

July 31, 2009

From: Mayor Jim O'Neal, Chairman Ozarks Transportation Organization

OTO Board Members:

Wearing my "Chair of the OTO Board" hat, I received the attached letter co-signed by both John Twitty, General Manager of City Utilities, and Greg Burris, City Manager of Springfield. Within that letter, City Utilities and the City of Springfield are jointly requesting that the OTO Board provide a response to three questions that are important to our region's transportation future.

I am supportive of their request and agree that a timely response is needed to the first question. I have also added a fourth question that I believe needs to be addressed.

A "Transportation Development Plan Study Group" was informally created in 2008 and met a few times. However, I am recommending that we formalize that group's existence, membership, leadership, and charge. I am recommending that most of the informal group's members remain, but am also recommending some additional members be included given the proposed charge.

In order to promote communication with the OTO Board, I am proposing that the formalized "study group" be co-chaired by Lisa Officer and Bob Stephens. In addition to both being members of the OTO Board, Lisa is a member of the Board of Public Utilities and Bob is a member of Springfield City Council. I have every confidence that Lisa and Bob will lead this group effectively and in a timely manner.

I am proposing the following membership for the Transportation Development Plan Study Group:

- City Utilities Lisa Officer (co-chair)
- City of Springfield Bob Stephens (co-chair)
- City Utilities Carol Cruise
- City Utilities Chris Haller
- SMCOG Dan Watts
- OTO/Greene County David Coonrod
- Greene County Dan Smith
- OTO/Fisk Limo Howard Fisk
- MoDOT Frank Miller
- Springfield Chamber Greg Williams
- Drury University Doug Neidigh
- Branson Mayor Reanne Presley
- OATS Scott Kosky
- City of Springfield Ralph Rognstad
- City of Springfield Ann Razer

- City of Springfield Earl Newman
- City Utilities Transit Advisory Committee rep (TBD – City Utilities will provide name of rep)
- City Utilities Citizens Advisory Board rep (TBD – City Utilities will provide name of rep)
- Citizen representative Dan Scott
- OTO Staff Support Tim Conklin and others

I am proposing the initial charge for the Transportation Development Plan Study Group be to research and provide the OTO Board with a report that answers the following questions, with the recognition that a response to the first question is needed as soon as possible to allow site selection for the new bus transfer facility to proceed:

- Do we need a downtown transfer station, regardless of the type of bus route system in place or planned for the future?
- What are the one-time and ongoing costs associated with establishing and operating a complete grid system?
- What is the optimal size of the City's future buses? What fuel should these buses use?
- What are the advantages, disadvantages, and costs associated with establishing a regional transit authority and what steps would be involved in making this transition? (Bring appropriate leaders representing area municipalities into the conversation when addressing this charge.)

I hope you will agree that this charge is warranted and the proposed membership of the study group contains sufficient expertise and diversity of perspectives to be effective. Since there is a need to move quickly and our next OTO Board meeting is scheduled to occur in late August, I am seeking your concurrence via email by August 5<sup>th</sup> that formalizing the existence, membership, leadership, and charge of this study group is appropriate so that it can begin its work as soon as possible. I believe Tim Conklin and his staff are poised and ready to begin working with the study group. Please feel free to call me or Tim Conklin if you have questions.

Thank you for considering this request. Please respond via an email to me by August 5<sup>th</sup> if you have any concerns about this proposal to: [joneal@springfieldmo.gov](mailto:joneal@springfieldmo.gov). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jim O'Neal  
Mayor of Springfield