

TPO Technical Committee Minutes
August 11, 2015
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, TN

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on August 11, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville, TN. Chair Cindy Pionke presided and called the meeting to order. It was determined that there was a quorum. Committee members were asked to introduce themselves.

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| *Brian Boone | City of Maryville |
| *Don Brown | ETDD, <i>for Terry Bobrowski</i> |
| *Beth Collins | City of Lenoir City |
| *Houston Daugherty | Anderson County |
| *Karen Estes | Knox County CAC Transit |
| *Gerald Green | Metropolitan Planning Commission |
| *Jim Hagerman | City of Knoxville |
| *John Lamb | Blount County |
| *Jeff Ownby | Sevier County |
| *Mike Patterson | ETHRA, <i>for Gary Holiway</i> |
| *Pat Phillips | City of Loudon and Loudon County |
| *Cindy Pionke | Knox County |
| *Jack Qualls | TDOT, Region 1 |
| *Melissa Roberson | KAT |
| *Blake Sartin | Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority |
| *Darryl Smith | Town of Farragut |
| *Andrew Sonner | City of Alcoa |
| TPO Staff | |
| Partner Agency Staff | |
| Members of the Public | |

***voting members**

Cindy Pionke welcomed and introduced Gerald Green, the new Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

Pat Phillips addressed Committee Chair Pionke and requested an addition to today's Agenda.

Pat Phillips moved that the Committee accept an addition to the Agenda which would add 3 CMAQ-funded projects to the FT 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program in the Cities of Alcoa, Knoxville and Loudon. The grants were recently awarded, and he noted the projects are obligated on a first come, first served basis. **The Motion was seconded by Jim Hagerman. The Motion carried unanimously.**

Committee Chair Pionke then noted consideration of a recommendation to amend the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program to add these 3 projects will now be heard as Agenda Item #8.

1. Motion to Approve June 9, 2015 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of June 9, 2015 TPO Technical Committee Minutes.

A Motion was made by Jim Hagerman and seconded by Blake Sartin to approve the June 9, 2015 TPO Technical Committee meeting Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously

2. **Motion to Recommend Adoption of the Draft FY 2016-2017 Transportation Planning Work Program**
Item Summary: TDOT, FHWA and FTA have approved the Work Program for consistencies with state and federal regulations. Staff recommends approval.

Discussion: Jeff Welch touched on the Program which has been before the Committee previously and noted staff are requesting the Committee's recommendation for adoption to the Executive Board. He briefly noted some of the Program highlights further noting a large portion of the document reflects work that involves ongoing planning efforts as required by our federal partners and which reflects their Priority Areas.

A Motion was made by Jim Hagerman and seconded by Gerald Green to recommend adoption of the Draft FY 2016-2017 Transportation Planning Work Program. The Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Motion to Recommend Approval of an Amendment to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program**
Item Summary: Staff recommends approval.

Discussion: Bryan Berry noted the proposed Amendment reflects resurfacing and safety improvements along a 5.2 mile section of Buttermilk Rd. in Loudon County for FY 2016 with a project total of \$795,000.

A Motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by John Lamb to recommend approval of the Amendment to the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. The Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Motion to Recommend Endorsement of Long Range Mobility Plan 2040 Population Projections**
Item Summary: A follow up to the preliminary review of population projections that were presented to the Technical Committee in May 2015. The TPO staff has further reviewed various sources of information and has prepared a staff recommendation to endorse/reaffirm the projections used in the previous Mobility Plan update and also used for PlanET process.

Discussion: Mike Conger noted that staff updates the Mobility Plan every 4 years as is required under federal regulations. A first step is to review projections of employment and population growth. These projections feed into our regional Travel Demand Model, which forecasts the level of traffic demand in the future and which is a major tool used to evaluate deficiencies of the roadway system. He pointed out that the projections reviewed cover the 6 counties in the TPO planning area. He reviewed the projected growth for each county individually as projected by the TPO (for the previous Mobility Plan and utilized for PlanET), U.T. Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and Woods and Poole Economics. He also reviewed the pros and cons of each projection source utilized during this process. He concluded noting staff recommends using the TPO Projections for consistency with PlanET, which is providing the backbone for the Plan Update, in addition to the projections being produced specifically for the Knoxville Region. Staff do not feel there have been any major changes in these projections in the last 3 years that would cause them to be invalidated. The complete presentation is available online can be found here:

http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/tech/aug15/pop_projections.pdf

A Motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by John Lamb to recommend endorsement of the Long Range Mobility Plan 2040 Population Projections [as prepared and endorsed by staff]. The Motion carried unanimously.

5. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on the status of applications received following the recent call for projects, as well as local TAP funding overall.

