

**TPO Executive Board
9 a.m., May 28, 2008
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on May 28 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building, Knoxville, TN. Mayor Bill Haslam, Chair of the Executive Board, presided.

*Mark Brown	Vice Mayor, City of Knoxville
*Bill Haslam	Mayor, City of Knoxville
*Dale Hurst	for Mayor Matt Brookshire, Lenoir City
*John Lamb	for Mayor Jerry Cunningham, Blount County
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Mike Ragsdale	Mayor, Knox County
*Darryl Smith	for Mayor Eddy Ford, Town of Farragut
*Tom Strickland	Knox County Commission Chair
*Larry Waters	Mayor, Sevier County
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
Whitney Ray-Dawson	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
John Fairstein	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Barbara Kelly	Community Action Committee
Steve King	City of Knoxville
Tameka Macon	Federal Highway Administration
Barbara Monty	Community Action Committee
Jeremy Pearson	City of Alcoa
Cindy Pionke	Knox County Engineering
Tina Rolan	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Robert Shaw	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
Virginia Shoemaker	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

*Voting Member

Determination of Quorum

1. Approval of February 27, 2008 Minutes

Presenter: Bill Haslam, Chair

Background: Attachment #1 – February 27, 2008, TPO Executive Board Minutes.

A motion was made by Mayor Don Mull and seconded by Dale Hurst to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval of Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation improvement Program (TIP)

The TPO Technical Committee recommends approval.

Presenter: TPO Staff

Attachment #2 – Resolution.

a. Item Summary: Add new project TIP #2008-123: KAT Capital Improvements. The capital Job Access allocation comes from a 2006 statewide Job Access earmarked money that can only be used for capital.

Background: Attachment #2a.

b. Item Summary: TDOT requests change funding for TIP #2008-105: increase FY2008 High Priority Project funding and local funding from \$320,000 Federal/\$80,000 local to \$600,000 Federal/\$150,000 local.

Background: Attachment #2b.

c. Item Summary: TDOT requests the TPO add new TIP project 2008-124: Freeway Service Patrols bucket. These funds will go to the operation of the motorist assistance service. \$944,000 Federal STP/\$236,000 state STP for FY2008, \$1,038,400 Federal STP/\$259,600 state STP for FY2009, \$1,142,240 Federal STP/\$285,560 state STP for FY2010, \$1,256,464 Federal STP/\$314,116 state STP for FY2011. **Background: Attachment #2c.**

d. Item Summary: TDOT requests the TPO amend TIP project 2008-068 (Highway Safety Improvement Program) to add \$45,000 STP/\$5,000 local for FY 2008. **Background: Attachment #2d.**

e. Item Summary: Knox County requests drop project TIP 2008-036: Oak Ridge Highway/Ball Road/Beaver Ridge Road traffic signal. **Background: Attachment #2e.**

f. Item Summary: Amend project TIP 2008-093: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Phase II Marketing. Marketing efforts include free fares, bus decals and advertising. These funds are flexed from FHWA to FTA. Amend FY2008 to \$232,400 Federal FTA/\$58,100 state. **Background: Attachment #2f.**

g. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-089: KAT - SmartFix 40 -15-20 minute service on Magnolia Avenue, Kingston Pike and Broadway corridors.

Background: Attachment #2g.

h. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-090: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Guaranteed Ride Home, emergency rides for KAT commuters during the SmartFix 40 project. **Background: Attachment #2h.**

i. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-091: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Capital Investments. This project was to include enhanced transit amenities at Park and Ride locations, neighborhood connector pick-ups and bus leases to accommodate the new service improvements. **Background: Attachment #2i.**

j. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-092: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Express Service to the University of Tennessee and downtown from two outlying locations (Strawberry Plains and Halls) as an alternative for commuters coming downtown. **Background: Attachment #2j.**

k. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-094: KAT - SmartFix 40 - neighborhood connectors. This project was to provide a shuttle linking the affected neighborhoods (Fourth and Gill, Emory Place and the Old City) with downtown. **Background: Attachment #2k.**

l. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-095: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Smart Trips support. **Background: Attachment #2l.**

m. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-096: KAT - SmartFix 40 - TPO evaluation. This project was to evaluate the SmartFix 40 Congestion Reduction programs. **Background: Attachment #2m.**

n. Item Summary: Drop project TIP 2008-097: KAT - SmartFix 40 - Vanpool program. This project was to reinstitute a vanpool program as an additional drive-alone alternative. **Background: Attachment #2n.**

A motion was made by Mayor Mike Ragsdale and seconded by Vice Mayor Mark Brown to approve the TIP amendments. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom (NF) Grants

The TPO Technical Committee recommends approval.

