

# 2014 TASK FORCE REPORT **TRANSPORTATION - HIGHWAYS**

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The Transportation Task Force was created in 1997 to identify the transportation deficiencies within the tri-state region. The goal was and is to develop and complete major four-lane highway corridors to assist in the economic development in our 35-county three-state region. In addition to those efforts, in 2013, the Transportation Task Force now also focuses on waterways issues which are critical to our region, the Midwest and the entire nation.

## **Highways**

In 1998, the task force unanimously agreed on 1,519 miles of four-lane regional highway priorities and in 2011 a new Missouri corridor was added bringing the total to 1,677 miles. Priority maps were created and a delegation of six, two from each state, made presentations to elected officials and departments of transportation. To date, the Transportation Task Force has facilitated nearly 1,300 miles of four-lane highways in the tri-state region, leaving just 380 miles of the 1,677 miles to be completed.

In addition to major segments of a number of other regional corridors that have segments upgraded, the Chicago Kansas City Expressway with full signage including a logo and a common route designation has been completed except for the Macomb By-Pass as has the Avenue of the Saints with logo from St Paul to St Louis. Also nearly complete is the Trans-Iowa/Illinois Freight Corridor from Galesburg, IL, to Des Moines, IA, with only two sections remaining to be funded in IL, upon completion this year of the construction of the US 34 bypass at Biggsville, IL.

Our regional efforts in transportation have impacted decisions in all three states so our Tri-State Summit area of almost 700,000 people is now served with four-lane highways in all directions.

The Task Force is now working with individual highway coalitions' members to lobby for increased funding for highway improvements in all three states and on a Federal level. The benefits of the new highways will multiply if communities work together to promote the advantages as an efficient, safer, free flowing transportation connection. Without increased highway funding the completion of the remaining TDS Highway Priorities stands to be in jeopardy.

Priority maps from the Transportation Task Force are available as well as a live, updated, Google Earth depiction of the highway priorities at [www.tristateofmind.org](http://www.tristateofmind.org).

## **Current Highways Focus Areas:**

- Get the release of funding to pave the Macomb, IL, By-Pass on the CKC, thus fully completing this vital economic corridor
- Complete construction of the US 34, 4-lane, 5-mile by-pass of Biggsville, IL, and secure funds to complete the two significant and dangerous remaining sections between Burlington, IA, and Monmouth, IL
- Secure funding for the very critical Hannibal, MO, relocation on the Ave of the Saints for US 61
- With the recent completion of the \$100 million US 61 by-pass of Fort Madison, IA ,secure additional funding for the completion of the complete US 61 corridor
- With the completion of the multilane improvements of the Southwest Gateway from Mexico, MO, to Lebanon, MO, continue to strive for a 4-lane roadway from New London, MO, to I-44 with a 4-lane by-pass at Lebanon, MO
- With the recent completion of the 4-lane connection of US 67 with IL 255 at Godfrey, IL, continue to actively seek funding for the completion of the US 67 Corridor (the Summit's largest unfunded priority)
- With the final alignment now approved of the 4-lane, 60-mile section of IL 336 from Peoria, IL, to Macomb, IL, secure funding for this important roadway
- Marketing of Route 110 – Chicago to Kansas City (CKC) Expressway across the two states
- Continue design engineering on US 67, Illinois River Bridge at Beardstown, IL, and secure funding for its earliest construction
- Planning, Design, & Funding for the replacement of the US 54 Mississippi River Bridge at Louisiana, MO
- Secure funding for a continuous, completed, 4-lane, US 63 in MO & IA between Jefferson City & Des Moines appropriately name the "Corridor of the Capitols"



## **Waterways**

Modernizing and strengthening our nation's inland waterways system, including the lock and dam infrastructure, is critical. It will create American jobs, increase exports and keep our nation competitive in world markets. Every year, the Upper Mississippi ferries more than 125 million tons of commodities with a combined value of \$20 billion – and those figures are growing according to the Waterways Council. The National Corn Growers Association reports that navigation on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers supports over 400,000 jobs, including 90,000 high-paying manufacturing jobs.

### **Water Resources (Reform) Development Act of 2013 Funding**

The WRDA/WRRDA Conference Committee should conclude a negotiated bipartisan agreement that will authorize the 2013 WR(R)DA bill recommending higher investment and recapitalization of our inland waterways infrastructure. Furthermore, the amount of the user fee should be increased as an investment in the future of the system. Investments in water resources infrastructure are investments in the long-term strength and security of the nation.

It is critical that the Congress provides WR(R)DA funding to add 1200 foot locks to 7 facilities, 5 on the Mississippi, and 2 on the Illinois River which will virtually double the capacity of the upper Mississippi River to ready itself for the expansion of the Panama Canal and the developments in New Orleans which will greatly increase traffic.

### **Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port**

The Mid-America Port Commission was established by a three-state compact in 1999. It is the only three-state port compact in the United States. The purpose of the Port is to be a catalyst for regional economic growth by:

- Assisting tri-state businesses to compete globally
- Creating both short-term construction jobs and long-term head-of-household jobs
- Attracting new businesses and industries to the region by making it an attractive location for logistics

The Port Board of Commissioners chose the South Quincy Development District location in Illinois as the first site for development. Land for the Port has been optioned or acquired. Over \$12 million in infrastructure is in place including roads, water, sewer, electric and gas utilities.

All permits are in place or at the final stage pending identification of the source of funding – public, private or a public-private partnership. The goals of the Port Commission are:

1. Develop a port with intermodal transportation focusing on container on barge
2. Develop infrastructure to transload dry and liquid products
3. Provide international barge, rail, truck and air cargo transportation
4. Establish a tri-state Foreign Trade Zone

### **Navigation**

The Task Force works with other river-related organizations to impact the improvement of navigation on the upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers. With our allies at the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association, the Waterways Council and levee districts, we have garnered much support. Political leaders are now considering our needs as well as the importance of these rivers to the economy.

Ensuring the economic, environmental and social prosperity and sustainability of the Upper Mississippi River System will require a concentrated and continued investment along with purposeful and collaborative river stewardship and management.

### **Current Waterways Focus Areas:**

- Negotiated bipartisan agreement and authorization of the 2013 Water Resources (Reform) Development Act (WR(R)DA) bill including the recommendation of higher investment and recapitalization of the inland waterways infrastructure
- Funding for the Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port to develop intermodal transportation focusing on container on barge
- Funding of the Navigation and Environmental Stewardship Program (NESP), as authorized in WRDA 2007, to ensure that America and our region is competitive in the Global marketplace
- Designation of the Upper Mississippi Connector (M-35 Waterway of the Saints), stretching from St. Louis to St. Paul, as a Marine Highway
- Funding for The Comprehensive Plan as authorized in WRDA 1999 to address flood control needs on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers