

Attachment #1

**TPO Technical Committee
May 8, 2007
City/County Building
Small Assembly Room
Knoxville, TN**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on May 8 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.

*Drew Daruka	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Rich DesGroseilliers	Lakeway Area Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization
*Curtis Henry	Sevier County
*Buz Johnson	for Mark Donaldson Knoxville/Knox County MPC
*Steve King	City of Knoxville Engineering
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Jeremy Pearson	for Chris Hamby City of Alcoa
*Bruce Wuethrich	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
Arran Addington	Tennessee Department of Transportation
Monica Austin	City of Oak Ridge
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Whitney Ray Dawson	Citizen
Karen Estes	Knox County Community Action Committee
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
James Norris	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Cindy Pionke	Knox County Engineering
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Robert Shaw	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location (CABOL)
Shannon Tolliver	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Jim Ullrich	Citizen
Charlotte West	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 April 10, 2007 Minutes

Presenter: Darryl Smith, Chair

Item Summary: Approval of April 10, 2007, TPO Technical Committee minutes.

Background: Attachment #1 – April Minutes.

A motion was made by Bruce Wuethrich and seconded by Scott Poland to approve the April 10 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Recommend Approval of Amendments to the FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

a. Add Cumberland Avenue Corridor Plan (2006-129)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Add \$720,000 TCSP/\$180,000 local funds for FY 2007.

Background: The City of Knoxville is applying for Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program funds to fund a Streetscape Design and Engineering Plans, Fort Sanders Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan and Comprehensive Parking Study. **Attachment #2a.**

b. Add South Knoxville Waterfront Pedestrian Bridge (2006-130)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Add \$1,000,000 TCSP/\$20,000 local funds for FY 2007.

Background: The City of Knoxville is applying for Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program funds to fund design and engineering plans for a pedestrian bridge over the Tennessee River. **Attachment #2b.**

c. Amend Purchase of Six Para-transit Vehicles (2006-038)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Amend FY 2007 to \$264,000 Transit/\$33,000 local/\$33,000 state.

Background: The Knoxville/Knox County Community Action Committee requests that we amend Section 5310 capital assistance funds to purchase six para-transit vehicles. **Attachment #2c.**

d. Amend Improvements to Kingston Pk/Lovell Rd (2006-029)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Change local match to state match and move \$10,000 to departmental oversight.

Background: Kingston Pike is a state highway, and TDOT has agreed to provide the match. **Attachment #2d.**

e. Amend Middlebrook Pk, Hardin Valley to Cedar Bluff (2006-030)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Amend FY 2007 to add \$3,009,292 STP-TPO/\$752,323 state for Construction overrun, \$312,640 STP-TPO/\$78,160 state for ROW overrun and \$66,469 STP-TPO/\$16,617 state for engineering overrun. Total overrun cost is \$3,388,401 STP-TPO/\$847,100 state.

Background: The Tennessee Department of Tennessee and Knox County have requested that funds be added to cover these cost overruns. The funds will come from the STP-TPO balance of unprogrammed funds. **Attachment #2e. New 2e with revisions.**

f. Amend Purchase vans for CAC-5309 Funding (2006-040)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Amend FY 2007 to \$170,627 Transit/\$17,474 local/\$17,474 state funds for FY 2007 and \$232,400 Transit/\$23,800 State/\$23,800 local for FY 2008.

Background: The Knoxville/Knox County Community Action Committee is requesting that funds be added to FY 2007 and FY 2008 for the purchase of vans. **Attachment #2f.**

Shannon Tolliver, TPO staff, discussed the first two amendments. The City of Knoxville applied for Transportation, Community and System Preservation program grants and they are requesting that these be amended into the plan. Shannon passed out revised TIP sheets for item letter c, d, and e. These items have updated funding amounts. Additionally Shannon passed out another amendment to update the Project Contingency Overrun bucket (2006-027) because funds from that bucket are being transferred to Kingston Pk/Lovell Rd (2006-029).

