

TPO Executive Board Minutes
9:00 a.m., October 24, 2012
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on October 24, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building, Knoxville, Tennessee. Ed Shouse, Knox County Commission, chaired the meeting and called it to order. It was determined there was a quorum.

* Tom Beehan	Mayor, City of Oak Ridge
* Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
* Jim Hagerman	City of Knoxville, <i>for Mayor Madeline Rogero</i>
* John Lamb	Blount County, <i>for Mayor Ed Mitchell</i>
* Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)
* Brenda Palmer	City of Knoxville
* Cindy Pionke	Knox County <i>for Mayor Tim Burchett</i>
* Ed Shouse	East Tennessee Development District (ETDD)
Cindy McGinnis	Knoxville Area Transit (KAT)
Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC)
Mike Patterson	ETHRA
Anne Wallace	City of Knoxville
Mark Watson	City of Alcoa
Jeff Welch	Director, Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
Bryan Berry	Metropolitan Planning Commission Staff
Nathan Benditz	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Dori Caron	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Terry Gilhula	Metropolitan Planning Commission Staff
Alan Huff	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

***voting members**

1. Approval of August 22, 2012 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of August 22, 2012 TPO Executive Board Minutes.

Attachment #1 – August 22, 2012 Minutes

Action: A Motion was made by Tom Beehan (City of Oak Ridge) and seconded by Brenda Palmer (City of Knoxville) to approve the August 22, 2012 Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

2. Regional Mobility Plan Updates

Item Summary: Staff have been very busy with many items pertaining to the Mobility Plan Update, some of this work is reflected below.

- a. Project List – The call for projects ended on September 20th. Most project applications were received by then and all were received by October 2nd. We have reviewed and scored all roadway projects and will provide those before the meeting. Staff is still reviewing applications for bike, ped, greenway, and transit, and is working with applicants, and will send those lists out shortly

Attachment Packet #2 – Roadway Projects, Costs, and Revenues

- 2a. Detailed Revenue Estimates for FY 2013**
- 2b. Overview of Projected Revenues and Roadway Project Costs, by Horizon year**
- 2c. Anderson and Sevier County Roadway Projects**
- 2d. Blount County Roadway Projects**
- 2e. Knox County Roadway Projects**
- 2f. Loudon County Roadway Projects**
- 2g. Existing or Committed Roadway Projects**

- b. Documents Available Online – TPO staff has been working on putting content on the TPO website as a part of the Mobility Plan collection of products. Staff will post a draft of Chapter 1 within the next week. Other products on the website include terms; acronyms; timeline; outreach schedule; vision, principles, and strategies; and the project application. Many more products will be posted in the weeks and months to come. Any ideas on products to clarify the process are welcome.
- c. Public Survey – TPO staff has put together a public survey, similar to the one conducted during the last Mobility Plan update. The survey collects public priorities for transportation in the region and allows prioritization based on cost. This survey will be sent out within the next week.

Discussion: Alan Huff (TPO) briefly reviewed the above-listed handouts beginning began with Attachment 2a which reflects a detailed revenue estimate for FY 2013. He clarified that these estimates are based on historic data as well as known future apportionments from the state and noted these figures reflect the revenue estimates for the highway project side. Mr. Huff stated the Plan has to be fiscally constrained meaning we can't spend more than we bring in. Going forward with the Attachments, 2b, he also noted that the chart is simplified to 3 groups of Horizon years but the final Plan will have more Horizon years. Mr. Huff noted that in the Horizon Year period of 2016 to 2024, there are more projects listed than estimated revenue. This does not mean they cannot be funded but that staff will be working with the Technical Committee to move some projects further back in the Horizon years. The additional Attachments list roadway projects by county, and also show existing or committed roadway projects. Mr. Huff noted if jurisdictions had additional projects they could still be considered for addition to the Plan as long as they were not so comprehensive as to significantly affect the numbers. It was clarified that the numbers reflect projected inflation of both revenue and project costs. It was further noted that staff are still awaiting additional applications for bike and ped projects. Mr. Huff also stated that staff continues to work on plan documents to post on the website and have sent out a public survey for a public comment period.

3. Impact of Changes to the Urbanized Area on Transit Services in the Region

Item Summary: Recent changes by the U.S. Census to the Knoxville urbanized area will have an impact on regional transit services. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding is broken down into urbanized or rural area grants.

These grants have a limited amount of funding and rules on how transit services can be paid for under these programs. Key issues are how are the once rural areas that have just become urbanized going to be served by transit and how are those services going to be funded? Complicating matters is that funding is also being impacted by changes under the new transportation act recently passed by Congress. The TPO staff has been working with KAT, Knox County CAC Transit, and ETHRA to address these issues. TPO staff will make a brief presentation concerning the possible impacts.

