

**TPO Technical Committee
June 12, 2007
City/County Building
Small Assembly Room
Knoxville, TN**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on June 12 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville. Darryl Smith, Chair, presided and called the meeting to order.

*Kathryn Baldwin	Anderson County
*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville/Knox County MPC
*Debra Fleming	for Angie Midgett Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Curtis Henry	Sevier County
*Steve King	City of Knoxville Engineering
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Jennifer Lehto	East Tennessee Development District
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Jeremy Pearson	for Chris Hamby, City of Alcoa
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County Engineering
*Scott Poland	City of Maryville
*Blake Sartin	Metro Knoxville Airport Authority
*Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
*Melissa Trevathan	Knoxville Area Transit
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Karen Estes	Knox County Community Action Committee
Kelsey Finch	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Civil Rights
Mark Geldmeier	City of Knoxville Engineering
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Jill Hall	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Local Programs
Ann Padgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Traffic Office
Susan Ralph	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Local Programs
Shannon Tolliver	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Nathan Vatter	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Traffic Office
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Jill Wolverton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

*voting members

Determination of Quorum

A quorum was declared by Chair Darryl Smith.

1. Approval of May 8, 2007 Minutes

Presenter: Darryl Smith, Chair

Item Summary: Approval of May 8, 2007, TPO Technical Committee minutes.

Background: Attachment #1 – May Minutes.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Scott Poland to approve the May 8 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of Appalachian Development Highway System “Corridor K”

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: This item was discussed at the Executive Board meeting on May 23 where Denny Mobbs from Cleveland, TN made a presentation.

Attachment #2a - Letter from Denny Mobbs.

Background: Corridor K is part of the Appalachian Development Highway System. The proposal is to relocate and construct a 20.4-mile section of four-lane highway from Cleveland in Bradley County, TN, through the Cherokee National Forest to the North Carolina line where the roadway continues to Sylva, NC. TDOT completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2003. TDOT has now commissioned a Corridor K Economic Development and Transportation Study. **Attachment #2b - Map of Corridor K.**

Katie Habgood of the TPO staff discussed the letter and map Denny Mobbs presented to the Executive Board on May 23. TDOT has prepared a draft environmental impact statement for this proposed road. Jeff Welch stated that the Board referred this item to the Technical Committee. Traffic headed to North Carolina would be going that way instead of through Knoxville. Jeff stated we will wait to see what the economic and feasibility study reveals, then present more information at that time. It would be a very expensive road to build.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Cindy Pionke to defer this item until we have more information. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Draft Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) Projects for the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and TDOT Proposed Projects for 2008-2011

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff has attempted to present a balanced TIP through 2011 given increased construction costs and declining revenues. **Attachment #3 – Memo Attachment #3a – Existing CMAQ project list. Attachment #3b Proposed CMAQ project list. Attachment #3c – STP proposed Project List.**

Background: SAFETEA-LU requires a four-year TIP. We have also included TDOT’s proposed 2008-2011 list of projects for the TPO area and the regional area. **Attachment #3d TPO Area Projects and #3e Regional Area Projects .**

Shannon Tolliver of the TPO staff explained how TPO Staff financially constrained the local STP and CMAQ projects for the upcoming FY 2008-2011 TIP. She stated that at the last Technical committee she presented all the local STP and CMAQ projects that were submitted to the TPO during the call for projects submission in January 2007. During that meeting she emphasized that not all the projects would be funded because there were not enough revenues to cover the costs. In order to financially constrain the plan the staff had to remove some projects, decrease the scale of some projects and move funding between the years.

For the CMAQ projects, staff recommends that existing projects in the TIP be funded first. Staff then recommends setting aside 1 million dollars for cost overruns, and then fund ongoing projects such as Smartrips, Knoxville traffic equipment control upgrade, etc. The next step was to fund KAT and CAC bus purchases but at a lesser amount than requested. With these changes staff was able to financially constrain the CMAQ program.

For the STP projects, staff remained committed to funding existing projects and thus recommends deleting two new project submittals. Staff also raised the annual STP revenues by \$500,000 per year, and increase all out year phases of work by 8 percent per year. The last step was to move phases of work for Millertown Pike, between Washington Pike and I-640 to FY 2011. With these changes the STP portion of the plan is financially constrained.

Jeff Welch stated that both CMAQ and STP are the staff’s recommendation to financially constrain the plan and changes can be made. He also asked that members discuss this with their local officials. Shannon stated that each member will receive a draft TIP at the July meeting.

Jeff stated that on the CMAQ projects list, there are 25 projects that have been approved by the TPO but are not moving forward. Tennessee ranks 49th in the country in not obligating their CMAQ dollars. With continued rescissions by Congress the CMAQ program may take a bigger hit than other programs.