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The TPO is responsible for deciding how to distribute Knoxville's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) JARC and NF grant funds. The notice of availability was advertised in local papers and notices were mailed to a variety of agencies. A committee reviewed the applications. The following projects are recommended for funding: (1) Knox County CAC Transit (JARC grant for \$626,616) for demand response service to get people to work or job training activities; (2) Sertoma Center (JARC grant for \$30,000) for two sedans to carry clients to work; (3) Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office On Aging (NF grant for \$250,000) multi-service grant to assist those people who are disabled. This includes funding (a) a volunteer program to provide escorted transportation, (b) a Mobility Manager to provide "one-on-one" assistance to help clients find the most appropriate transportation service, and (c) demand response transportation for needs beyond medical and job related. All grants must be matched.

Background: Attachment #3.

Doug Burton, TPO staff, reported that the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom (NF) grant application and review process was complete. The TPO in coordination with the Knoxville Human Services Transportation Coordination Committee (HSTCC) held a call for projects to be funded with Knoxville's allocation of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) JARC and NF grant funds. The grants' availability was advertised in several newspapers, including the Knoxville News Sentinel and The Enlightener. The information was posted on the TPO website. Approximately 100 flyers were sent to non-profit organizations, social service agencies, and public and private transportation companies.

The TPO made all JARC and New Freedom funding available from FY 2006 through FY 2009. The HSTCC received two JARC and one New Freedom proposals. After reviewing the project proposals, the HSTCC is asking the TPO Technical Committee to recommend to the Executive Board to approve the following grants.

- Knox County CAC Transit – A \$626,616 JARC grant to be matched for a total of \$1,253,232 of operating services to carry passengers to work or job related activities. This grant will provide service over two years. This project includes anticipated FY 2009 grant funds. The TPO will prepare a contract that will not allow Knox County CAC Transit to expend the FY 2009 funds until they receive a written notice to proceed from the TPO. The TPO will not prepare this letter until the FY 2009 funds have been officially approved by FTA.
- Sertoma Center – A \$30,000 JARC capital grant to be matched for a total of \$37,500. The funding will be used to purchase two sedans to help carry their clients who are disabled to work.
- Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) Office on Aging – A \$250,000 New Freedom grant to be matched for a total of \$386,720 to provide capital and operating services, to help those persons who are disabled, gain greater access to the transportation system. The project includes an innovative program where volunteers will be recruited to provide assisted transportation services for those individuals who require an escort to medical appointments and essential errands. Also, a mobility navigator will be employed to help individuals gain access to the appropriate transportation services. The mobility navigator will recruit and train volunteers to assist first time riders in learning the transportation system. Finally, the project includes expanded hours of service through an agreement with Knox County CAC Transit during evenings and weekends for non-essential trips, such as access to community events, plays, concerts, movies, and special events, like expos and public meetings.

In anticipation of the JARC and New Freedom grant program, placeholder sheets were put into the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). FTA has reviewed the TIP and requires only that the program of projects be approved by the TPO Executive Board. A summary table showing grant allocation and matching funds requested was distributed. It was noted that on Tuesday before the Executive Board meeting the TPO had received word verbally from the TDOT Office of Multimodal Transportation Resources that they would provide part of the local match.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Brown and seconded by Tom Strickland to approve the Job Access and Reverse Commute and the New Freedom grant funding for Knox County CAC Transit, Sertoma Center and Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Submittal of a letter to TDOT requesting continued matching funds for Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) Transit

The TPO Technical Committee recommends approval.

Presenter: TPO & Knox County CAC Transit Staff

Item Summary: Part of the capital and operations budget for Knox County CAC Transit is funded through grants from the Federal Transit Administration and the TDOT Office of Multimodal Transportation Resources (MTR). In the past, the Office of MTR has provided part of the local match as it does for other transit agencies across the state. Recently, the Office of MTR is re-examining which agencies should receive funding support. Knox County CAC Transit asks the Executive Board to write a letter of support recognizing Knox County CAC Transit's importance to the community and asking the Office of MTR to maintain its past support of matching funds for Knox County CAC Transit programs.

