

DRAFT



TRI-STATE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

Tri-State Development Summit & Great Region

To: MoDOT & Missouri Highway Commission
From: TDS Steering Committee
CC: DRAFT Press Release
Date: 6/20/2014
Re: August 5, 2014 MoDOT Sales Tax Issue for Funding Transportation Comment on June 11, 2014 Public Meeting in Hannibal, MO, Press Release & Summit Position Statement

The Tri-State Development Summit has been working across three states and 35 counties, including Northeast Missouri, to create and enhance economic development opportunities for that region since 1996. The successes have been many.

The group is keenly aware of the significant funding shortfall now facing the Missouri Department of Transportation, and has pledged to assist with any initiative that would increase the money available for important infrastructure projects — especially the development of four-lane highways in the northeastern portion of the state.

Amendment 7 would provide MoDOT with much-needed revenue to begin to address Missouri's transportation needs. However, we strongly urge both MoDOT and the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to consider modifying the priority list for the 17-county Northeast District to help us convince voters to approve the measure in August.

Despite having four major multi-state corridors in the district — the Chicago-Kansas City Expressway, the Avenue of the Saints, the I-72/U.S. 36 east-west corridor and I-70 — the only priority capital project included for the northern part of this district is the Champ Clark Bridge on U.S. 54 in Louisiana.

While of long-range importance, this project will do little to create immediate economic development because it is not connected with a major highway corridor. It is unlikely that the bridge project alone will serve as an incentive to persuade voters to approve Amendment 7.

Instead, we propose that the costs associated with that project be assessed to the state program. That would enable the \$12.5 million earmarked from the proposed

transportation tax to be reallocated to the Northeast District for more crucial capital projects that would help spur economic development and voter enthusiasm.

Likewise, the \$20 million being allocated in the proposed 10-year plan for I-70 improvements in Warren and Montgomery counties should instead be part of the overall I-70 project. That would free up additional money for the Northeast District to pursue other, more critical capital projects.

The Hannibal Expressway has been a top regional priority since 1984. It is a critically important link along the 563-mile, three-state Avenue of the Saints national highway corridor between St. Louis and St. Paul, Minn. It is one of three major multi-state corridors intersecting in Hannibal.

This 10-mile expressway offers significant economic development potential and would also address major safety concerns now on the route. Interstate travelers would no longer be forced to drive 12 miles out of their way and encounter seven stoplights in congested Hannibal city traffic once this is completed.

Because the Hannibal Expressway is part of a national-designated corridor, much of the \$70 million cost of the project could be allocated statewide, much like the I-70 work, and not be completely assessed against the Northeast District.

However, the Hannibal Expressway is not presently included in the priority list. Numerous meetings and hearings involving MoDOT officials and residents in the region over the years have created expectations for many that this project would be a priority. This is a major highway project that has the potential for positive ramifications across three states, and is supported up and down the corridor.

In fact, the Tri-State Development Summit has recommended a number of other important regional priorities, including the 23-mile pavement upgrade of U.S. 54 eastward from Mexico to Mo. 19; the 43-mile stretch of U.S. 63 north of Kirksville to the Iowa border; the eight miles on U.S. 61 from Running Fox School to the Iowa border; and the 27-mile stretch of Mo. 19 from New London to U.S. 54.

It is disappointing that none of these projects are included in the 10-year plan. It is apparent that long-term, major capital funding in Missouri is an issue that must be addressed.

The exclusion of these projects has created a belief that the significant transportation needs of the Northeast District, the only one in Missouri to contain four multi-state highway corridors, is being short-changed with the proposed funding formula. Only 4.5 percent of the revenue projected to be generated over 10-year life of the transportation tax is being allotted to this district. We believe that should be revisited and more weight given to Northeast Missouri.

We urge MoDOT and the commission to reconsider and include the Hannibal Expressway before the 10-year plan is adopted in July. The substantial long-term benefits for the region are real and have been well-documented.

Regardless if these modifications are made, the Hannibal Expressway should be specifically named as a priority project in this 10-year plan. Should the transportation tax generate more revenue than anticipated, or if new state or federal funding sources become available in the future, this would allow for planning, engineering and environmental work to be completed, and right-of-way to be acquired so this project would be ready to proceed when full funding does become available.

This would give voters in Northeast Missouri a reason to support Amendment 7 in August. Otherwise, they are faced with receiving little return on the additional taxes that will be imposed on them over the next 10 years, severely reducing the chances the ballot measure will be approved.

The Tri-State Development Summit remains committed to working with the Missouri Department of Transportation and Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for the passage of Amendment 7. We realize failure will further deepen the state's already dire funding crisis and have a negative impact on Missouri for decades to come.