Discussion: Doug Burton (TPO) began with a review of the regional transit providers. Locally we have Knoxville Area Transit (KAT) who primarily serve the City of Knoxville with large busses on fixed route and also have a demand response system for which reservations are necessary. Knox County CAC Transit is a complete demand response system and operates exclusively with reservations.

East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA) is a demand response system serving a 16 county area, and the City of Oak Ridge operates 2 demand response vans and a taxi voucher program aimed at assisting seniors and persons who are disabled.

CAC also houses a Volunteer Assisted Transportation Program using their vans and volunteers to transport persons to a destination where they can also assist that person at that destination. Mr. Burton then noted the 2 factors impacting transit in the region: the Urbanized Area boundary expansion and the new MAP-21 legislation, which although only a 2 year bill, it sets the framework for funding. Mr. Burton noted the Federal Transit Administration funding can basically be broken down into 2 areas: rural and urban. He noted urban to urban transit needs to be billed to an urban grant source, rural to rural transit needs to be billed to a rural grant source and also noted that currently, no area providers have access to both sources of FTA funds. Mr. Burton clarified that Section 5311, rural funding, comes to our area through TDOT who receives the federal funds directly and disperses them throughout the state. Most of these funds go to ETHRA. With Section 5307 or urban funding, the funding comes directly to our area via a very complicated formula approved by Congress. He noted for FY 2012 our Knoxville Urbanized area received 4.8 million formula dollars. For every urban grant program FTA wants the money to come to one designated recipient, and in our region it is the City of Knoxville where the money is distributed via local decision making. Currently, KAT is the only provider accessing 5307 funding. Mr. Burton noted Congress still needs to approve specific dollar amounts but that he estimates our area will receive a funding increase of somewhere between \$350,000 and \$600,000 dollars based on population growth. Staff have identified that ETHRA is still serving some urbanized areas. The new interpretation is that they should not be serving those urban areas with rural grant dollars and this will significantly impact those services.

Mr. Burton then reviewed 2 other programs likely to be affected as well. Job Access & Reverse Commute funding, Section 5316, comes directly to the TPO who puts out a call for projects every few years, though it typically has gone to CAC. It is approximately \$270,000 and this money is used to provide about 25,000 trips per year transporting people with low income to jobs and job training. The program is eliminated under Map-21 although FTA has stated this service can be funded out of the 5307 pool of money. The New Freedom funding, Section 5317, also comes directly to the TPO and is used to provide services that help people with disabilities have greater access to transportation. Mr. Burton noted Section 5317 yields about \$165,000 and also is awarded through a call for projects. It is currently awarded to CAC's Volunteer Assisted Transportation. Going forward this program (5317) will be folded into Section 5310 funding (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) and will also cease to be a standalone program. Mr. Burton stated that according to FTA, decisions with regards to distribution of these monies are typically made at the TPO Executive Board level. He noted that a concern is how services where there will be a loss of funding will continue and how will new services be funded. He further noted jurisdictions may need to come up with local matches. Mr. Burton noted that the "clock is ticking" and stated decisions on how TPO will divide the 5307 and 5310 funding must be made soon. He noted that the TPO Technical Committee has a subcommittee that is examining these issues. There are many procedures and hoops to go through to obtain this funding which then needs to be approved by the Governor. Mr. Burton stated that as a region we need to work together to minimize these impacts as there will be loss of services and further reiterated that we need to address these issues very quickly. Jeff Welch (TPO) noted staff will meet with the city managers to discuss how we can address these losses of services, particularly in the rural areas. Mr. Burton stated that FTA has made it clear that they are not signing off on any new grants until they see our "game plan".

4. Non-state Highway Project Transfer to Local Agencies

Item Summary: Staff will review notification from TDOT regarding a new policy, effective October 1, 2012 which states that the Department will discontinue providing assistance to local agencies in the development of projects located on federally eligible non-state highways.

Attachment #3 - Non-state Highway Project Transfer and Local STP and Earmark Projects

Discussion: Jeff Welch (TPO), referencing an email received from Teresa Estes, head of local programs at TDOT, noted that TDOT has implemented a new policy which states that jurisdictions that have the capacity to manage construction projects which are located on federally eligible non-state highways will need to begin to do so from start to beginning including all inspections and engineering.

Mr. Welch noted that as a result of MAP-21 many more highways have been added to the National Highway System and subsequently TDOT will need to manage these additional state projects.

5. Annual Obligations of FHWA funds for FY 2012

Item Summary: TDOT has provided to the TPO a list of obligated projects for fiscal year 2012 (October 1, 2011, to Sept. 30, 2012). Approximately \$31,867,669 was obligated in our TPO area. This does not include transit obligations.

Attachment #4 - List of Obligated Projects for Fiscal Year 2012.

