

Roads

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The state has kept the revenues on hand to match federal funds, Ortbahn added.

The proposed DOT funding of \$333 million for fiscal year 2013 includes \$285 million for roads, \$28 million for bridges, \$13.8 million for safety and \$5.8 million for other purposes.

The process becomes a vicious cycle, Voeltz said. "It's a trickle-down effect. We try to deliver as much as we can, but we're also being realistic with you," he told the roundtable.

The state remains open to other revenue sources, Ortbahn said. "We always look for additional funding, include private partnerships. But we don't have the traffic to justify things like toll roads," he added.

NEW CHALLENGES

The heavy traffic in northwestern South Dakota presents new challenges and even more demand on state highway funding, Voeltz said.

Those roads, located in a sparsely populated region, have traditionally been lightly traveled. Now, those roads face tremendous wear and tear because of the soaring truck and other traffic created by the North Dakota oil boom, Voeltz said.

In turn, those new demands place even more stress on a South Dakota highway system suffering an estimated \$500 million backlog in projects.

"The oil fields up there (in North Dakota) have really impacted things for us. In West River, you see it a lot," Voeltz said.

"We see roads that are really getting pounded."

Transportation officials are already seeing the impact of the heavy traffic, Ortbahn said. "Highways that formerly had hundreds of trucks a day are now seeing several thousand. Those roads are just getting beaten up," he said.

The DOT officials heard similar anecdotes from the Yankton audience.

Bon Homme County commissioner John Fathke of Avon said he sees the impact on West River roads while traveling for his job with the South Central Educational Cooperative.

Fathke has also heard about the traffic impact from a colleague in northwestern South Dakota.

"The superintendent for the Harding County school in Buffalo said they used to see \$1,000 in (traffic) fines each month, and the money goes to the school," he said. "Now, they see \$30,000 a month, and they have a Highway Patrol officer up there handling traffic."

Yankton resident Jeff Hines works with the Bartlett & West engineering firm and has heard similar stories from North Dakota colleagues. He noted it takes 400 tractor-trailer loads of equipment and other items to drill one oil well.

Hines attended the Bakken Conference in Spearfish, which focused on the impact of the North Dakota oil boom on South Dakota. Discussion included possible oil drilling in South Dakota along with the traffic created by oil workers living in South Dakota and commuting to the North Dakota fields.

"Even if there isn't oil drilled in South Dakota, you are seeing the creation of a tremendous amount of traffic," Hines said.

District 19 State Sen. Frank Kloucek (D-Scotland) noted the

Legislature is conducting a summer study on the issue of north-west South Dakota roads.

Information can be found on the Legislative Research Council's website at legis.state.sd.us/.

LOOKING AT ALTERNATIVES

Meanwhile, DOT managers will determine how to proceed in the wake of reduced federal transportation funding, Ortbahn said.

"We are looking at advance construction funding, where we borrow against future years rather than re-do (our plans) by the 1st of October (when the fiscal year begins)," he said.

District 18 Rep. Bernie Hunhoff (D-Yankton) said the lack of funding will apparently mean dangerous situations with S.D. Highway 46 will remain unchanged.

"With Highway 46, you continue to hear people's concerns about the traffic, especially on weekends with their boats (headed to and from Lewis and Clark Lake and the Missouri River)," he said. "It's also farm intensive, with a lot of ag and livestock traffic. And there are numerous small towns along the way."

Highway 46, with its hills and lack of shoulders, has remained a major subject at STIP meetings for years, Hunhoff said.

"I would say the stretch from Irene to (Highway 81) is the No. 1 traffic issue," he said. "If the road isn't changed, then you need to put up a sign that it's a dangerous road."

The DOT does look at safety factors in determining its work, Peterson said. "We do look at the number of accidents. Fortunately, it's not that many (along Highway 46)," he said.

Wednesday's meeting included an overview of major area projects along with an explanation of funding changes.

The federal transportation bill

combined programs, meaning the Safe Routes to School, the Rec Trails and the Scenic Byways programs no longer receive dedicated funding. They are now part of enhancement funds, with more programs competing for the same \$5.4 million annually.

Kloucek asked about the impact for districts participating in the Safe Routes to School program.

"Those selected this spring were warned there may not be funding after Oct. 1. If they were picked this spring, they weren't guaranteed this money," Ortbahn responded.

The DOT officials fielded questions on a variety of topics.

- The DOT has proposed a total of \$20 million for 2014-17, intended for a pipeline rehabilitation program. The program would repair or replace pipeline under the roads.
- The state specifies locations for resurfacing during the first three years of the highway plan. The DOT designates a lump sum for the fourth and fifth years, making specific assignments after gauging the condition of roads.
- In response to a question, Peterson said bridges over US Highway 81 and S.D. Highway 46 didn't create flooding over local roads or impact the James River flood plain. Any flooding was created by two consecutive wet years and the inflow from tributaries, he said.
- Kloucek questioned DOT plans for spending \$10 million during a two-year period for rest areas around the state. Ortbahn said the DOT is determining if rest areas are adequate or need maintenance.
- "I don't want them to build brand new rest areas. Repair, yes, but tear down and build new, no, unless it's absolutely necessary," Kloucek later told *the Press & Dakotan*.
- Hunhoff inquired about re-classifying roads and the possibility of the state swapping road

systems with local governments.

