

**TPO Technical Committee
November 14, 2006
City/County Building
Small Assembly Room
Knoxville, TN**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on November 14 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville. Scott Poland, Chair, presided and called the meeting to order.

*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission
*Curtis Henry	Sevier County
*Steve King	City of Knoxville Engineering
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Jennifer Lehto	East Tennessee Development District for Terry Bobrowski
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Scott Poland	City of Maryville
*Blake Sartin	Metro Knoxville Airport Authority
*Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
*Melissa Trevathan	Knoxville Area Transit
*Kenny Wiggins	City of Alcoa for Chris Hamby
*Bruce Wuethrich	Knox County Engineering
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Monica Austin	City of Oak Ridge
Betty Burks	KAT bus rider
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Karen Estes	Knox County Community Action Committee
John Fairstein	Citizens Against the Beltway Orange Location
Kelsey Finch	Tennessee Department of Transportation
Fred Frank	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Theresa Hutchins	Federal Highway Administration
Bill McMaster	Knoxville Parkway Resource Team
James Norris	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Richard Pack	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Local Programs
Gary Palmer	Town of Farragut
Cindy Pionke	Knox County Engineering
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Bob Shaw	Citizens Against the Beltway Orange Location
Shannon Tolliver	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Jim Ullrich	Citizen
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

*voting members

Determination of Quorum

A quorum was declared by Chairman Scott Poland.

Jeff Welch recognized Theresa Hutchins from the Federal Highway Administration.

1. Approval of October 10, 2006 Minutes

Presenter: Scott Poland, Chair

Item Summary: Approval of October 10, 2006, TPO Technical Committee minutes.

Background: Attachment #1 - October Minutes.

A motion was made by Mark Donaldson and seconded by Barbara Monty to approve the October 10 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Recommendation to Approve Amendments to the FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Presenter: TPO Staff

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has requested modifications to the 2006-2008 STIP/TIP to keep the document fiscally constrained. These modifications are necessary as a result of the approval of the 2006-2007 Work Program, Earmarked Projects, actual Project Schedule production, Cost Increases, Federal Rescissions, Funding Restrictions and remaining available funds.

See the TDOT request - Attachment 2i.

The following three project additions are being added to the 2006-2008 STIP/TIP as a result of an increase of \$5,600,000 federal/\$1,400,000 state funds.

a. Item Summary: I-640/North Broadway interchange-Phase 2 (2006-126)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be added into the TIP for \$1,360,000 NHS/\$340,000 State funds for right-of-way. **Attachment #2a.**

b. Item Summary: Western Ave, Texas Ave to Major Ave (2006-024)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to add \$3,920,000 HPP/\$980,000 State funds for right-of-way. Consequently, the funds programmed for right-of-way in fiscal year 2006 will be deleted in order to utilize the HPP funds. **Attachment #2b - Current and proposed.**

c. Item Summary: SR-73/US-321 in Lenoir City (2006-020)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to add \$320,000 HPP/\$80,000 State funds for preliminary engineering. Additionally, the funds programmed for right-of-way in fiscal year 2007 will be transferred to fiscal year 2009. **Attachment #2c - Current and proposed.**

d. Item Summary: Knoxville Parkway (2006-013)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to transfer the preliminary engineering from fiscal year 2006 to 2009. **Attachment #2d - Current and proposed.**

e. Item Summary: Alcoa Hwy North of bridge over Little River to Maloney Rd (2006-002)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to transfer right-of-way funds from fiscal year 2006 to 2008 and to transfer the construction funds from fiscal year 2008 to 2009. **Attachment #2e - Current and proposed.**

f. Item Summary: Alcoa Hwy, South of Airport Rd to near Pellissippi Parkway-Alternate Route (2006-001)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to transfer right-of-way funds from fiscal year 2007 to 2009. **Attachment #2f - Current and proposed.**

g. Item Summary: Pellissippi Parkway, SR 33 to SR 73 (2006-017)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to transfer construction funds from fiscal year 2007 to 2009. **Attachment #2g - Current and proposed.**

h. Item Summary: James White Parkway, Chapman Hwy to Moody Ave (2006-012)

Background: TDOT has requested that this project be amended to transfer right-of-way funds from fiscal year 2007 to 2009. **Attachment #2h - Current and proposed.**

Shannon Tolliver of the TPO staff briefly reviewed each project and explained that TDOT has requested these changes to the TIP and that most of the changes are moving funds between years and even moving money to fiscal year 2009. The current TIP does not contain fiscal year 2009 but the new TIP will be updated next spring and these funds will be added to that TIP.

Bob Shaw of 6705 Cate Road stated that he is pleased to see the fiscal constraint effort by TDOT. He asked what “add” means in the TIP table from TDOT concerning the phase of SR 475. Rick Pack from TDOT answered that “add” means to add to the 2009 preliminary engineering phase.

