

Aldermen endorse formation of TDD

The next step in improving streets in the City of Lake Ozark is in place.

The board of aldermen has endorsed the formation of a Transportation Development District (TDD) that would have the authority to increase the sales tax within that district by up to three-quarters of a cent on every \$1 spent. The city believes that a TDD would benefit the city by providing funds to make transportation improvements within the TDD.

Improving Bagnell Dam Blvd. from near Quality Inn to Bagnell Dam would be the focus of the TDD.

The TDD would be independent of the City of Lake Ozark. It is a mechanism under state law that allows for the enactment of an additional sales tax not to exceed 1 percent on all purchases within that district. The Lake Ozark TDD would limit the sales tax to a maximum of three-quarters of a percent.

Rick Hasty, chairman of the Lake Ozark Citizens Transportation Committee, told the board that he and committee members canvassed the Bagnell Dam Blvd. business district and collected signatures from the vast majority of businesses and property owners in the proposed TDD area in support of the TDD.

"It's unbelievable the amount of support we've gotten from the businesses," he offered. "We weren't able to reach all of the businesses because some of them have closed for the season but those we contacted – probably 85 – were very supportive and agree that we need improvements to Bagnell Dam Blvd."

The Transportation Committee was formed to promote ideas and solutions to



This is a good example of a deteriorating section of Bagnell Dam Blvd. that would be improved with funds from a Transportation Development District (TDD). The Lake Ozark Citizens Transportation Committee is spearheading the TDD process.

aid in the restoration, repair and maintenance of the city's transportation infrastructure.

Mayor Gerry Murawski, part of the Transportation Committee, added that most businesses owners or managers he talked to said "it's about time."

Alderman Vernon Jaycox congratulated the committee for its diligence in explain-

ing the TDD proposal to business owners and collecting signatures for the petition.

"It's past due and we all want our streets to be upgraded," he offered. "I don't think people mind paying a couple extra bucks for better streets."

Alderman Judy Neels, who had several questions for Hasty, stressed the importance of transparency and keeping the public informed.

"I just want to make sure that everyone in that district is aware of what's going on," she urged.

What's next?

Although there are four options for moving forward with the TDD, City Attorney Chris Rohrer said the city, which is the transportation authority, will file a petition for formation of the TDD with circuit judges in both Miller and Camden counties for their review. Once that happens, the city will place the TDD issue on the general municipal April ballot for consideration by only registered voters within the TDD since the funds collected would be used for improvements only to Bagnell Dam Blvd.

Once those formalities have been completed, the Transportation Committee will begin to promote the TDD and explain the specifics so registered voters within the TDD can make an informed decision.

"Businesses that will benefit with new roads are showing support," Hasty pointed out. "We have to do this (raise funds locally) on our own since the state turned us down for a grant. This is the way the committee has determined is best. And we will be as transparent and open as possible."