HIGH STAKES

After the meeting, Kloucek said he's unsure how the state will meet its growing needs.

"The South Dakota DOT does a remarkable job of trying to keep ahead of the needs of our state highway system. The real issue is the road and bridge repair and replacement," he said. "Our infrastructure needs will increase in the future. How will we fund them with declining federal highway dollars available?"

The funding woes also brought concerns from Carmen Schramm and Mike Healy with the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce. They are particularly watching the Highway 50-Fourth Street project in Yankton slated for 2015 on the plan.

"We have had years that kept the same funding, but this is the first time they are talking about a 5 percent cut in funding per year," Healy said.

The Legislature may need to consider a gas-tax hike or new revenue sources to meet infrastructure needs, Schramm said. The funding — or lack of it — will affect the entire region, she said.

"We see our market area as an economic partnership. We want to see that people travel efficiently and effectively," she said. "And it's not just about highways. If we had not pushed for the Discovery Bridge, who knows what might have happened if it has been delayed a year or more?"

The Yankton Chamber plans to send delegations to STIP meetings in both Mitchell and Sioux Falls, Schramm said. "We need to be diligent in getting money for the southeast part of the state," she said.

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at twitter.com/RDockendorf

Fires

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That, however, could pose even more challenges for local fire departments, according to Scherschligt.

"CRP is a lot taller and will burn a lot faster," he said.

Nickles and Scherschligt both encouraged residents to use caution in the increasingly dry conditions.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage](https://twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage)

Neb. Singles In Ag To Host Annual Meeting

The Nebraska Chapter of Singles In Agriculture is having their Annual Meeting the weekend of July 27-29, 2012 at the Niobrara State Park, Niobrara, Neb. A couple of things they will be doing are touring the Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park and a covered wagon ride of the Kreycil Riverview Elk and Buffalo Ranch. The annual meeting will be held Saturday afternoon at the Niobrara State Park Group Lodge. In the evening we will take in the buffalo cookout in the park and the program will be "Excess Baggage: Riding the Orphan Train" afterwards there will be a dance and visiting at the Group Lodge. For more information please call 308-920-0364 or 402-729-6154.

Singles In Agriculture is open to all singles 18 and older with an interest in Ag. We offer friendships, fellowship, travel, and a chance to get together with other 'country folk.'

Karate

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of teaching and running things. He put a lot of himself into the dojo and dedicated a lot of hours to it."

Barron-Galvan, who began training with her father at age 11, said what stood out most about his work at the dojo was the fact that he would teach all types of students.

"He took in whoever was willing to train, no matter what their ability," she said. "He was also willing to work with students with physical disabilities and cognitive disabilities. He modified it and made it so they could learn and could feel successful."

Thirteen-year-old Mason Ballard, who was a student of Barron's for six years, said he wouldn't have the skills he has today without the

help of the late teacher. Ballard, a brown belt with three white stripes, also attended the karate convention last month and received the Men's Spirit Award.

"He was a good teacher, and he always made it really fun to do," Ballard said. "He was a really good trainer who focused on the important stuff."

Since Barron's passing, the Yankton Karate Club has been closed, as no one from the dojo possesses the necessary level to certify those who are training. With hopes of reopening the facility, Barron-Galvan and fellow students Pete Moore and Shawn Mann have been traveling to Norfolk, Neb., to continue training.

"We're trying to get in a position where we can run the dojo. To test anybody above a white belt, we need to be a third degree black belt, and the three of us are only first degree black belts," Barron-Galvan said. "So we suspended the dojo for now, and then we're hoping to reopen it when we are ready

to take on some more students."

The three have also been helping Ballard with his training and have provided the young student with transportation to Norfolk.

Virginia Ballard, Mason's mother, said she has been amazed by the way Barron-Galvan, Moore and Mann have stepped up to aid her son.

"It's just really awesome that these people have helped Mason and mentored him along, because

he's loved it since he was 6 years old," she said.

Barron-Galvan said her efforts toward reopening the dojo, as well as helping Mason with his training, are simply things she "needs to do."

"I know that's what Dad would have wanted," she said.

You can follow Derek Bartos on Twitter at twitter.com/d_bartos

Please Stop In & Welcome Our New Pharmacist

Byron Olson

Byron has 17 years experience as a pharmacist. Byron, his wife Beryl and their 3 children have lived in the Yankton community for over 8 years. Byron will be a great addition to our staff.



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Karaoke with Papa Ray
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6-7pm – Domestic Beers
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Friday

Ribs
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Saturday

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Bingo Wed. at 7:00pm
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