

TPO Technical Committee Minutes
March 12, 2013
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on March 12, 2013 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville. Vice Chair Cindy Pionke presided and called the meeting to order. It was determined that there was a quorum.

*Kathryn Baldwin	City of Oak Ridge
*Brian Boone	City of Maryville
*Don Brown	ETDD, <i>for Terry Bobrowski</i>
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)
*Barbara Monty	CAC
*Jim Hageman	City of Knoxville
*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville-Knox County MPC
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Pat Phillips	Loudon County
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County, <i>for Dwight Van de Vate</i>
*Melissa Roberson	Knoxville Area Transit (KAT)
*Blake Sartin	Knoxville Airport Authority
*Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
*Andrew Sonner	City of Alcoa
TPO Staff	
Partner Agency Staff	
Members of the Public	
*voting members	

1. Approval of January 15, 2013 Minutes

Action Possible Action Discussion

Attachment #1 – January 15, 2013 Minutes

Discussion: Jeff Welch (TPO) clarified the issue of regional transit would be addressed when staff meet to update the Transportation Planning Work Program. He noted staff would continue to research what other RPO's are doing and bring that back to the Committee.

Action: A Motion was made by Pat Phillips (Loudon County) and seconded by Darryl Smith (Town of Farragut) to approve the January 15, 2013 Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

2. Election of Officers

Item Summary: Leslie Johnson is no longer employed by the City of Lenoir City. She was elected Chair of the Technical Committee at the meeting in January. A new Chair needs to be elected. The term of office shall be for one year. Any officer is eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Attachment #2 – TPO Chairs and Vice Chairs from 1993 to present

Action: A Motion was made by Pat Phillips (Loudon County) and seconded by Kathryn Baldwin (City of Oak Ridge) to nominate Vice Chair Cindy Pionke (Knox County) as Chair. The Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: As the Vice Chair seat is now vacant nominations for Vice Chair were sought from the floor.

Action: A Motion was made by Pat Phillips (Loudon County) and seconded by Andrew Sonner (City of Alcoa) to nominate Kathryn Baldwin (City of Oak Ridge) as Vice Chair. The Motion carried unanimously. Kathryn Baldwin abstained from the vote.

3. Regional Mobility Plan Update

Item Summary: TPO staff will present an overview of the Draft 2040 Regional Mobility Plan and Air Quality Conformity. An updated Draft Mobility Plan, that reflects comments from TDOT, is available on the TPO website. On March 01, 2013, the Draft Plan was released for the federally required 30-day public comment period. This comment period will officially end on April 01, 2013. Print copies were distributed to 25 area libraries for review. Comments can be submitted to TPO staff by email (alan.huff@knoxtrans.org), by phone (865-215-2500), by fax (865-215-2068), in person at TPO offices, during March or April Technical Committee or Executive Board meetings, via online survey (www.knoxtrans.org/mobilityplan), via paper survey, or by inviting TPO staff to present and hear comments at meetings of community organizations. Also of note, FHWA and FTA will conclude their review and submit comments to TPO staff by Monday, March 18, 2013. TPO staff will present a summary of changes that result from FHWA, FTA, and Public comment during the April Technical Committee meeting. Results from the analysis demonstrating air quality conformity of the draft Plan will be presented.

Attachment #3 – Updates to Three Mobility Plan Projects

Discussion: Alan Huff (TPO) noted the Plan goes to 2040 and is required to be fiscally restrained, which staff has done for each Horizon year and funding category. Projects must be included in the Plan in order to be eligible for the TIP. Horizon years are set by air quality conformity. Based on the air quality conformity areas, the 2010 urbanized area (MPA) and PlanET (2003 MSA), the Plan now includes 8 counties. Mr. Huff reviewed changes to the Plan including the incorporation of MAP-21 requirements. Mr. Huff noted staff worked to make the Plan more transparent. He further noted an Executive Summary of the Plan will be released within the next few months. Our population is growing by numbers as well as growing in age. The percentage of seniors is expected to grow from 13.8% in 2010 to 19.2 % in 2040, which presents significant implications and addressing them has been made a priority in the Plan. He noted we are also spreading out geographically with the density of the overall area dropping significantly, though there are many areas where congestion continues to grow. He reviewed highlights of the extensive outreach efforts in conjunction with the Plan Update. Mr. Huff noted staff would bring the final draft before the Technical Committee April 16 for Action then onto the Executive Board on April 24. He then reviewed the final steps outside of the TPO that will take place before the June 1st deadline.