A motion was made by Bruce Wuethrich and seconded by Darryl Smith to approve Attachments 2a-2h amending the TIP for 2007-2008 and moving some projects to 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Endorsement of Enhancement Grant Applications

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Attachment #3a - City of Knoxville South Waterfront Riverwalk 2007 Application. Attachment #3b - Town of Farragut Kingston Pike Sidewalk 2007 Application.

Background: Two applications for projects in the Knoxville Region have been submitted to TDOT, and endorsement by the TPO is requested.

Jeff Welch stated that TDOT takes applications for Transportation Enhancement funds if they are within the MPO area. They must be endorsed by the TPO. The applications for 2007 projects were due to TDOT November 1, and the TPO has received two requests for endorsement, one from the City of Knoxville for the South Waterfront Riverwalk, Phase II, Knoxville Shoals Promenade, and one from the Town of Farragut, Kingston Pike sidewalk. The staff recommends endorsement of these projects. If the Technical Committee endorses the projects, they will be sent to the Executive Board for their endorsement.

A motion was made by Darryl Smith and seconded by Steve King to approve the endorsement of the Transportation Enhancement grant applications and recommend they be sent to the Executive Board for endorsement. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Project Priority List

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Attached is the High-Priority Highway Project list presented at the December 2005 Legislative Luncheon. **Attachment #4.**

Background: Annually the TPO presents to our state legislators and TDOT a list of high-priority transportation projects for the TPO area. This is provided as guidance for TDOT and legislators in selecting projects for funding.

Jeff Welch stated that these are the 12 high-priority projects for the urban area that will be presented to the state legislators and TDOT at the legislative luncheon to show them where we see needs for state-funded projects. Some of the 12 projects included are Alcoa Highway, Western Avenue, Pellissippi Parkway Extension and I-640/Broadway. No request has been received to change the list, and all the projects are still in need of funding. They are generally listed in priority order; however, it is recognized that some projects are more complex and will cost more money than others on the list. If enough funding is available to complete some of the less expensive projects, then we would want those to move forward even if they are ranked lower. The Executive Board endorses these projects. As the legislators develop their budget, this list will help them in planning.

Bob Shaw stated that he wants to understand the assembly and ranking of this list. Jeff stated that funding is not always available for each project and each needs to move on. This is a general priority list that TDOT can use to select projects from as their dollars become available. Projects come from the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and can move up and down. This year, the I-40/James White Parkway SmartFix 40 project was dropped from the priority list because construction is underway. These projects have been on the list for several years and

came from projects that local governments have been working on. We used to have 20-30 projects and have dropped it down to 12-13 to be more realistic. New items are added if the Technical Committee and Executive Board want them added. Bob asked why these are all road construction projects and not light rail. Jeff answered that light rail is not included in the LRTP, and noted that transit needs and nonmotorized transportation needs are also passed along to our area's legislators. These highway projects that are identified are funded by TDOT with federal and state funds.

Melissa Trevathan of Knoxville Area Transit asked if the needs of public transit will continue to be addressed in a narrative format to the legislators. Jeff said that policy would continue. Barbara Monty stated that job access funding needs to be a strong point for our legislators. Jeff stated that both of these points will be presented at the legislative luncheon on January 26.

A motion was made by Mark Donaldson and seconded by Blake Sartin to accept the priority projects list and recommend that it be presented at the Legislative Luncheon in January. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Review of STP/CMAQ Application Process

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: In light of SAFETEA-LU requirements, TPO staff has reviewed the application forms and the existing application process and has made some changes. Staff would like your input and possible changes and modifications by Friday, December 8.

Background: Attachment #5a - STP Applications. Attachment #5b - CMAQ Applications.

Shannon Tolliver stated that the staff is taking comments on these applications. SAFETEA-LU legislation requires that the TIPs cover four years instead of the three years that previous TIPs have covered. She will send out the call for project applications in January, and they will be due to the staff in February/March. The staff will review and prioritize the projects, then the Technical Committee will review the project lists. A draft TIP will be ready in May or June, public meetings will be held in July and the Technical Committee will make a final recommendation to the Executive Board in July/August. On August 22 the Executive Board will adopt the TIP. The application has been changed slightly to add security as an additional evaluation criterion, as required by SAFETEA-LU.

Shannon stated that CMAQ applications have not been changed much since the call for projects was issued last year. The timeline for project selection and approval is the same as the STP application. SAFETEA-LU requires that diesel retrofits be given a priority in the CMAQ application process so this application will say that for diesel retrofit projects 5 to 10 additional points will be awarded. Staff is considering requiring applicants to submit projects for two years of funding instead of the traditional one year of funding.

6. Congestion Management Process Update

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The TPO staff will be presenting background information and a timeline for preparing an update to the current Congestion Management System plan.

Background: The new SAFETEA-LU planning regulations have changed the name from a Congestion Management System to a Congestion Management Process (CMP), although the major requirements have not changed. The TPO staff has completed data collection for the CMP and will be working over the next few months to prepare an update to the plan, which will identify congested corridors in the region along with appropriate mitigation strategies.