A motion was made by Barbara Monty and seconded by Bruce Wuethrich to recommend approval of amendments to the FY 2006-2008 TIP to the Executive Board. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Appointments to the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The Technical Committee appoints members to the Bicycle Advisory Committee. The new appointments are Dave Penegar, Elle Colquitt and Monika Miller.

Background: Twelve citizens serve on the BAC and address bicycling issues and concerns as part of the coordinated intermodal transportation system.

Kelley Segars, TPO staff, stated that the BAC lost two members, and Elle Colquitt and Monika Miller would like to be on the committee.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Blake Sartin to approve Elle Colquitt and Monika Miller as new members of the BAC. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Recommend Approval of Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: SAFETEA-LU requires a Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan (HSTCP). The HSTCP identifies gaps in existing services, proposes strategies to help meet the identified gaps, examines ways services can be coordinated and outlines how Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom and Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities) funds will be distributed. With regard to funding distribution, the regulations call for an open project selection process that allows for all providers to put forth proposed services to be considered for funding. Part of the approval action is to designate the TPO as the designated recipient to receive these funds and manage the project selection process.

Background: Representatives from TPO, KAT, ETHRA, Knox County CAC, UT Commuter Pool, Smart Trips and TDOT began meeting in May 2006 to develop the HSTCP. Two plan-specific public meetings have been held, and surveys and questionnaires have been distributed.

Attachment #3.

Katie Habgood, TPO staff, discussed the Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan. She stated that the plan will help identify gaps in services. The providers will decide how the Job Access funds will be distributed. Doug Burton, TPO staff, chaired the meeting when the service providers met. Knox County will not get as much money as last year, and services will be provided with less money. One of the goals is to educate the citizens about transit services available.

A motion was made by Ted Newsom and seconded by Melissa Trevathan to recommend approval of the Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan to the Executive Board. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Draft Public Participation Plan

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Federal legislation passed in 2005 (SAFETEA-LU) requires some changes to the public participation process. These mandated changes place an increased emphasis on particular elements such as involving an expanded list of interested parties, increasing interagency consultation and emphasizing visualization techniques and electronically accessible information. TDOT is currently reviewing the draft plan.

Background: Attachment #4.

Katie Habgood stated that SAFETEA has required updates be made to the Public Participation Plan. Federal legislation requires that the plan focus on electronic distribution. It does not have to be approved this month. TDOT is reviewing it now, and then there will be a public comment period. Jeff Welch stated that one change that was made was the abolishment of the Urban Transportation Issues Committee to create a task force or working groups such as incident management, freight movement, bicycle, etc.

Jim Ullrich, 1003 Luttrell Street, stated that citizens do not feel a part of public meetings they attend, especially with only five minutes to speak. He suggested that people from UT's psychology department should have input in this plan. Since input is through the elected officials, he asked how they get the citizens suggestions. Citizens would like to know if the elected officials are working for them. He asked how the citizens' needs are established. The public should be involved at the beginning of building a road, not included after the placement of the road has been decided.

6. Tennessee Department of Transportation Toll Studies for East Tennessee

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Studies have been completed on the feasibility of creating two new Knoxville area roadways as toll ways. The Knoxville Regional Parkway (SR 475) and a corridor connecting I-40 to Gatlinburg were studied. The initial study indicates SR 475 as feasible while the Gatlinburg to I-40 corridor requires additional analysis. **Attachments #5a – SR 475 Conceptual Feasibility Report and #5b – Proposed Intra County Parkway Conceptual Feasibility Report.**

Background: States and communities throughout the country are pursuing options to build and maintain transportation facilities. Allowing toll roads is one option under consideration in Tennessee.