Mike Conger (TPO) reiterated the development of the Long Range Mobility Plan includes performing an air quality conformity determination. He noted currently the Knoxville area is in either nonattainment or maintenance for 4 air quality standards and briefly reviewed them. Mr. Conger stated that the purpose of the transportation conformity process is to link together air quality planning and transportation planning. He noted part of the Clean Air Act is to ensure there are no federal funds spent on projects that will delay attainment of our air quality standards for which we are in nonattainment or that would increase the frequency and/or cause any new violations of the NAAQS standards. Subsequently all of our transportation plans must demonstrate conformity before they can be adopted. He noted if we do not demonstrate conformity that one consequence could be entering into a “conformity lapse period” which means highway projects where you are adding capacity for single occupancy vehicles will not move forward into their next phases of progress. Mr. Conger reviewed the process by which conformity is demonstrated through a technical analysis using the Travel Demand Forecasting Model and EPA Emission Factor Model. He further noted that our area meets the state mandated “budgets” for the emissions tested but that we will need to keep an eye on these as budgets are developed with the new standards. Mr. Conger stressed the importance of attempting to maintain consistency with the Mobility Plan project list when the new 2014-2017 TIP projects are developed since we can rely on the Mobility Plan Conformity Analysis unless any there are any new major projects or there is any change in current project scopes.

There was discussion regarding the need for pedestrian improvements being included in the new Chapman Highway project noted in the Mobility Plan project updates. Jeff Welch noted that as the project is in its infancy there is most likely time to add language including those improvements even though it is a state generated project. Mr. Conger also clarified that typically staff do not specify all of the pedestrian and bicycle improvements when listing projects and further noted that the Mobility Plan contains general language that states that there is a bicycle-pedestrian accommodation policy that must be followed with any major project implementation. The complete presentation for the Overview of the Draft 2040 Regional Mobility Plan and Air Quality Conformity can be found by clicking on the following link:
http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/tech/apr13/mobility_plan_pres.pdf.

4. Transportation Improvement Plan Schedule and Applications

Item Summary: Development and approval of the Transportation Improvement Program will take several months. The attached time line indicates the major milestones that need to be met in order to have an approved TIP by the end of this year.

Attachment #4 - 2014-2017 TIP Timeline

Discussion: Jeff Welch (TPO) noted staff had requested projects be submitted for consideration for the TIP and the review process has begun. He then reviewed the remaining timeline noting deadlines with respect to TDOT and our federal partners. Mr. Welch noted over the next 6 months staff would be working to present and refine multiple drafts of the TIP to the Technical Committee and Executive Board which will have incorporated feedback from IAC, TDOT, FTA and FWHA. He noted there will also be a formal Public Comment period starting in August. Staff will seek final approval from the Committee and Board at the September meetings. After that, Mr. Welch noted we move to final federal approval of Conformity in October then final approval from FWHA/FTA of the TIP by December 10th. At that point we can then obligate funds to projects. Mr. Welch also encouraged member jurisdictions to remember that projects in the TIP need to be consistent with the Mobility Plan so staff can use the same air quality conformity determinations.

5. Transportation Planning Work Program Timeline FY 2014

Item Summary: Preparation of the 2014/2015 Transportation Planning Work Program must begin now in order to complete it by September 2013. Attached is the schedule that we must meet in order to complete the work program on time.

