



In This Issue

- MoDOT Director Pete Rahn Earns Prestigious National Award
- ODOT Considers Closing Some Ramps to Ease 217 Congestion
- 2009 Election Results

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn Earns Prestigious National Award

AASHTO Press Release – November 3, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Governing magazine has named Missouri Department of Transportation Director Pete Rahn as one of its 2009 Public Officials of the Year. Rahn served as President of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in 2008.

Noting the success of Missouri's New I-64 project in St. Louis, Governing magazine specifically praised Rahn's ability to "partner with the private sector in unique ways to build large-scale transportation projects quickly and affordably." The New I-64 is the largest construction project in Missouri history. It involves the reconstruction of 10 miles of interstate highway, interchanges, and bridges on I-64/Highway 40 in St. Louis.

Governing magazine based its decision in part on Rahn's willingness to take risks and his desire to make a difference. Rahn is the first state transportation director to be selected in the award's 23-year history.



This is a well-deserved honor for Pete and all the great people at MoDOT who helped make the groundbreaking changes that transformed their agency. Since coming on the scene in 1995, Pete has brought exceptional leadership to MoDOT, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, AASHTO and TRB. TW

ODOT Considers Closing Some Ramps to Ease 217 Congestion

The Oregonian – November 3, 2009

HILLSBORO – Shutting down some interchanges on Oregon 217 during rush hour is a possibility under consideration by the state transportation department in an effort to improve traffic flow

along the roadway. Last spring, DKS Associates was hired by the state, using federal funding, to study the ramp-closure idea as an alternative to spending \$1 billion to widen Oregon 217, according to Oregon Department of Transportation officials. Oregon 217 has one of the most difficult congestion problems in the region because it has so many access points so close together, said ODOT Region 1 manager Jason Tell.

DKS is using sophisticated models to analyze how traffic would decrease on Oregon 217 and increase on side streets under different interchange closure scenarios between 4 and 6 p.m. Preliminary findings show a variety of effects using 12 different ramp-closure scenarios. Closing all interchanges except Southwest Scholls Ferry Road would decrease congestion on Oregon 217 by 41 percent, but with no public improvements to side streets, their congestion would increase by 25 percent. The numbers vary when improvements to side streets are factored into the models, said Tell. Adding or extending lanes or re-timing traffic signals could reduce congestion on those roads, he added.

Improvements to side streets would cost much less than widening Oregon 217, said County Chair Tom Brian last month. "We all use 217 for a local street," Brian said. "It was not meant for this, but we don't have good north-south routes in the county." Local elected officials will discuss the idea with state officials Nov. 18, and try to come up with other possible solutions to be studied and considered by the public.

2009 Election Results

Colorado, Colorado Springs

Initiative: Measure 2C requested voter approval to raise the local property tax by 10 mills over five years to support city organizations including parks, pools and transit services. Without it, city officials said transit services would be significantly cut.

Status: Failed 37% to 63%

Colorado, Fountain

Initiative: Voters approved a 0.75% sales tax for transportation work, including safety improvements, public transportation work and resurfacing public streets. Scheduled to take effect January 1, 2010, the tax will raise \$1.352 million in the first fiscal year and will be reduced by 0.4% after ten years.

Status: APPROVED 50.4%-49.6%

Indiana, Porter and St. Joseph Counties

Initiative: An overwhelming majority of voters defeated a proposal in a special election held in St. Joseph and Porter counties to create a four-county regional transportation district in Northwest Indiana. If it had passed, residents of Porter and St. Joseph counties would be charged an additional .25-percent income tax to fund the transportation district. La Porte and Lake Counties, which opted out of the special election, would not have paid the tax, and would not be given a say in operations of the district. Voter turnout was about 10% of registered voters for the special election from St. Joseph County, and 15% from Porter County.

Status: St Joseph County: Failed 5%-95%/ Porter County: Failed 20%-80%

Maine (Statewide)

Initiative: Maine voters statewide approved a \$71.25 million bond to fund a variety of transportation investments and to help the state leverage more than \$148 million in matching funds from local, federal and private sources. Funding from the bond would cover various transportation needs, including \$55 million for highways and bridges, \$4 million for rail, including \$2 million for a new Critical Rail Corridors Program, and \$400,000 for an intermodal transportation facility. Some of the funding would be for aviation, port and ferry improvements.

Status: APPROVED 65%-35%

Michigan, Flint

Initiative: Flint voters agreed to renew five-year millage through June 30, 2016 for the Flint Mass Transportation Authority to run bus routes. The measure renews the current 0.6 mill property tax and is projected to generate about \$814,164 in the first fiscal year it is collected.

Status: APPROVED 68%-32%

Michigan, Grand Rapids (May 5, 2009 ballot)

Initiative: On May 5, voters in Grand Rapids, East Grand Rapids, Kentwood, Walker, Wyoming and Grandville defeated a proposal to raise property taxes beginning in 2012. The proposal to help pay for a high-speed bus line calls for increasing the current millage by 0.16-mills in 2012. It also would extend the length of time the millage could be collected to 2016.

Status: Failed 52% to 48%

Michigan, Kalamazoo

Initiative: Voters in the city of Kalamazoo approved the second portion of a two-part plan to increase transportation funding. The first part of the plan was the countywide vote in May. This week, voters approved the second part —a 0.6 mill property tax request to generate approximately \$1 million annually for Metro Transit over three years.

Status: Approved 76%-24%

Michigan, Kalamazoo County (May 5, 2009 ballot)

Initiative: The countywide three-year, 0.4 mill levy was approved this year by county voters to pay for services such as Care-A-Van and fixed bus routes outside the city.

Status: Approved 63% to 37%

Ohio, Cincinnati

Initiative: Issue 9 is an amendment to the Cincinnati city charter that requires voter approval before the city could spend money on any passenger rail transportation, including streetcars. The amendment was drafted after a coalition of civic organizations opposed to the city's proposed \$100 million streetcar project collected enough signatures on petitions. The amendment's broad wording would have prevented any rail project from moving forward without voter approval.

Status: Failed 44%-56% (WIN)

Oklahoma, Oklahoma City (December 8, 2009 ballot)

Initiative: The Dec. 8 MAPS ballot will ask residents to vote yes or no on a variety of downtown

projects, including a new rail-based streetcar system, a downtown convention center and biking and walking trails. The proposal calls for a seven-year, nine-month extension of the one-cent sales tax, and requires approval by 50-percent of Oklahoma City voters.

Status: Pending

Washington, Island County (August 18, 2009 ballot)

Initiative: Island Transit, which is funded through sales and use taxes collected in Island County, approved an increase in the tax rate from six-tenths of 1 percent to nine-tenths of 1 percent. The increase will provide the Island Transit service with an additional \$2.2 million in the first year.

Status: APPROVED 55% to 45%