Jeff Welch stated that TDOT initiated a 25-year transportation plan and identified needs and deficiencies to develop a multimodal transportation plan. They identified more needs than there are funds available. TDOT met with a consultant to conduct studies on the possibility of three toll roads in Tennessee. They looked at proposed SR-475 as a toll facility from I-40/75 in Loudon County to I-40 in Sevier County. The consultant believes this facility has a reasonable expectation to be a toll road. The study further stated that the westerly leg of proposed SR-475 may be feasible as a toll facility by itself. The other feasibility study is a potential intra-county connector from I-40 north of Exit 407 to U.S. Hwy. 321 in Gatlinburg. The study determined that there was insufficient data to make a determination at this time.

Robert Shaw, 6705 Cate Road, stated that after reading the Wilbur Smith report on I-475, he thinks toll roads are a mistake because TDOT should be able to stay within their budget without adding toll roads. He asked how so much study could be going on for I-475 east when it is not even in the Transportation Improvement Program or the Long Range Transportation Plan. Jeff Welch stated that some several years ago and a very preliminary route was sketched out on maps. Mr. Shaw asked for a copy of the January 2007 detailed financial report. He stated that he is disappointed this group did not voice their opinions about toll roads. Darryl Smith stated that toll roads have worked in other states, and federal funding is not covering our requirements for roads. Jeff stated that there is considerable interest by private investors in public infrastructure as investment opportunities.

Martha Arnett, 2416 E. Gallaher Ferry Road, stated that the beltway started out as a bypass, then a beltway and is now regional parkway. She asked how Wilbur Smith did the feasibility study. She stated she is against toll roads. She asked where her comments go from this meeting. Jeff Welch stated that various staff members in TDOT receive copies of our minutes. Bruce Wuethrich asked why she is opposed to toll roads. She is opposed because they are expensive to travel on.

Mr. Shaw answered Bruce Wuethrich's question regarding why he is opposed to toll roads. Making I-475 a toll road is contrary to the plans for this road. It is supposed to be a bypass.

Jim Ullrich, 1003 Luttrell, asked why TDOT is talking about building a road from I-40 to Gatlinburg to be connected from I-475. We have an opportunity to do something different, which is called intracounty parkway. Sevier County does not need another road. They need more people. How do we solve public participation in the beginning of the process?

John Fairstein, 11205 Sam Lee Road, thanked Technical Committee for their hard work. He asked if the toll road is a for-profit facility. Jeff Welch stated that there has not been any discussion of that. Mr. Fairstein would like to see some financial comparison of using government or public funds. He asked if the property owners who lose property to a road would be allowed to share in the profit. There was no announcement that TDOT was commissioning this study by Wilbur Smith. Who was consulted to provide evaluation list of categories? Is the environmental impact statement the same if this is funded by the government or private funds? Jeff says it would be the same. He stated that the air quality would be worse at the toll booths. He asked how many lanes there would be at the toll booths and would there be restaurants and gas stations there?

Whitney Ray Dawson, 13050 George Lovelace Lane, stated that the biggest issue is trucks. The State of Virginia may put trucks on rails, and they will get off in Tennessee. We have a chance to do something good to move freight through our state. Many schools, churches and houses will be impacted. Jeff Welch stated that effective planning for the movement of goods requires a multi-state regional approach.

7. Results of Smart Trips Month

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Smart Trips Month included a variety of events to increase awareness and reduce vehicle miles traveled. It was a success, resulting in 84 new commuters, four new worksite participants and pollution reduction of nearly 100 tons.

Background: Smart Trips, a program of the TPO, serves the urbanized areas of Knox, Blount, Sevier, Jefferson and Anderson Counties. Smart Trips promotes alternatives to driving alone. **Attachment #6.**

Kelley Segars, TPO staff, stated that Smart Trips expanded to 6 months this year. April was Smart Trips month. Each week Smart Trips focused on different modes of transportation—carpool/vanpool, transit, biking and walking. The month was packed with events bringing awareness to alternative modes and encouraging commuters to give up their solo commutes. The events included Take the Mini to the Max; the second annual Pedal versus Metal Race; the second annual Mayors' Cup Racewalk; Fare Free Tuesday for KAT buses; bike pools to EarthFest and numerous bike seminars. There were 84 new commuters who registered for Smart Trips during April and two new employers. There are now thirty employers participating. There was a reduction of 98 tons of pollution during April, and participants saved \$26,320 by not driving alone to work.