Discussion: Jeff Welch (TPO) stated that federal regulations require TDOT to produce an annual report of obligated funds for each Metropolitan Planning Organization. He noted that for FY 2012, which ended September 30, 2012, the total amount of funds obligated was approximately 32 million dollars. Mr. Welch also noted that staff have just received the obligations report on the transit side and will post both the highway and transit reports on the website this week.

6. Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary

Item Summary: The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) Boundary must be updated based on the newly designated 2010 Census Urbanized Area prior to the adoption of the Mobility Plan update. The TPO staff will review the process to update the MPA boundary and present a few preliminary options for discussion. The following is a link to the Power Point presentation:

http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/oct12/item6_pres.pdf

Discussion: Mike Conger (TPO) noted that staff is in the process of redefining our MPA or Metropolitan Planning Area boundaries which is the area the TPO is responsible for doing the transportation planning for. He noted this is done in response to the new census every 10 years and where urban areas are defined based on population density and other factors. For transportation planning purposes, Mr. Conger stated staff needs to at minimum include areas now defined as “urbanized areas”. He reviewed the census-designated definitions of an Urbanized Area which includes any area with 50,000 residents, Urban Clusters which is an urban area with at least 2,500 residents and no more than 49,999 residents. Mr. Conger noted this census data is also used by several federal agencies to determine funding allocations.

Mr. Conger noted the steps necessary to make these adjustments. He again noted the first step being to include the census mandated areas. The next step is a smoothing process as the boundary can be quite jagged and have some gaps. Staff then looks at what makes sense to include in the new MPA boundary from a regional transportation perspective. Staff is required to look at areas that are likely to become urbanized within the next 20 years.

Mr. Conger noted that our region’s urbanized area expanded quite a bit since 2000 and identified specific growth areas. He also noted multiple new nearby urban clusters. Mr. Conger reviewed specific areas staff is proposing to include through smoothing.

He clarified that jurisdictions in the census defined minimum areas are included in the TPO. He also noted implication in joining the TPO would be those areas would be eligible to tap into our federal STP funds. It was noted that on a municipal level, if you become part of the TPO you forfeit your representation on the RPO. A county may continue to have representation on the RPO. What may most affect some new jurisdictions is the project prioritization process where there may be a concern that their projects could be lower on the TPO project list as opposed to a higher priority on the RPO project list. Next steps include finalizing these boundary expansions in the next 2 months. The TPO Bylaws will then be updated.

It was mentioned that the Executive Board would have a recommendation from the Technical Committee for final expansion of the MPA boundaries.

7. Other Business

TDOT Update. Jeff Welch (TPO) stated that we had approximately 70 individuals attend the breakfast with Commissioner Schroer which included many elected officials. It was further noted that Comm. Schroer's tour was very well accepted and appreciated locally.

PlanET Update – **Attachment #5:** Jeff Welch stated that PlanET has engaged over 4000 individuals in various formats. Mr. Welch noted that the fourth round of Working Groups took place on October 23rd. The event had around 80 participants which were broken down into smaller groups at 16 tables, each with a facilitator. Working with 4 themes (dispersed growth, growth in existing cities and towns, growth along corridors, and growth within existing cities and towns with new centers). They were asked to look at the 5 county region and distribute how they thought the population and employment growth could occur over the next 30 years. They were also asked to draw new transportation corridors. The information gathered will be compiled to produce 4 alternate scenario maps to take to the public for input. With that input, a final preferred scenario will be produced along with performance indicators.

I-640@ Broadway Public Design Meeting scheduled for November 29, 2012, in the fellowship hall of Smithwood Baptist Church, 4914 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxville, TN. The meeting starts at 5:00 p.m.

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/i640/default.shtml>

Attachment #6 – Notice of Public Design meeting

Jim Hagerman briefly described his participation on the TDOT Environmental Streamlining Committee. This involves getting input from the environmental community and persons involved in environmental issues into the operations of TDOT. The group has begun to discuss assisting TDOT with developing environmentally friendly practices.

Mayor Tom Beehan (City of Oak Ridge) introduced Mark Watson, City Manager for the City of Oak Ridge.

Ed Shouse (ETDD) noted that the Knox County Commission approved going forward with 2 roundabouts at Bob Gray and Bob Kirby Roads against fairly heavy opposition. He noted they will be less than one mile apart. He further noted that there was similarly heavy opposition to the roundabout at Northshore and Concord which has actually been very well accepted by the public and additionally, the statistics for accidents have been substantially reduced there.

Technical Committee Meeting Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

Executive Board Meeting Wednesday, November 28, 2013, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building (tentative date, announcement to follow next week)

8. Public comment

Members of the public may address the Executive Board with a five-minute time limitation for each person.

9. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.