

**TPO Technical Committee Minutes
February 8, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on February 8th at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building in Knoxville. John Lamb, Chair, presided and called the meeting to order.

*Terry Bobrowski	East Tennessee Development District
*Brian Boone	City of Maryville
*Rich DesGroseilliers	Lakeway Area TPO
*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville/Knox County MPC
*Karen Estes	Community Action Committee for Barbara Monty
*Chris Jenkins	Town of Farragut for Darryl Smith
*Leslie Johnson	Lenoir City
*Steve King	City of Knoxville
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Mike Patterson	ETHRA for Gary Holiway
*Pat Phillips	Loudon County
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County for Dwight Van de Vate
*Melissa Roberson	Knoxville Area Transit
*Blake Sartin	Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority
*Andrew Sonner	City of Alcoa
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Nathan Benditz	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Amy Brooks	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Paul Misticawi	TrafficCast
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Kevin Tilbury	Gresham Smith & Partners
Jim Ullrich	Citizen
Anne Wallace	City of Knoxville
Bob Whetsel	City of Knoxville
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

***voting members**

Determination of Quorum

1. Approval of December 14, 2010, minutes

Presenter: John Lamb, Chair

Attachment #1 - December 14, 2010, TPO Technical Committee minutes

A motion was made by Blake Sartin and seconded by Pat Phillips to approve the December 14th minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Election of Officers

Presenter: John Lamb, Chair

Attachment #2 – List of past Officers

The Bylaws of the Technical Committee require an annual election of officers. This involves the 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. Chair John Lamb has served two one-year terms. Jeff said the packet included a list of past Chairs and Vice Chairs. John Lamb called for nominations from the floor for the position of Chair. Andrew Sonner was nominated for Chair. John asked if there were any other nominations. Seeing there were no other nominations John called for an official nomination of Andrew Sonner for Chair and a vote.

Cindy Pionke nominated Andrew Sonner for Chair seconded by Pat Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

John Lamb called for nominations from the floor for the position of Vice Chair. Leslie Johnson was nominated for Vice Chair. John asked if there were any other nominations. Seeing there were no other nominations John called for an official nomination of Leslie Johnson for Vice Chair and for a vote.

Brian Boone nominated Leslie Johnson for Vice Chair seconded by Andrew Sonner. The motion carried unanimously.

John Lamb noted it was the procedure that he would finish the meeting as Chair and that Andrew would take over as Chair at the next Technical Committee meeting.

3. Recommend Approval of Amendments to the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program

Presenter: Katie Habgood

Attachment #3a-3e – List of projects to be amended into the TIP (one additional TIP project handed out at meeting).

Katie Habgood discussed each project and told why it was needed to be added to the TIP. She also distributed an additional project for Lenoir City that came in after the agenda was sent out.

- a. Add TIP Project #2011-075 (Jackson Ave bridge replacement at Gay St). This project is funded with Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement funds for local projects (BRR-L) and will either replace or rehab the two ramps leading to the Gay St Bridge along Jackson Ave in Knoxville. **Attachment #3a.**
- b. Add TIP Project #2011-076 (Creekwood Park Blvd Sidewalk and Lighting Improvements) with CEI cost overruns funded with L-STP (\$17,800 Fed/\$2,600 Local). **Attachment #3b.**

- c. Add TIP Project #2011-077 (Harrison Road). This project is a roadway widening for turn lanes, drainage improvements, sidewalks and lighting on Harrison Rd and Kingston St near Lenoir City High School. This improvement project was previously in the TIP as Project #2008-020. **Attachment #3c.**
- d. Amend TIP Project #2011-053 (Loudon County, SR-73 at SR-2 (US-11) to East of Little Tennessee River) to add more NHS funds to the construction phase of the project. This amendment is at TDOT's request. **Attachment #3d.**
- e. Add TIP Project # 2011-078 Knox County Traffic Equipment control Upgrade Hardin Valley/Pellissippi Parkway. This project was previously in the TIP as Project #2008-150. (CMAQ- \$215,000) **Attachment #3e.**
- f. Amend TIP Project #2011-063, Lenoir City Downtown Streetscape. Add High Priority Project (HPP) funds in the amount of \$119,970 for PE-N/PE-D/RW/CN for FY 2011.

A motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by Cindy Pionke to recommend approval of a resolution to the Executive Board to amend the TIP. The motion carried unanimously.

Katie Habgood noted Congress was once again considering a rescission of federal transportation dollars as they wrestle with the budget. The TPO still has a lot of STP funds available. It would be in our best interest if we try to move these projects along. Any balance could be subject to a rescission. There is currently \$21 million programmed in the TIP but this funding is not officially obligated. It must be obligated to be safe from rescission. Everyone on the Technical Committee needs to work towards getting more projects obligated. Katie will send the project status information to the members. Once STP projects are contracted between the local government and the state the TPO has typically been out of the information loop. The TPO staff is trying to become more involved and track these projects.

4. Review of Social Media Policy

Presenter: Katie Habgood

Attachment #4 – Examples of Social Media Policies

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way many communicate and obtain information online, the TPO will be using social media to reach a broader audience. Katie Habgood stated that TPO is behind in its use of social media as a way to inform the public and to receive information back on TPO plans and activities. The TPO is on Facebook. We have discovered it is a good way to communicate. Katie noted that TPO was working on developing a social media policy. Several examples of social media policy were handed out as part of the packet. Katie asked for the Technical Committee to review the policies and to let us know what issues they might have or to convey experiences that they may have through their agencies to help the TPO develop its policy.