8. Strategies to Improve Travel Demand Forecasting

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: TPO staff will share results from a scoping seminar that was recently held with the consultant in charge of Phase 1 of the travel demand forecasting model update.

Attachment #7.

Background: The scoping seminar addressed both short- and long-term improvements to the travel demand model. The consultant provided cost estimates for the various features that can be added to the model such as mode choice modeling.

Jeff Welch stated that the staff has designated items in the Work Program addressing improvements to the travel demand model.

Mike Conger, TPO staff, stated that the TPO is in the beginning stages of improving the Travel Demand Forecasting Model. Staff met with consultants on April 19 to scope out necessary improvements based on an evaluation of the current model against updated sources of information. The sources of new information included journey to work data from the Census, comparison of traffic patterns in our model versus those represented in TDOT's statewide model and current traffic counts. They provided cost estimates and timeframes for various improvement options. The TPO staff wants the model completed and ready to use for the Long Range Transportation Plan due in June

2009 and therefore a working model is needed by mid-2008. We would also like to explore having TDOT share some of the cost of data collection with us. Mike noted that a separate effort would also soon be getting underway to develop a land use model that would complement the travel demand model through a grant opportunity being provided by TDOT.

John Lamb asked if the model is really bad enough to warrant a large amount of money to be spent on it. Mike replied that it was true that you can get into a situation where you start getting diminishing returns on your investment since it can start costing large sums of money to only get relatively small improvements in the model, however the results from the consultant's comparison against the updated sources of data revealed some deficiencies that should be corrected if possible. Mike emphasized that the main source of errors were likely due to the fact that the current model was expanded to a much larger geographic area than we originally collected data for and therefore several assumptions had to be made on travel behavior in those areas. He stated that the only way to correct the deficiencies was to try and collect actual data so that the model components could be based on statistically valid correlations in travel behavior rather than ones based on assumptions.

9. Legislative Updates

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The Tennessee State legislative bodies began meeting again in January, and some transportation-related bills are making their way through the House and Senate.

Jeff Welch stated that two bills are being discussed in the legislature to allow toll facilities. One of those bills is moving forward but with lots of amendments including that only the public would be allowed to build toll facilities. Another bill was to direct TDOT to connect all county seats with a four-lane road to an interstate facility. That bill is not going forward at this time.

10. Other Business

Executive Board Meeting, May 23 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building
Technical Committee Meeting, June 12 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

Jeff began the discussion by talking about the recent project overrun costs the TPO has had to amend into the TIP. Within the past year there have been close to \$1 million in CMAQ overruns and \$4 million in STP overruns. For the next TIP, the TPO staff will need to reevaluate the dollars reserved in the overrun buckets. If the TPO does not program adequate funds for each project and the overrun buckets the TPO may need to move projects out of the TIP in order to cover these costs. This month the TPO staff is going to examine the STP/CMAQ programming for the next TIP and consider these cost increase so that the overruns do not cause other projects to be pushed out. Shannon Tolliver, TPO staff, stated that the high cost of construction projects has caused many cost overruns. Local governments may have to find additional funding or other projects will be delayed.

Mike Conger distributed the Travel Time Study. Additional copies are available.

Jeff stated that the prospectus is not ready to be distributed today.

11. Public Comment

Jim Ullrich, 1003 Luttrell Street, distributed an article by Gilbert Carmichael entitled *Intermodalism, A New Science of Transportation*. He discussed how freight transportation has changed. He does not think the problem is financial but a thinking problem. We think everyone wants new roads. The problem isn't cars or trucks; we should start looking at freight and passengers.

Whitney Ray Dawson asked if there are any studies on mass transit. Jeff stated there is the Regional Alternatives Plan for bus rapid transit. A study will be done with Knox Area Transit concerning improvement to the urban transit system.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.