Melissa Trevathan of KAT stated that some of projects listed have been obligated. Shannon is checking on KAT and CAC funds. Melissa added that KAT is having trouble transferring CMAQ funds from FHWA to FTA. Jeff stated that even if the money is obligated, you need to keep a project moving.

Kathryn Baldwin asked if there is there a time limit, and Jeff answered that there is not one, but TDOT is now considering a timeline on CMAQ projects. If the funds are not spent in 3 years, then TDOT will take the funds and put them into their CMAQ bucket.

Steve King from City Engineering asked if the projects at Central and Merchants will be funded through CMAQ. Shannon answered they would. The current projects will be funded if they are on the list. Steve also asked if the STP analysis would take into consideration the Pleasant Ridge Road project. Shannon answered that the I-640 to Merchants project is still in the STP. Steve stated it had been bid twice and is over budget.

Jeff Welch discussed the TDOT Area Projects and Regional Area Projects for FY 2008-2011.

4. Draft Work Program

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The TPO is required to prepare an annual work program outlining planning studies and tasks to be conducted by TPO participants. The major emphasis this year will be continued improvements to the travel demand model and the preparation of a transit strategy for KAT.

Background: Attachment #4.

Jeff Welch stated that the Technical Committee has discussed the work program at the last two meetings and staff have received comments from TDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. Staff is looking at the fund balance and may have to request more money from it to fund the travel demand model update.

Darryl Smith stated that Farragut would like to move the Campbell Station Road and I-40 interchange project forward. Jeff Welch stated that staff will make a request to TDOT on its eligibility for planning dollars. The board will vote on the Work Program in August, and we should have an answer by then on its eligibility.

5. Draft Prospectus for the TPO

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The prospectus outlines the roles and responsibilities of the participants in the TPO planning process. In addition, major issues facing the TPO are briefly discussed. The prospectus will also include the bylaws for the TPO committees and agreements between agencies.

Background: Attachment #5.

Jeff Welch stated that this prospectus is no longer required by federal regulations, but it gives the role of each item's place in TPO. The added and updated language is in italics. The prospectus will be recommended for approval in either July or August.

6. Proposed Agreement Between the TPO and the East Tennessee Southern Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Consistent with a prior agreement with TDOT, TPO staff will provide technical support to the Knoxville nonattainment area, which includes most of the East Tennessee South RPO.

Background: Attachment #6 - Proposed Memorandum of Agreement.

Katie stated that the Memorandum of Agreement came from the Prospectus. Most of the southern RPO is within our nonattainment area. Staff felt there should be rules outlining an agreement between the TPO and RPO endorsing this organization.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Scott Poland to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between TPO and the RPO to provide technical support. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Proposed Bylaw Changes for the Technical Committee

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Minor changes are proposed to reflect references to SAFETEA-LU and the new Rural Planning Organizations. **Attachment #7.**

Background: The current bylaws require that any changes be presented to the Technical Committee at least one month before a vote can be taken.

Jeff Welch stated that the changes are crossed out and the words that are underlined are being added. This will be voted on in July.

Barbara Monty stated that on page 28, the name of her organization is not Knox County Transit, but Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee. Steve King stated that on page 27, his title is Director of City of Knoxville Engineering , not Operations and Engineering.

8. Other Business

Technical Committee Meeting, July 10 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.
Executive Board Meeting, August 22 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room o

Jeff Welch stated that \$20 million of STP funds have been spent on state highways and _____ on f the City/County Building

non-state highways. Norfolk Southern had a meeting last week concerning I-81, and today we have distributed the section concerning movement of goods through this corridor and making improvements. They want the freight to move faster than trucks by using rail. They may build terminals for trains to come and transfer the goods. Jefferson County would be a logical area because I-40 and I-81 come together there. Investments will begin in 2008. The benefits of moving freight by rail would be (1) safety, (2) highway congestion mitigation, (3) deferred/reduced highway maintenance expense, (4) deferred/reduced highway expansion requirement, (5) environmental benefits (emissions, land use, fuel consumption) and (6) economic development. TDOT has initiated an I-81/I-40 study to look at identifying congestion capacity, freight movement, economic access, etc.

Yesterday, the Tennessee Senate and House passed a bill to continue studies concerning tolling. A bridge in Davidson County and the Knoxville Regional Bypass are two places that are being considered. TDOT has the opportunity to move forward. There will be an environmental study. This bill does not allow public private partnerships, but could be managed by a private company. Jeff will share information with the Technical Committee as it becomes available.

9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

10. Adjournment

There being no further comment, the meeting was adjourned.