Mike Conger of the TPO staff gave an update on the development of the update to the CMP. One of the major requirements is that it must include an appropriate analysis of all reasonable travel demand reduction and operational management strategies for congested corridors. The CMP is required since the Knoxville Urban Area is a Transportation Management Area. The staff has finished data collection and will now be compiling the data in order to identify congested corridors. A committee will be formed of the various transportation operations personnel in the TPO jurisdictions in order to assist the TPO staff with the development of the CMP plan and congestion mitigation strategy selection. Mike included a timeline for the update with the goal of completing everything by next summer.

Theresa Hutchins from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) stated there will be a training class regarding CMP in Nashville on November 29-30. She recommended that each MPO should have one or two representatives attend in addition to staff members.

7. Safe Routes to School Workshop/Grant Program

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: A new statewide grant program will focus on creating more opportunities for Tennessee children to walk and bike to school. The TPO has been actively involved in this program and staff will be attending a workshop in December.

Background: Attachment #6 - TDOT Press Release.

Ellen Zavisca of the TPO staff stated that TDOT announced the Safe Routes to School Grant Program with funds provided through SAFETEA-LU. TDOT has a statewide advisory committee and she is a member. This program provided funding for programs and projects that create more opportunities for Tennessee children to walk and bike safely to school. The funds can be used for elementary or middle school. Applications will likely be available this month and are due in February or March. TDOT is looking for programs that are comprehensive, addressing education, engineering, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation. Jeff Welch asked who can apply for the grant. Ellen responded that local jurisdictions have to apply for infrastructure projects and that for non-infrastructure programs, non-profit or parent-teacher groups can partner with local governments or state agencies. The state program will be funded by approximately \$10.7 million in federal funds through 2009. The state has available the first three years of funding, but Angie Midgett of TDOT stated that the money might not all going to be given out in the first round of applications.

8. TN MPO Retreat and Annual AMPO Meeting Outcomes

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: TPO staff attended the 2006 Tennessee MPO Retreat.

Background: The statewide annual retreat allows MPOs to discuss common dilemmas, receive updates and reports from TDOT and plan for future planning requirements.

Jeff Welch stated that TDOT, with FHWA, hosted a retreat of MPOs throughout the state. TDOT will look at the draft unified planning work programs as early as February. There were questions on TIPs, discussions on local planning reports and the LRTP process, which FHWA will provide guidance. Jeff stated that there is still confusion about what is required of the LRTP and what needs to be updated by July 1, 2007. The public Involvement process will be looked at.

Jeff stated that the TPO staff attended the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual meeting. We are two years away from a new Highway Authorization Bill, and already organizations are developing strategies to shape the new transportation bill in 2009. SAFETEA-LU, which guaranteed \$286 billion of highway funding through 2009, may not be fully funded due to revenue shortfall. An additional 10 cent per gallon fuel tax is needed to fully fund this program in the future TPO jurisdictions should implement projects as quickly as possible. The projects may not be funded at the level we had hoped. Theresa Hutchins stated that when local jurisdictions obligate projects, they should be sure the project is ready to go. Jeff added that the transit fund could be depleted by 2011.

9. Other Business

Jeff Welch stated that the Legislative Luncheon will be held on Friday, January 26, 2007 at noon at the Fox Den Country Club.

The TPO quarterly newsletter was distributed.

Staff received copies of a report from FHWA called "Innovative Intersection Safety Improvement Strategies and Management Practices: A Domestic Scan. These can be downloaded from the Internet.

A letter from TDOT concerning customer satisfaction was distributed. The purpose of the survey was to determine satisfaction levels with the quality of the state transportation system, to help identify and prioritize the transportation services and improvements and assess how well TDOT is performing. The letter contained the results of the survey.

Kelley Segars of the TPO staff discussed bicycle and pedestrian counts. Traffic counts do not include bicycles and pedestrians so separate counts are conducted each year. The counts are done in the spring and fall.

Doug Burton of the TPO staff discussed the Job Access Reverse Commute. SAFETEA-LU requires the TPO to prepare a public service plan. Congressman John Duncan has given earmarks for \$1.25 million in federal dollars that will be matched by state and local governments. There will be a 75 percent cut. Knoxville Area Transit and the Community Action Committee (CAC) use this money to provide services at night and weekends. CAC will pick people up 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and they will have to cut their services.

10. Public Comment

John Fairstein of 11295 Sam Lee Road stated that at the July Technical Committee meeting he asked about the I-81 intermodal terminus here in Knoxville and where it will be located. He asked when it will be built, who would pay for it and the impact on traffic. He would like this subject addressed at a future meeting. Jeff Welch stated that he does not know of any plans for an intermodal facility here. Fred Frank of the TPO staff stated that the Virginia Department of Transportation is studying improvements to I-81 in Virginia and as part of a larger study area, have begun looking at impacts intermodal improvements along the entire I-81 corridor from Knoxville to Harrisburg may have.

Jeff stated there will probably not be a December Technical Committee meeting unless issues come up.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.