Andrew Sonner asked if you receive public comment from someone is it public record? Katie said the issue of how to handle the comments the public makes on these various forms of social media is an issue. An important function of the overall TPO Public Involvement Plan is to keep accurate account of public comments and the TPO also needs to be able to respond to comments. So, the issue of how to handle official comments and requirements of public record laws need to be explored. Some governmental agencies do not consider statements left on social media, such

as Facebook, as official comments. They redirect citizens who want to make an official comment on the public record to another place on the website that can be better structured to handle comments. Angie Midgett stated that her understanding is that if the Nashville MPO receives a complaint about something like a traffic issue, their staff will contact the person and give them the appropriate agency contact information. Jeff Welch stated one challenge of using social media is that the information would have to be kept up-to-date. As the TPO explores the use of social media we will have to look at our resources.

5. Federal Funding and Legislation

Presenter: Jeff Welch

Jeff Welch stated that Congress is discussing ways to cut the budget including reducing transportation funding. The Highway Trust Fund is already running low on funding. There has not been a gas tax increase in some time so no new funding is flowing into the Fund. The House side of Congress is being more aggressive and is further along than the Senate in developing its budget plans. Jeff is hopeful the Senate may temper the budget cuts. Right now, different sources are projecting an approximate 17 percent cut in transportation programs. There is also the real possibility that Congress may rescind funds that have not been obligated. One proposed Senate bill would cancel all earmarks and any projects that have not been obligated. Representative Mica (R-Florida) is head of the Transportation Subcommittee, which are holding meetings now. The Secretary of the Department of Transportation Ray LaHood thinks they will pass the transportation bill, but it will be at lower levels, probably a 15-17 percent reduction. The current continuing budget resolution goes through March 4th.

New TDOT Commissioner John Schroer made his presentation to Governor Bill Haslam. There are no general tax dollars in TDOT's budget. A 15-17 percent cut in federal funding to the TDOT budget would represent approximately a \$150 million in funding.

6. Demonstration of "BlueTOAD" Travel Time Data Collection Technology

Presenter: Mike Conger (Introduction) and Paul Misticawi from TrafficCast (Presenter).

Mike Conger introduced Paul Misticawi from TrafficCast who presented on a new technology called BlueTOAD. This technology allows for anonymous gathering of travel data in real time along roadways or corridors by tracking Bluetooth devices. Bluetooth is wireless technology used to transfer data between two devices. Bluetooth is commonly found in cell phones, mobile phone headsets, computers, and cars. BlueTOAD devices can be set up along a corridor and track the different devices that pass between the monitors. If the same Bluetooth device address is detected at different monitors then data on time and speed can be computed.

The presentation included a demonstration of the product's features based on an actual installation of the devices in Knoxville along Cumberland Avenue. One reason Cumberland Avenue was selected as a demonstration is that Cumberland Avenue is set to go under construction. By monitoring Cumberland Avenue before and after the construction a better

assessment of the projects impact can be made. Mr. Misticawi says his company has worked with various companies and governments dealing with traffic data nationwide. The monitor tracks data 24 hours a day. This is anonymous so you do not know who owns the phone or device.

7. Other business

Executive Board Meeting, February 23rd at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

Technical Committee Meeting, March 8th at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

Jeff Welch stated that TDOT is working with the Federal Highway Administration on developing a template for preparing a Needs Assessment Report. The Needs Assessment would be completed before a Transportation Planning Report (TPR) is done. TDOT is hoping that by completing the Needs Assessment they can begin to move projects from concepts to construction more quickly. Knoxville will be part of a pilot program. TDOT will perform a Needs Assessment Report on Oak Ridge Highway (from Schaad to Byington Solway). This section of roadway is programmed to be widened in the future. TDOT is looking for examples statewide that represent road projects in different settings. This road project is typical of one being constructed in a suburban/urban area. TDOT is also using the Pellissippi Parkway project (from Dutchtown Road to the Anderson County line at the Solway Bridge) as another example. Both of these projects have been identified as roadways needing access management and interchanges. On February 23rd there will be a meeting for agency stakeholders to meet with the consultants to look at the corridors and discuss typical data needs and possible issues surrounding a Needs Assessment. TDOT hopes to have a draft template and report by March or April. A Needs Assessment Report can be done by local jurisdictions.

Angie Midgett stated that TDOT hopes that the template will help local governments and TPOs funnel information to TDOT in a better format. Jeanne Stevens of TDOT will be at the Executive Board meeting to discuss this issue in greater detail with the Board. Jeff stated that invitations will be sent out for the meeting on February 23 which will be held at the National Transportation Research Center off of Hardin Valley Drive.

Jeff announced that regrettably Katie Habgood is leaving the TPO and moving back to Florida the end of February. This is her last Technical Committee meeting. Katie has accepted a job with a consulting firm. Katie accomplished a lot during her tenure at the TPO including preparing the Mobility Plan and the TIP. The TPO Staff appreciates her commitment over the past 5 years.

8. Public comment

There was no public comment.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.