Attachment #5a – Transportation Planning Work Program FY 2014

Attachment #5b – Transportation Emphasis – Focus Areas

Discussion: Jeff Welch (TPO) stated the Work Program defines the studies, special projects and analysis, technical data accumulation and evaluations that the TPO will undertake in conjunction with our local, state and federal partners in the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Welch noted we have a 2 year Work Program for FY 2013-2014 and staff is now looking to prepare the FY 2014-2015 Work Program. He noted staff needs to have a draft to TDOT by April 22nd. He asked that project and study ideas be submitted to staff by the next meeting, April 16th. Staff will be looking to incorporate transportation emphasis and focus areas, key MAP-21 performance management provisions as well as information gained from the PlanET initiatives into the Program.

6. New Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Item Summary: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released the new MSA boundaries for regions across the country. Knoxville's MSA area has grown from five counties to nine counties. The nine Knoxville MSA counties are: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Grainger, Knox, Loudon, Morgan, Roane, and Union.

Discussion: Terry Gilhula (MPC) noted that after completion of the U.S. Census, done every 10 years, the OMB undertakes a comprehensive review of statistical area delineations and further noted that the changes released by their office this February 28th take effect immediately and reflect new definitions.

Mr. Gilhula reviewed the census defined urbanized area (a minimum population of 50,000) and urban cluster (population from 2,500 to 50,000) which lie at the heart of what OMB calls the Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA). The CBSA is defined as a geographic entity with at least one core (urbanized area or cluster) with a population of at least 10,000, with adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core, measured by commuting ties. A CBSA is delineated in terms of whole, contiguous counties. CBSAs consist of central as well as outlying counties, defined by commuting trends in and out of the central counties.

There are three types of CBSAs: Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with at least one urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more; Micropolitan Statistical Area (MCSA) with at least one urban cluster with a population of 10,000 but less than 50,000; and, Combined Statistical Area (CSA), which is a geographic entity consisting of two or more adjacent CBSAs with strong employment interchange. He noted our CSA is now a 13-county area, having gained Morgan County. Within this new CSA, the Knoxville Metropolitan Area has grown from a five-county area (Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon and Union) to a nine-county area gaining Campbell, Morgan, Roane and Grainger counties. This has added 140,000 in population to our metropolitan area.

The designation of Anderson County as a central county of the MSA is significant as their commuting ties with several adjacent counties now pull those counties (Roane, Morgan and Campbell) into our metropolitan area. Anderson joins Blount, Knox and Loudon counties as our central counties. Mr. Gilhula noted that the Journey to Work data used to define the MSAs was released by the Census Bureau last week. He further noted that these MSA delineations are for statistical purposes only and that they provide a nationally consistent way to collect, tabulate and publish Federal statistics for geographic areas. He also stated that OMB advises that they may not be suitable for use in program funding formulas. The complete presentation about the new Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area can be found by clicking on the following link: http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/tech/apr13/cbsa_march2013_pres.pdf.

7. Regional Greenways Update

Item Summary: In concert with PlanET and the Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council, the TPO is assisting local governments with a regional conceptual greenway plan. Meetings were held with the public and stakeholders in four counties (Anderson, Blount, Loudon and Union) in November and December, and maps are being revised on consultation with the local governments.

Discussion: Ellen Zavisca (TPO) noted there is multiple current greenway planning efforts. In Blount County, TPO has brought on private consultants to look at the link between Maryville and Townsend in terms of a greenway connection. They have created a technical advisory committee and are planning public outreach activities in April. Moving onto the joint PlanET / TPO greenway planning, there are two different tracks. One track involves the UT School of Architecture and the work their Landscape Architecture and Architecture studio is doing on behalf of PlanET. They are looking at five different corridors, one in each of the five PlanET counties. These are: Anderson County – Briceville to Lake City, a rails to trails initiative; Blount County – Alcoa to Louisville roughly along Louisville Road; Knox County – Second Creek; Loudon County – Greenback to Friendsville, also a rails to trails initiative; Union County – Bull Run Creek. Ms. Zavisca noted staff has identified a champion in each county to support these projects. Ms. Zavisca stated the TPO is working on a four-county greenway conceptual plan involving Anderson, Blount, Loudon and Union Counties as they do not have countywide greenway plans in place. She noted staff met with the public and other stakeholders in each of the four counties back in November and December and those meetings have led to proposed preliminary countywide plans which will be shared with each of the four counties for additional feedback. Staff has already been back to Loudon County. She also noted TPO staff will remain available to assist with implementation and will continue to encourage them to work together with the Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council. It was clarified that Knox County already has a greenway plan.

