

TPO Technical Committee
February 12, 2008
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on February 12, 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville. John Lamb, Vice-Chair, presided and called the meeting to order.

*Kathryn Baldwin	Anderson County
*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville/Knox County MPC
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Steve King	City of Knoxville Engineering
*Terry Bobrowski	East Tennessee Development District
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Russ Newman	Loudon County
*John Lamb	Blount County
*John Sexton	Knox County Engineering for Bruce Wuethrich
*Scott Poland	City of Maryville
*Blake Sartin	Metro Knoxville Airport Authority
*Melissa Trevathan	Knoxville Area Transit
*Rich DesGroseilliers	Lakeway MPO
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Joe Barrett	Local Planning Assistance Office
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Karen Estes	Knox County Community Action Committee
John Fairstein	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
Kelsey Finch	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Civil Rights
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Tina Rolan	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Robert Shaw	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
Jim Ullrich	Citizen
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

*voting members

Jeff Welch introduced Tina Rolan, the new Smart Trips coordinator with the TPO.

1. Approval of December 11, 2007, Minutes

A motion was made by Terry Bobrowski and seconded by Kathryn Baldwin to approve the December 11, 2007 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval of Amendment to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The attached TIP amendment reflect the addition of one new project to the TIP and the administrative adjustment of four existing TIP projects.

a. Add a new project: Engineering for Montvale Road (SR 336) from US 321 to Montvale Station Road (TIP Project #2008-109).

Item Summary: Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for Engineering: \$224,000 local STP and \$56,000 state funds.

Background: Attachment #2a.

Administrative Adjustments were made to the following projects:

b. Adjust TIP project #2008-080- Purchase KAT Vehicles- to delete state match of \$100,000 and increase CMAQ amount by \$100,000. Attachment #2b.

c. Adjust TIP Project #2008-082- Purchase Vehicles for CAC-to delete state match of \$22,500 and increase CMAQ amount by \$22,500. Attachment #2c.

d. Adjust TIP Project #2008-078- CMAQ Project Contingency- transfer \$122,500 to 2008-080 and 082. STP Project Contingency transfer \$219,500 to 2008-081 and 085. Attachment #2d.

e. Adjust TIP Project #2008-055- Watt Rd. Kingston Pike to Old Stage Rd.- Add PE phase in 2008 in the amount of \$20,000 Local STP and \$5,000 Local funds. Attachment #2e.

f. Adjust TIP project #2008-081- Purchase KAT Vehicles- to delete state match of \$197,000 and increase local amount by \$197,000. Attachment #2f.

g. Adjust TIP Project #2008-085- Purchase Vehicles for CAC-to delete state match of \$22,500 and increase local amount by \$22,500. Attachment #2g.

Attachments for items 2h and 2i were handed out at the meeting. Items 2a and 2i require action. Terry Bobrowski asked if adding the project in item 2a will bump any other projects, and Jeff Welch replied that it would not. Regarding item 2i, KAT is distributing its 5307 Federal funds to a variety of Transit Enhancement projects and plans. Melissa Trevathan said this reflects KAT proposed program of projects which was published and will be available for review at a KTA public meeting at the end of this month.

Scott Poland moved. Kathryn Baldwin seconded, and the motion recommending approval of the TIP amendments passed unanimously.

The other items were administrative adjustments, and Jeff Welch explained each adjustment. Money will be coming from the CMAQ bucket for items 2c, 2d, 2f and 2g because TDOT's Multimodal Division is not able to provide the local match. Items 2e and 2h require a PE phase for TDOT to have oversight. Scott Poland asked how we refill our buckets. Jeff said that each year take a small percent of our CMAQ allocation and add it too the cost overrun bucket. We don't have a maximum withdrawal amount. There is a lot of reserve money, but we do need to monitor it.

3. Election of Officers

Presenter: Technical Committee Chair

Item Summary: The Bylaws of the Technical Committee require an annual election of officers: Chair and Vice Chair. The terms of office are for one year and an officer is eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. The bylaws require an election to be held at the first meeting of the year.

Background: Chair Darryl Smith and Vice Chair John Lamb have served one one-year term.

Kathryn Baldwin moved to keep the existing slate of officers. Russ Newman seconded the motion. John Lamb asked if there were any other nominations. There was none. The motion was passed with John Lamb abstaining.

4. Annual Listing of Projects

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Annually the TPO must prepare a listing of projects that funds were obligated to during the past fiscal year. The listing is attached and has been made available to the public.

Background: Attachment #3 - Annual listing of obligated projects.

A total of \$182 million was programmed last year. Of that, \$145 million was Federal funds, and only \$94 million (or 65 percent) went to contract. It takes a long time to get contracts through, but we need to move as quickly as possible to get funds obligated and get projects in place to provide service. The Annual Listing of Projects is on the TPO's website, and a legal notice was published.

5. Review of CMAQ Application for Request of Projects

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff is prepared to solicit projects for the current year CMAQ program. We are anticipating approximately \$1.9 million available for this year.

Background: Attachment #4 - Draft Application form.