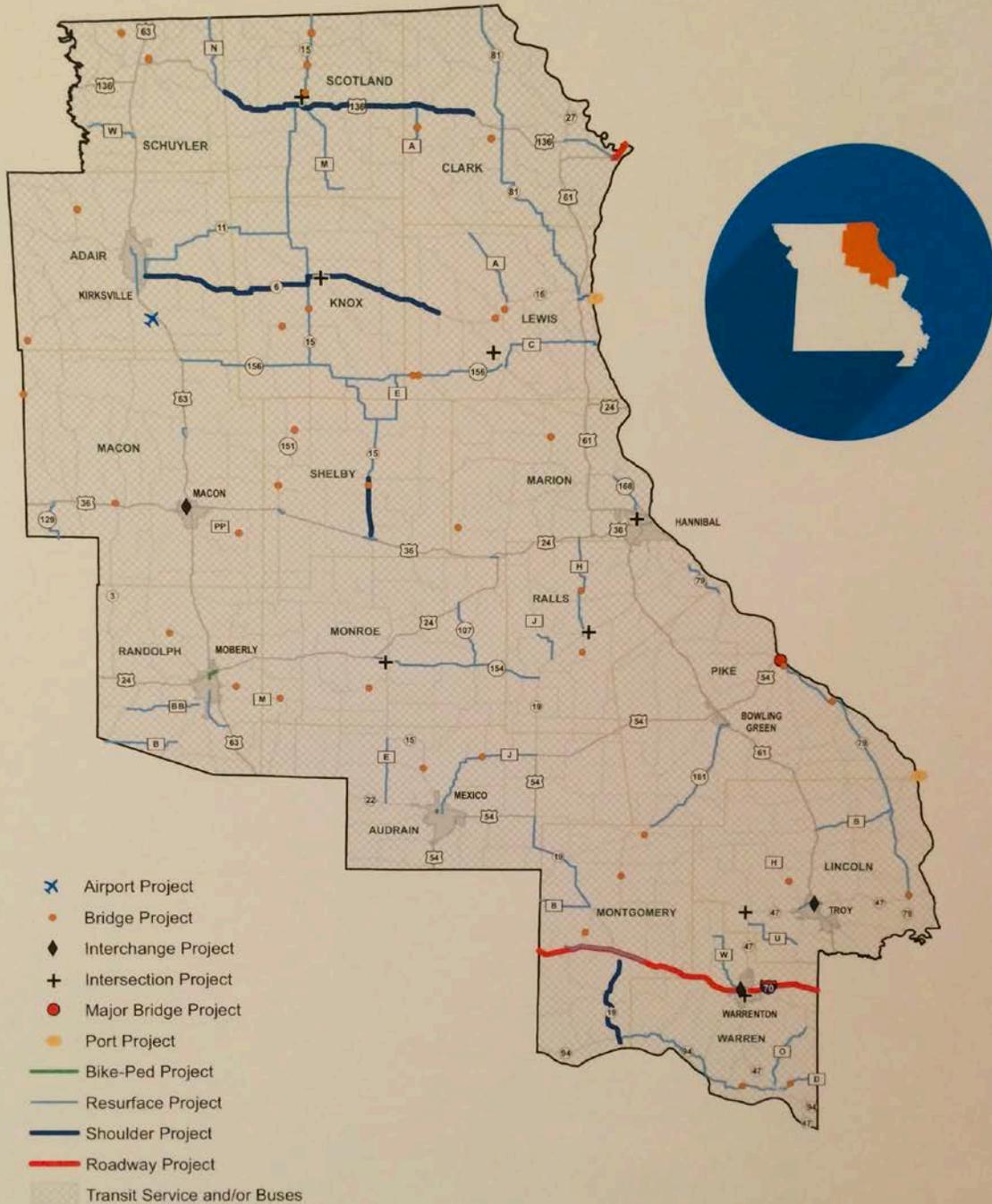
The Summit has created a successful regional economic development approach in its 35 counties in Missouri, Illinois and Iowa that represent nearly 700,000 people. A goal was established 18 years ago to complete 1,519 miles of four-lane highways in the region, and today nearly 1,300 miles are finished. We want to continue to build on that remarkable success.

The Missouri Department of Transportation and the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission were instrumental in the completion of the Missouri portion of the Chicago-Kansas City Expressway. Their support and commitment to that project — including the securing of the common route designation and CKC logo signage — proved crucial. Once fully promoted as a new national highway corridor, the CKC will help alleviate traffic congestion on I-70 by providing a viable east-west alternative to national traffic.

Your attention to our capital reallocation requests and establishing the Hannibal Expressway as a priority will make this ballot measure much more palatable to the voters in Northeast Missouri and will be the catalyst to build the economy of the region.



PROPOSED PROJECTS



Northeast District