Background: Knox County CAC Transit provides a variety of public demand response transportation services carrying over 250,000 riders a year. Comparatively statewide, only Nashville's transit system carries more demand response passengers.

Jeff Welch stated that recent changes at the TDOT Office of Multimodal Transportation Resources (MTR) have that department examining their financial commitments and their process for distributing transit funds statewide. Up until this week it was not known if Office of MTR would participate as a matching partner in Knox County CAC Transit Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom grants. The Office of MTR had participated in matching transit grants in past years. Just the day before the Executive Board meeting the TPO received a verbal commitment that MTR would match the Knox County CAC Transit grants. The Executive Board appreciated TDOT's commitment but felt it was important to proceed to write a letter stating that Knox County CAC Transit was an important service provider in the Knoxville region and TDOT Office of MTR should continue to provide matching funds to Knox County CAC Transit grants.

Mayor Ragsdale echoed the Executive Board's position that Knox County CAC Transit plays an important role in providing transportation services to the Knoxville area. He also noted that Knox County CAC Transit often helps those in our society that needs transportation the most, the low income, our seniors, and the disabled. Mayor Ragsdale thanked Jeff Welch and Doug Burton for working hard with Knox County CAC Transit. He added the coordination efforts between Knox County CAC Transit, KAT and ETHRA should continue. He asked that the TPO staff help facilitate this coordination.

A motion was made by Mayor Ragsdale and seconded by Tom Strickland to send a letter of support for Knox County CAC Transit to TDOT. The letter should request that TDOT continue providing matching funds for Knox County CAC Transit grants. The letter should also make TDOT aware that the coordination between Knox County CAC Transit, KAT, and ETHRA will continue and TPO staff will work with those providers to be sure the most efficient transportation services are provided to this area. The motion passed with TDOT abstaining.

5. Results of Federal Certification Review

Presenter: TPO Staff and Tameka Macon of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Item Summary: FHWA and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) conducted a review of the TPO planning process in February. The results of the review came with no corrective actions and three recommendations.

Background: Attachment #4.

Jeff Welch introduced Tameka Macon from FHWA, who was the lead for the TPO certification review. She has submitted the report from FHWA and FTA. The certification was completed in February, and the TPO had no corrective actions. There were three recommendations: (1) consider updating the Work Program every 2 years; (2) encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness of the Congestion Management process; and (3) encouraged to continue utilizing flex funding for transit capital for the travel demand model, which includes the Lakeway TPO.

Robert Shaw, 6705 Cate Road, stated that the TPO should evaluate the effectiveness of the congestion management process. He asked how this will be done, and Jeff Welch stated he has asked FHWA to assist in finding best practices in evaluating the congestion management process. Staff will use tools to update the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Jeff stated that this is an ongoing process, and we look at travel time and intersections. Mayor Haslam asked if there are national standards related to this. Jeff stated that the congestion management regulations have been updated, and FHWA is reviewing them.

6. FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program Draft (UPWP)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff has prepared a draft 2009 UPWP for the upcoming fiscal year beginning October 2008. Staff is requesting one last time for any special planning studies or projects. Also, the recent Federal rescission resulted in a \$79,000 cut in our planning funds for fiscal year 2009.

Background: Attachment #5.

Jeff Welch stated the TPO is required to prepare an annual work program and Tameka Macon of FHWA has suggested it be updated every 2 years. It takes a year to update it. It will take a major effort to update the Long Range Mobility Plan by June 2009. The consultant, Mike Brown, who is working on the Urban Land Use Allocation Model, looks at availability of the land where people live and work and steep slopes and wetlands. This model includes nine counties. Public meetings are being held. We are looking at the relocation of the transit center, converting to rail in the future and bicycle/pedestrian studies. TPO received an \$80,000 reduction in planning dollars, and we are still expecting rescissions at the federal level. Vice Mayor Brown asked how we are going to replace the fund balance. Jeff stated that staff has discussed increase in revenues.

Robert Shaw asked about Section G, Air Quality. The impact of new air quality standards should be assessed. Mike Conger, TPO staff, stated that we are trying to keep up with the new air quality standards. Staff is attending training sessions. The Environmental Protection Agency reassess every 5 years or so. Jeff Welch stated that we have to be sure that the LRTP meets the air quality standards. Mr. Shaw asked if there has there been any modeling about the new air quality standards and how serious the constraints are to meet the new standards. Mike stated that Knox County Air Quality Management determines the air quality and reduction studies, and the TPO staff provides information to them.