We are still unsure of the exact amount available for CMAQ projects this year. There is one addition to the application, and that is a request to describe the service life of the project. Applications are due March 14. Staff will review them and bring them back to the Technical Committee in April. They'll also go before the RPO, IAC, and TDOT before going to the board for approval in May. Jeff Welch said we received \$1.7 million for CMAQ last year and we will use that target for this year until we receive information on our allocation. Bob Shaw, 6705 Cate Rd., offered an idea that he saw in an article where two towns in Iowa bought hybrid school buses. He said it might be a good fit for CMAQ funds here. Jeff said that the purchase of hybrid vehicles is eligible.

6. FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff must submit a draft 2009 UPWP to TDOT by the end of February. If there are any planning studies that your jurisdiction is interested in please let us know as soon as possible. There will be additional time to add to the UPWP over the next couple of months.

Background: Attachment #5 - SAFETEA_LU Planning Factors.

Jeff Welch said that staff is preparing the next Work Program and wanted to know if there are any planning studies the jurisdictions are interested in, such as TPR requests for TDOT. The TPO will be placing considerable effort into model updates and the mobility plan in the next year along with other plans like the Transit Development Plan with KAT and air quality studies. There is a fund balance of several hundred thousand dollars available in budget for special planning studies, but studies still require a 20 percent local match. John Lamb said that Jeff does a great job. Kathryn Baldwin asked if committee members should call or email Jeff if they have a project idea. Jeff said yes, and we'll help figure out eligibility. Angie Midgett emphasized that it needs to be a planning study, not an engineering study.

7. Discussion of the next Long Range Mobility Plan

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The next update of the regions long range plan is due in May of 2009. Staff is already exploring ways to reorganize the plan and to generate greater community interest.

Background: The dialogue around our transportation system has changed and now includes diverse topics from economic development to energy consumption and carbon footprints in addition to needed road improvements. Our Mobility Plan has the potential to shift the historic trend and positively affect our region.

Katie Habgood distributed an initial timeline for the development of the 2009 plan. She said there are a lot of plans and programs feeding into this plan, including the Congestion Management Process and Complete Streets studies. We are developing the public participation plan currently. Everyone is already aware of some of the challenges facing us in the near future, like the fiscal constraints of decreasing transportation funds and sharply increasing construction costs. That will require us to re-examine the existing list of projects. We'll be relying on some visioning processes that have been done in the region already, like Nine Counties One Vision and the Quality Growth conference. Many different processes have said the same thing about what people want for the area in the future. We will be struggling with the land use/transportation connection. There are some pilot projects going on now that can lay the groundwork for that issue. Katie invited committee members to get in touch with any questions they have.

8. Update on Travel Demand Model and Urban Land Use Allocation Model (ULAM)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: A progress report will be made on both the travel demand model update and the ULAM study.

Background: The TPO staff has engaged consultants to develop a land use model and an update to the travel demand model. The projects are both currently in the data collection stage, which includes a major household survey effort that is just getting underway throughout the region.

Mike Conger presented an update on model improvements. The consultant will be presenting again in March. There are two models being updated: the travel demand model and ULAM. The model update has two phases. The first phase is refreshing the current model and validating it to 2006 traffic counts. This should be completed by April 2008 and can be used for the Long Range Plan and Air Quality conformity. The second phase is a major overhaul of the model and includes a major household survey which is currently underway. The second phase won't be complete until mid-2009, so it won't be in time for the Long Range Plan update. For the ULAM update, which should be completed by May or June 2008, there are two Market Index Charettes with local developers coming up in March. John Lamb asked about the selection criteria for local developers, and Mike replied that regional major homebuilders and commercial developers are invited. Kathryn Baldwin suggested contacting individual cities' codes department as they usually keep a list of developers. John Lamb asked Mike to please email everyone on Technical Committee to find the developers. Mike talked about the recently completed license plate survey. We are also updating the roadway network for the TDM, along with updating demographic and employment data from year 2000 to year 2006. Mike showed maps with the 2006 population density and change in population between 2000 and 2006. Mike talked about the household survey and the daily travel log. Kathryn Baldwin said she was contacted, and she participated in the pilot.

9. National Transportation Commission Recommendations

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission submitted its report to Congress on Jan. 15, 2008. Briefly the Commission advocates a Strong federal role, concentrating the federal investment to 10 program areas, performance base approach, speeding project delivery and increase public and private investment at all levels.

