

Minutes

Bi-State Region Air Quality Task Force

Monday, June 24, 2024, 11:00 a.m.
Bi-State Regional Commission
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Larry Burns, Rock Island County
Gary Statz, City of Davenport
Matthew Johnson, IA DNR
Andrea White, IA DOT
Rich Dwyer, Kent Corporation

Others Present:

Gena McCullough, Bi-State Regional
Commission
David Kovarik, Bi-State Regional Commission

1. Introductions and Consideration of December 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes – Gary Statz motioned to approve the minutes, and Larry Burns seconded. The motion carried.
2. Update from Resource Agencies on Current Air Quality Status/Issues – Matthew Johnson of the Iowa DNR provided reports for Iowa. In February 2024, the EPA approved updating the acceptable primary annual PM_{2.5} levels from its current 12.0 µg/m³ to a range of 9.0 to 10.0 µg/m³. As of this meeting date, there are no sites in Iowa that are below the new PM_{2.5} levels. These new levels will not go into calculating annual levels until 2026. The conversation then turned to the Canadian wildfire's impact on exceedance levels, especially with the lower level. Mr. Johnson stated that all data for PM_{2.5} is less than the new level, so Iowa does not need to look into requesting an exceptional event exemption. While Davenport is not close to exceeding PM_{2.5} levels, IDNR will be looking to hold stakeholder meetings before June 2026 to discuss concerns as they arise. There was a question about how can local pollutants be reduced. Mr. Johnson explained that the source of emissions varies between communities. However, sulfate and nitrates reacting with ammonium is a common source of pollution and that would a good place to start looking to reduce emissions.
3. Carbon Reduction Strategies – Andrea White of Iowa DOT provided an update on Iowa's Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS), which was submitted in late 2023. Iowa's CRS will focus on reducing carbon emissions in five areas, while maintaining the safety, sustainability, accessibility, equity, connectivity, and flow of the state's transit system. The first area, multimodal transportation, will look to support multimodal travel options that enable people to travel by less carbon-intensive modes than single-occupant vehicles, such as public transit, bicycles, commuter rail, and others. The second area will focus on improving the operational efficiency of the state's transportation systems, working to reduce congestion and manage demand rather than construct new capacity. The third area, alternative fuels, focuses on how to support alternative and renewable fuel sources across transportation modes. The fourth mode, construction, will focus on reducing emissions during the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the transportation system. The final mode will look at other

methods that the state can use to reduce transportation emissions. The next steps for the CRS will be to integrate it into the state's long-range transportation plan.

4. Benefits of Roundabouts – Gary Statz presented on the benefits of roundabouts, using the roundabout at Veteran's Memorial Parkway and Jersey Ridge Road as an example. Roundabouts have both safety and air quality benefits. In a 3-year comparison between roundabout and a signaled intersection at Elmore and Veteran's Memorial Parkway, there were 7 crashes with no injuries at the roundabout, while the signaled intersection had 12 crashes, each experiencing 2 to 3 injuries. To demonstrate the air quality benefits, Mr. Statz utilized a traffic simulation software to calculate the average delay traffic would experience at the roundabout and the same intersection prior to its conversion to a roundabout. The roundabout traffic waited 16 seconds less, and spent 16 fewer gallons of fuel compared to the same signaled intersection. While there was some apprehension at the initial change, many citizens are coming around to the roundabout, and more are being considered in Davenport in the future.
5. Local Status Report and Air Quality Issues – David Kovarik reviewed the status report provided in the agenda packet. The report is attached to these minutes.
6. Grant and Funding Opportunities – Mr. Kovarik notified the group that there is a Community Charge Grants Program that is open now until Nov 21, 2024. Find more information at this website: <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program>
7. Other Business
 - a. The Task Force will monitor the Vehicle Technologies Offices for future funding opportunities.
 - b. Iowa is adding an excise tax on all EV charging that occurs within the state.
8. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:46 a.m.