Mayor Larry Waters stated that he serves on the Air Pollution Board and that it is going to take a national standard for us to meet the standard. The new standard will make all the large cities nonattainment. Mayor Don Mull stated that when a city meets the standards, the government raises the standards.

7. Projects submitted for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funding

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The TPO received eight new project applications and two existing multi-year project applications totaling \$4.2 million. The TPO anticipates receiving \$1.6 million in CMAQ funds.

Background: Attachment #6

Jeff Welch stated that allocations continue to go down. We cannot make a recommendation because we do not know what the funding will be. The Technical Committee is looking at projects. Mayor Mark Brown asked if the staff prioritizes the projects. Jeff stated that we present a spreadsheet that looks at the cost and amount of pollution reduction. Each project will have the cost and reductions included.

8. Regional Mobility Plan Update

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff will present the Mobility Plan's Public Participation approach including dates for the first round of public workshops and a project timeline.

Background: The next update of the region's long range plan is due in May of 2009.

Katie Habgood, TPO staff, stated that the Mobility Plan public meetings have begun. She distributed list of meeting dates and locations. An online survey has had over 500 responses. In August she will give the Executive Board the results of the meetings. A draft will be finished in January 2009, and the plan will be adopted in May.

Vice Mayor Brown asked if the people who come sign in and if the same people move from workshop to workshop in different areas of town. Katie responded that there is a sign-in sheet at each meeting, and no one is prevented from attending more than one meeting. Jeff Welch stated that we are trying to get on neighborhood agendas to present the plan. Mayor Waters stated that the people of Sevier County are concerned about Chapman Highway. The state has funded adding a turn lane through Seymour. They are concerned that the turn lane will stop at the county line, and they think it should go all the way to Knox County.

9. Report on May 2008 Smart Trips month

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff will report on the highly successful Smart Trips month that is coming to a conclusion at the end of May.

Tina Rolen, TPO staff, distributed items concerning Smart Trips month. Smart Trips is to promote alternatives to driving alone to have a positive impact on air quality. There has been a 44% increase in participation from 2007, adding 250 new members in May. A media campaign has been launched that encompasses print and television ads. Companies are helping by getting their employees to sign up. We encourage people to carpool, ride bicycles and busses. May was Smart Trips month. Events included carpooling, riding the bus, walking, biking and pedal versus medal. Undrivers' licenses were distributed for the month of May for participants to receive discounts at area merchants each day in May and free bus fare on Tuesdays during the month. Commuters won awards for their participation.

Mayor Mike Ragsdale stated that he applauds the programs. He stated that the Park and Ride locations do not have enough parking. Tina stated she has been working with Belinda Woodiel-Brill at KAT to resolve the problem in Farragut. John Lamb asked what it would take to get Blount County, Maryville and Alcoa included in this program because he would be interested. Tina has talked to Ruby Tuesday in Maryville. Dale Hurst stated he would also like to see Loudon and Lenoir City included.

10. Other Business

- **An Overview and Comparison of Tennessee Environmental Evaluation Report (TEER) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Attachment #7a and letter from John Fairstein #7b.**

Jeff Welch stated that the audience at May 13 Technical Committee meeting wanted a comparison of TEER and NEPA. Jeff has forwarded a letter from John Fairstein letter to TDOT's environmental department. John Fairstein, 11205 Sam Lee Road, distributed color copy of the TEER and NEPA charts showing his comments. He has concerns about some of the items that are not required but TDOT follows. We are not getting enough information from TDOT. He asked what endeavor means. He asked how responses to environmental issues are prioritized. He is a citizen, but he looks to the Executive Board to ask questions of TDOT. He asked what was going to done about air quality and sinkholes in the TEER process.

- **Technical Committee Meeting, June 10 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.**
- **Executive Board Meeting, August 27 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.**
- **Knoxville Mobility Plan public workshops, May 27 – June 5, 2008.**

11. Public Comment

Robert Shaw stated that toll roads have been discussed lately. If a road is a federal road and becomes a toll road as a state project would it be moved from NEPA to the TEER process? Jeff Welch responded that if a road is a current federal highway the NEPA process would apply.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.