
RPA 1 Transportation Enhancement Committee MINUTES: May 16, 2012

Present: Barb Schroeder, Tim Engelhardt, Rod Marlatt, Bruce Palmborg, Randy Uhl, Darrell Knecht, Lora Friest, Elaine Govern, Dean Hilgerson, Harold Chapman, Darla Kelchen, Jim Janett, Ashley Christensen, Karla Organist and Will McIntee

1. Meeting was called to order at 12:15 p.m. by chair, Rod Marlatt
2. The minutes from the February 24, 2012 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Engelhardt, seconded by Janett, all approved.
3. An updated spreadsheet with Enhancement Project funding was presented for review. In addition, projects for the 2013-2016 Draft TIP were reviewed for accuracy. Items of note:
 - a. Howard County's project number STP-E-CO45(50)-8V-45 has already been authorized so did not need to be rolled into the 2013 TIP as requested at the February meeting.
 - b. Fayette County project number STP-E-CO33()-8V-33 is currently sponsored by Fayette CRD. This will be changed to Fayette CCB.
 - c. Clayton County's project number STP-ES-CO22(66)-8I-22 was rolled into the 2013 TIP at Tim Engelhardt's request. The project has not been fully authorized yet and will need a bit more time.
4. RPA/DOT Updates:
 - a. Ashley Christensen is the new SRTS Liaison for our region. Committee members are encouraged to use Ashley as a resource for projects that may involve local schools.
 - b. The Howard County Conservation Board requested that two Howard County projects (STP-E-CO45(50)-8V-45) and (EDP-CO45()-7Y-45) be moved from FY 2012 to FY 2013
5. Backbone Completion Plan:
 - a. Knowing that the group does not want to request funds through the usual grant channels, nor take away from our state's funding, discussion surrounded what we need to take our message to federal and state legislators from our region and the neighboring counties and states to which the backbone will connect. In essence, we would like the project to be presented as a bill from every representing legislator from each state.
 - b. A Multi-Use Trail Study for the Lewis and Clark trail in Western Iowa was presented as a format option for telling our story. This generated conversation about the need for a plan of some type. Items to include in the plan were suggested:

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- Economic impact numbers
 - Background on existing trails
 - Community engagement/public input/surveys
 - Maps
 - Small narrative to support maps
- c. Additional discussion on this “plan” or “study” included how comprehensive it should be – do we want to create an overall plan for the region that creates a “reason” for the backbone project? Also – how do we get tourist or user input – they may not necessarily be residents of the region. Darla Kelchen and Randy Uhl felt that there were numbers out there we might be able to capture from the tourism department.
- d. Questions to be researched by our next meeting:
- Funding: How much will it cost and what are some funding sources?
 - Who should facilitate the study: The committee felt that an entity from outside of the region may be able to help us tell a more “unbiased” story.
 - Who was the audience for the Lewis and Clark study?
- e. Action items:
- Barb Schroeder will contact Professor Sam Lankford at UNI to see what his students or interns could do to help us accomplish this plan or study and what the potential costs might be. (An alternative option could be the PLACE program at IA State – Karla Organist will contact if an alternative to UNI is needed. Also mentioned were the Iowa Bike Coalition, the DOT and the group that did the Lewis and Clark study.)
 - Elaine Govern will check with the NE Iowa Funders Network to see whether this type of project might fit with the goals of this group and if so, what the maximum request might be – and when the funding cycle is.
 - Lora Friest will check their private donor database to see if there are any funders that might consider a planning request such as this.
 - Karla Organist will check to see whether Enhancement funds can be used for a study.
 - Lora Friest will talk to Brad about the online survey that was used for the TIGER grant to see if that could be done regionally to collect public input.
 - Karla Organist will find out more about the audience (purpose) for the Lewis and Clark plan and how long the process took.
- f. Will McIntee from Bruce Braley’s office answered some procedural questions from the group (I paraphrase):

- (Q) Would it be best to approach legislators together or as a group? (A) It might be helpful to bring together each legislators' district staff for one meeting.
 - (Q) Is our idea of creating a study or plan to share with legislators valid? (A) Yes, it would be a good course of action.
 - (Q) What about timing – when is it best to approach legislators? (A) Either right away – or after elections in November. Otherwise, there really isn't a time of year that is better than others. Right now, no one is doing any "earmarks" – so it's a good time to be planning.
6. Long Range Transportation Plan – as homework, committee members were asked to review the notes from the last LRTP meeting in 2010. Are the goals still applicable?
 7. Items from committee members:
 - a. Tim Englehardt extended an invitation to TRRC partners to tour Motor Mill on June 14th as part of their hosting of the 6-District meeting.
 - b. Elaine Govern extended an invitation to all to attend the dedication of the Wapsie Trail Bridge on June 16th. Many activities are planned – check out their website for more details: www.wgwtrail.com – it should be active next week.
 - c. UERPC Legislative Forum on June 15th at the Dairy Center in Calmar. It might be a good platform to begin to talk about our backbone goals for the region. Karla will forward invitations to the committee when they become available.
 8. The Iowa Trails Summit is on June 15th and 16th in Cedar Falls. Barb has two people attending. Registration is now available online at www.iowatrailssummit.org.
 9. Next meeting date is set for Wednesday, June 27th at noon in the Postville office.
 10. Motion to adjourn was made by Uhl, seconded by Palmborg, all approved, meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.