Discussion: Ellen Zavisca gave a brief overview of the history of the TAP Program and noted this funding is designated for bike/pedestrian projects and Safe Routes to School programs. She noted the TPO has now received 3 years of TAP funding totaling just under \$2.2 million. The initial call for projects was in 2013, allocating 2 years' worth of projects. Some of those funds remain unspent for various reasons. The FY 2013 funds need to be obligated by September of 2016 (FY 16). She also noted they received 2 applications for the most recent call for projects, one for bike/ped facilities in the in City of Knoxville and the other for bike/ped improvements at 2 intersections in the City of Oak Ridge. Both staff and TDOT have reviewed these projects, and some changes are needed before they are ready to be included in the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. Ms. Zavisca then reviewed the funds received, obligated and potentially left on the table, given the length of time it takes to get projects off the ground. She encouraged Committee members to identify projects which could be obligated quickly such as Safe Routes to School programming, further encouraging members to explore options to partner with other jurisdictions/entities. Ms. Zavisca clarified that staff are attempting to obligate the money already received first to reduce the risk of losing funds already reviewed. She concluded by asking Committee members to contact her with any potential projects.

6. Air Quality Update

Item Summary: The Knoxville Region was recently officially re-designated to Attainment status for Ozone by EPA. The TPO staff will provide an overview of the impacts of this announcement as well as an update on other current air quality topics.

Discussion: Mike Conger noted that on July 13th the EPA released official approval of our region's request to be re-designated to attainment for the ozone standard. He noted after the required 30-day waiting period, our region will be "in attainment" on August 12th. He gave a brief overview of air quality regulations and what pollutants the EPA regulates. He then noted the issue our region has dealt with has been the Ground Level Ozone and Particulate Matter (PM2.5) standards. Mr. Conger noted the EPA reviews the standards every 5 years to ensure they are still protective of health and the environment and if the standards are lowered it can result in being re-designated non-attainment again. He did note this was the first time all of the counties in our planning area have been in attainment for Ozone since June of 2004. Being in attainment reduces some of the requirements that are placed on industries that want to expand or locate here. He then noted that our region was still subject to transportation conformity because it now transitions to a "maintenance area" for up to 20 years out to 2036. Mr. Conger also noted the EPA is projected to lower the standard for Ozone in October of this year and touched on the possible ramifications for our region. The complete presentation is available on line can be found here: http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/tech/aug15/air_quality_update.pdf

7. Federal Funding Update

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on the status of the federal funding short-term extension and long-term funding. See attached overview from the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted Congress came through with a 3-month extension for federal funds for the Highway Trust Fund and public transportation through the end of October. There are enough changes in this extension such that enough money has been provided that could potentially fund the Highway Trust Fund and Transit through the end of December.

He further noted the Senate passed a 6-year bill, however it only has enough funding for 3 of those years. The House passed a 3-month extension and indicated they were planning to develop a long-term bill when they return from recess in September. From a statewide perspective, Governor Haslam and Commissioner Schroer are undertaking a 15-city community tour to talk about the need for investment in transportation infrastructure. They began last week in Memphis.

8. Motion to Recommend Approval of Amendments to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) [adding 3 CMAQ projects].

Item Summary: Jeff Welch noted these proposed Amendments were received after the Agenda had been established for today's meeting. The notices were sent out to local governments at the end of July. He then reviewed each of the 3 projects for the record, all to be amended by adding them to the TIP:

1. Maryville-Alcoa Central Traffic Operations: \$2,675,000 of CMAQ funds over 2 years, \$155,000 in FY 2016 and \$2,520,000 in FY 2017, for the Maryville-Alcoa Advanced Traffic Management System Phase 2 Project to upgrade signal system communications and equipment along US411/US 321, US 129 and SR 33.
2. The City of Knoxville: \$1,985,000 of CMAQ funds over 2 years, \$260,000 in FY 2016 and \$1,725,000 in FY 2017, to expand the City's Advanced Traffic Management System along Chapman Highway.
3. The City of Loudon: \$1,342,400 of CMAQ funds over 2 years, \$108,000 in FY 2016 and \$1,235,400 in FY 2017, for the Loudon Traffic Flow Improvement Project to replace outdated infrastructure at four signalized intersections, including updating vehicle detection. The Project will also provide signal system communication and coordination infrastructure and signal timing at 7 signalized intersections.

Discussion: Mr. Welch noted these proposed Amendments will be sent through the Interagency Consultation process, which requires a 14-day review period, further noting the tight timeline leading up to the Executive Board meeting later this month. Mr. Welch stated staff supports the addition of these 3 projects to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

A Motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by Jim Hagerman to recommend approval of Amendments to the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. The Motion carried unanimously.

8. Other Business

- Cindy Pionke noted Jeff Welch celebrated 30 years with the TPO in July.
- Governor Haslam's Transportation Funding Tour Across Tennessee
 - The Governor will be visiting Knoxville and Lenoir City.
- TPO staff, City of Alcoa officials and community members will meet with representatives from Smart Growth America on September 1st and 2nd to learn more about innovative zoning, a workshop that is part of a free, grant-funded technical assistance program and which will provide citizens and planners with tools and techniques to begin to create a vision for Alcoa's future growth. The first day is open to the public and will take place at 6:00 p.m. at the Alcoa Service Center located at 725 Universal St., Alcoa, TN 37701.
- Executive Board meeting Wednesday, August 26, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.
- Technical Committee meeting Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

10. Adjournment

A Motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by Jim Hagerman to adjourn. The Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.