feedback.

#### b. Discussion

- i. “Cross Traffic Does Not Stop” Signs: Members of the committee stated that these plaques could benefit those travelling in the area from out of town who may not know where local roads intersect major roads, especially state routes.
- ii. Expand Township Signing Grant Program to Cities: City representatives of the committee didn’t feel this was needed. It was commented that signs are a very small cost to them so it isn’t something they would need from ODOT. They also said that signage isn’t the main issue when it comes to safety of their roads and so they would rather see this funding go towards higher cost countermeasures.
- iii. Grant Pilot Program for Counties and Townships to install 6-inch, thermoplastic pavement markings on rural roads: Some of the county representatives on the committee commented that they don’t think this would fix the roadway departure problem in our area. They said the main issue is the small pavement width, but doing that type of improvement is costly. Overall they said they understand that these solutions are an attempt at correcting safety issues in a low cost manner and in some areas it may work. However, in our region, the rural county and township roads just need to be wider. It was noted that there are locations where it wouldn’t even be feasible to install the 6 inch markings because many roads don’t meet the width criteria to have center or edge lines. The committee noted that distracted driving is becoming a big problem in our

region and seems to be the biggest cause for roadway departure crashes. Ellen Smith explained that ODOT is very aware of the problem and is also proposing ways to tackle this issue in addition to the systematic safety improvements.

- iv. Replace overhead flashers with LED stop signs: According to the committee, this isn't a large area of concern for our region. They are familiar with locations where flashers may have contributed to driver confusion so they agree with the concern, but couldn't think of any specific locations in our region where that's an issue. They are in favor of replacing the flashers with the LED Stop Signs, but not if the flashers would be replaced with standard stop signs.
- v. General comments: It was stated that overall, ODOT has done a good job with safety in our region. Committee members commented that there are not many 'hot spots' for crashes in our region and that ODOT is doing all they can do to improve safety where they can.

#### **4. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) 2018 – 2021**

##### **a. Status Update**

- i. ODOT is requiring MVPO to develop a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for 2018 – 2021. This document will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which is developed by ODOT. A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a 4-year listing of projects that have federal and state funding and will implemented over the four year timeframe. This document is updated every 2 years. Metropolitan Planning Organizations develop their TIPs by listing state and federal funded projects in their regions which also includes the projects funded through the allocation they receive. Since MVPO does not receive an allocation for projects, the RTIP will include projects with state and federal funds that will be implemented within the MVPO region between State Fiscal Years 2018 and 2021.
- ii. MVPO is in the process of drafting the RTIP documents, which also include some portions of the long range transportation plan, as the RTIP has to be consistent with the plan. It will be demonstrated in the document how each project included is in line with MVPO's long range plan goals.
- iii. ODOT is also allowing the RTPOs to include a list of "unfunded project needs" to show what projects from the long range plan are short term priorities. This list should represent feasible projects from the plan that will be implemented from 2018-2021 if funding were to become available – either through existing sources or if an allocation were provided to MVPO. This was explained by ODOT as "a way to nudge them for

funding” – either through a possible allocation or through existing sources that can be taken advantage of. If there are any projects on the long range list that the project sponsor was planning on applying for in the next couple of years for example, such as TRAC funding through ODOT, it would be good to include in the RTIP.

b. ‘Unfunded Project Needs’ Discussion

- i. *Handout: Unfunded Project Needs: Unfunded Project Priorities List & Map*
- ii. *Handout: Unfunded Project Needs: Unfunded Feasible Projects List*
- iii. ODOT did not provide guidelines on which projects are allowed to be

included on the RTIP ‘Unfunded Project Needs’ list. Instead, they expressed that the list should just be representative of the region’s short term, unfunded needs from the long range plan. MVPO contacted all the project sponsors on the long range plan list (county, city, village engineers, etc.) and requested a list of *feasible* projects from the long range plan to be implemented from 2018-2021 if funding were available. This information led to a list of short-term, ‘feasible projects’ from the long range plan list. This list was then shortened in order to make it more significant by having each project sponsor identify their top 2 priority projects from the feasible projects list. ODOT sponsored projects were excluded as much as possible in order to focus on local, regional priorities. The project sponsors identified a total of 18 projects, which leaves 2 additional projects that need to be added to make the list 20 projects total. The Committee members will vote for 2 of the top 5 feasible projects and based on responses, the 2 most voted for projects will be added to the list.

There was some discussion from Committee members over the feasible projects. It was questioned whether repair projects should be on the list, but this was answered by committee members stating that a majority of projects in the region are repair and this will not be changing. Members commented that the unfunded project list should be realistic and contain projects that will ultimately be completed in the region. It was also noted that the 18 projects identified are a good start at representing what priorities the locals in the region have, including many projects that just need additional funding in order to be completed.

- iv. In the future, MVPO would like to work with the Committees to possibly establish thresholds for projects on the long range plan.
- v. Next Steps: Finalizing the unfunded project list is the next step, as the first draft of the RTIP is due on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. In March, MVPO will host public participation meetings for review of the draft and comments. MVPO would also like for the committees to meet at a time TBA in March

to go over the final draft of the RTIP. The final RTIP will be submitted on April 28, 2017 to ODOT.

**5. Upcoming Dates/Funding Source Information**

- a. ODOT Small City Program – Letter of Interest Due Feb. 1
- b. ODOT Municipal Bridge Program – Application Due March 1
- c. ODOT Transportation Alternatives – Letter of Interest Due Feb. 1
- d. ODOT Active Transportation Grant – Application Due March 3 **(new)**

This funding source is new this year and is meant for projects that can help improve active transportation and the safety of those activities in Ohio. Eligible projects include educational activities, low cost infrastructure improvements, planning activities and data collecting.

- e. Other Business – meetings will be held jointly with both the Technical and Citizens Committees at 10:30 a.m. on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of February, May, August and November from now on. Meetings will be scheduled separately as needed.

**6. Adjourn**

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS: Please mark your calendars.

**Technical Committee and Citizens Committee: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.**

**2017: March TBA, May 17, August 16, November 15**