Ms. Zavisca also mentioned that the Transportation Alternative Program applications are due March 22nd.

8. TDOT Regional Transportation Planners

Item Summary: TDOT has created Community Planner positions in each of the TDOT Regions. TDOT staff will provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of these positions will have in the TPO process.

Discussion: Tarren Barrett, recently appointed as one of the new Community Transportation Planners for TDOT Region 1 addressed the Committee. She noted Governor Haslam and Commissioner Schroer thoroughly reviewed the entire agency and created the Office of Community Transportation (OCT). Their purpose will be to coordinate local land use and statewide transportation planning decisions as well as to improve communications between TDOT and local partners. She also noted OCT will work with local partners to establish a regional transportation presence. They will also assist with statewide coordination of the long range transportation planning process in Tennessee’s eleven urbanized areas.

9. PlanET Update

Item Summary: An overview of where PlanET is at and where it is heading will be presented. PlanET has launched its third round of Community Involvement with small-group meetings and is also utilizing a new online input tool, Metroquest. Additional information as well as the link to this new online tool can be found by accessing the following link:

<http://www.planeasttn.org/Newsroom/NewsArchive/ArticleView/ArticleId/47/How-We-Grow-Matters.aspx>

Discussion: Amy Brooks (TPO) noted the third round of community outreach kicked off last week, with the goal of this round being to prioritize issues we need to address as we grow as a region. Across 5 different growth concepts, they want participants to consider how and where we can grow; where can we put additional housing, where do transportation investments make the most sense, etc. Staff will use this information to draft strategies that will be incorporated into a preferred concept for the growth of our region. She noted that will then be taken to our next round which will take place just before we draft the final plan. She noted the best way to get people to participate is through word of mouth and encouraged Committee members to share this information throughout their communities.

10. Other Business

Federal Sequestration Update. Jeff Welch (TPO) noted there was no immediate impact on the transportation side of the budget, particularly on the FTA side with there being no impact to the formula grants. He noted as the Highway Trust Fund needed to be bailed out to the tune of several billion dollars this FY, the funds taken from the General Funds to do that are subject to the sequestration. He noted that subsequent to that, approximately ½ billion dollars will be impacted on the highway side. Mr. Welch further noted that Congress only approved a 6 month budget which expires March 27th. The US House has approved a continuing 6 month budget for the remainder of the year at the levels that are now in place as a result of the sequestration.

PlanET Working Groups, 5th Round: Cansler YMCA*

Monday, March 18th:

Transportation: 9 am – 11 am

Healthy Communities: 1 pm – 3 pm

Tuesday, March 19th:

Environment: 9:30 am – 11:30 am

Housing and Neighborhoods: 1 pm – 3 pm

*Economy and Workforce Working Group meeting time and place will be announced at a later date.

Barbara Monty noted she is retiring and that she has enjoyed the opportunity to serve and work with everyone on the Committee. Karen Estes will now represent CAC. Doug Burton presented Ms. Monty with donation in her honor to the Meals on Wheels program on behalf of the TPO staff. Jeff Welch noted that Ms. Monty has been a tremendous asset to the community and that she has been a tireless advocate for seniors and others in need. Mr. Burton noted there will be a reception in her honor on April 16th from 4 to 6 PM at CAC.

Executive Board Meeting Wednesday, March 27, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

Technical Committee Meeting **Tuesday, April 16**, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building. *Please note the date change.*

Kelley Segars (TPO) announced that Smart Trips has earned the Gold Award in the National Center for Transit Research's 2012 Race for Excellence. Smart Trips was also named "Best Of" in the supporting agency category. One of only 4 agencies nationwide to be awarded gold in the race, Smart Trips received the honor via a video awards ceremony January 31st.

11. Public comment

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

12. Adjournment