Background: The entire report can be seen at www.transportationfortomorrow.org

The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, a Federal commission, submitted its report which recommends 54 pages of changes. Three members of the commission voted against it because they wanted to see more emphasis on private investment in the transportation system. The commission recommends a 40-cent increase in gas tax to help solve transportation funding issues. The bottom line is there is no vision at the national level (like when the interstate system was developed), and greater investment in all modes is needed. This document will guide our regional Mobility Plan. It shows us where we stand as a region in the national and global system. Discussion is starting regarding reauthorizing SAFETEA-LU, and this document will play a role. Terry Bobrowski asked if the TPO shared opinions with the Feds or the state when SAFETEA-LU came out. Jeff replied, yes, and we will continue to share information and our opinions. Terry Bobrowski asked when the process will start. Jeff said next spring at the earliest. Jim Ullrich, 1003 Luttrell Street, spoke about his concern that no one knows that this commission study exists. He described the Federal level hearings that have already occurred and said the present administration will not be there when decisions are made. Right now the Senate is focusing on establishing direction and principles. The Secretary of Kansas DOT, a woman! acknowledged the "natives are restless and there is a change in the wind," but still a number of people in the room don't know that anything is going on. He said change is coming and will affect all of us, and we need local leadership to educate public, politicians, and technical folks regarding what these recommendations are and in which direction we want to go. He asked that we spend some time on this topic.

10. Tolling Legislation and SR-475

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Tolling legislation approved by the legislature last year required TDOT to prepare a pilot program of two projects consisting of a new highway project and a major bridge project crossing a major river. This report is to be submitted to the legislature in January of 2009. Two possible projects in our area which TDOT prepared preliminary feasibility studies are SR-475 and a proposed Intra County Parkway in Sevier County. What action does the TPO Technical Committee want the staff to do related to these studies?

Background: Attachments #6a and 6b - Executive Summaries of the two studies.

Jeff discussed how tolling plays into our discussions about the Mobility Plan and the financing tools available to us. He reminded the Committee that state legislation says that toll facilities would be publicly managed, not private. We will discuss the TPO's options to share support or not for further tolling studies again in the future as more studies and more data (like the recent license plate survey) come available. Terry Bobrowski asked if TDOT will select projects for further study or take recommendations from MPOs. Jeff said both. For example, Memphis asked TDOT to look at a new bridge crossing. Chattanooga is looking at another bridge crossing. Kathryn Baldwin asked if it would be appropriate for the TPO to make recommendations on these one or two projects. Jeff said yes, that the board should say, we support this one or that one to TDOT. Regarding the two toll feasibility studies and the projects' progress, 475 (the Beltway) is further along in planning studies, while the IntraCounty connector isn't in the LRTP.

Kathryn Baldwin made a motion to recommend the Beltway to TDOT due to its regional impact.

Bob Shaw spoke and said this is the most important issue on the agenda, and he thinks this project shows a lack of good planning at the state level. TDOT needs to live within its own budget. Most people recognize that this road would cost about \$1 billion by the time it's actually built, he said. The toll study was based on bad assumptions – I-40 has more lanes now, so the effect would be different than what the study says. Toll roads are a new form of tax, and “pay as you go” is a better approach. Mr. Shaw's concern is that tolling facilities would avoid NEPA requirements. Toll booths are dangerous and do not help air quality. It is an onerous prospect to have privatization of tolls and our roads. He said the Tennessee Comptroller report supports cost-benefit analyses, and we need to spend more on transit, to look at climate change, our carbon footprint and to focus on moving people, not cars.

John Fairstein, 11205 Sam Lee Road, shared his concerns about interchanges and toll booths. One proposed tolling facility is right near Pellissippi State College, Hardin Valley High School, Hardin Valley Elementary, and the tollbooth would make it a basin of pollution. He quoted from a Sierra Club report concerning the significant association between vehicle traffic and curbside carcinogens. Are there alternatives to what the consultant (Wilbur Smith) proposed? He pointed to the Annual Listing of Obligated projects, and said some line items deal with the Beltway, and asked what they are. Jeff said that TDOT has engineering studies going on for the environmental document. Lastly, Mr. Fairstein said CSPAN interviewed the commissioners from the Federal Commission study, and it is available on CD.

Jim Ullrich said that tolling is a solution to some issues, but the problem with tolling is in the details. He said he didn't understand the proposed IntraCounty road in Sevier County at all. We don't need more cars in Sevier County. He wants to see the TPO and TDOT spend time on item 9, not item 10. Education and informing will pay off and will offer other solutions. Referring to reauthorizing SAFETEA-LU, he said it's not a highway bill, it's a transportation bill. He said we don't have a money problem, but a policy problem.

Back to Kathryn's motion, John Lamb asked if we should back a motion now or what. Jeff tried to clarify the intent of Kathryn's motion. She wants to support it as an option to traveling on I-40. The housing market needs to stay compact, and the Beltway would open that area of the region for development which is a good thing. She said the Beltway contributes to good planning practices.

Motion passed unanimously, TDOT abstained. The TPO Executive Board will hear the recommendation at the February 27 meeting.

11. Certification Review

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Every 4 years our federal partners conduct a review of the transportation planning process of the TPO. Representatives of FHWA, FTA and EPA will be meeting with the TPO staff on Feb. 26 and Feb. 27th. A public meeting will be held on the evening of Feb. 26th.

Jeff encouraged Committee participation at the certification review and to offer comments on the process.

12. Other Business

Resolution from the City of Rockford opposing any widening of SR. 33 through the city limits (**Attachment #7**).
Certification Review Public Meeting, February 26 at 6:00 p.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

Executive Board Meeting, February 27 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

Technical Committee Meeting, March 11 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

13. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.