



# Officials support naming the “Mother Road” in Madison County for National Historic Trail designation

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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County officials want to mark the “mother road” as a National Historic Trail.

The Transportation Committee voted Monday to support the permanent federal designation of Route 66, which runs through nearly a dozen communities in Madison County.

County Board member Phil Chapman of Highland and member of the Transportation Committee said he supports of the measure, which went before congress last year as the Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act

Chapman said he met with Hamel Mayor Larry Bloemker in August to collaborate on creating the resolution.

"Route 66 served as the "road to opportunity" for hundreds of thousands of Americans," Chapman said.

He said the highway provided thousands of jobs for road crews and other workers unemployed during the Great Depression in Madison County.

"Route 66 is an iconic symbol of America's search for freedom," he said

County Board member Tom McRae and chair of the Transportation Committee said he feels this is an important designation.

“People from throughout the world come to travel Route 66,” McRae said. “This designation will bring in tourism dollars to our area and from people who are anxious to see historic spots along the trail.”

The bill designates the 2,400-mile length of Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica, California, as the Route 66 National Historic Trail. The U.S. Senate must pass the legislation, and then be signed by the president before the end of 2018.

The Route 66 trail would become the 20th National Historic Trail. The designation would also bring economic development to the route's historic sites.

The designation ensures that the National Park Service will have the authority to assist and support states and local communities in preserving, promoting and economically developing Route 66 for generations to come

In July, the National Trust named Route 66 as one of the 11 most endangered historic places.

The United States commissioned Route 66 in 1926 as part of the first federal highway system, thus the nickname the “mother road,” and it holds historical value to the eight states through which it passes. In 1985, the highway was decertified.

The County Board will vote on the resolution Wednesday.