

**TPO Technical Committee  
September 9, 2008  
9:00 a.m.  
Alcoa Public Works and Engineering Department  
725 Universal Street  
Alcoa, Tennessee**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on September 9 at 9:00 a.m. at the Alcoa Public Work and Engineering Department, Alcoa, Tennessee. Darryl Smith, Chair, presided and called the meeting to order.

*Brian Boone	City of Maryville
*Chris Hamby	City of Alcoa
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Jennifer Lehto	East Tennessee Development District
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Greg Patterson	Sevier County
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County Engineering for Bruce Wuethrich
*Blake Sartin	Metro Knoxville Airport Authority
*Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Amy Brooks	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Marc Corrigen	Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
Whitney Ray Dawson	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
John Hunter	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Project Mgmt. Div.
Chris Jenkins	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Project Mgmt. Div.
Alan Jones	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Environmental Div.
Carl Koella	City of Rockford Commissioner
Jim Mays	Vulcan Materials
Mike Russell	Tennessee Department of Transportation – Project Mgmt. Div.
Robert Shaw	Citizens Against Beltway Orange Location
Andrew Sonner	City of Alcoa
Nathan Vatter	Tennessee Department of Transportation - Traffic
Kenny Wiggins	City of Alcoa
Terry Willett	City of Rockford

\*voting members

A quorum was determined.

### **1. Approval of August 12, 2008, Minutes**

**Presenter:** Darryl Smith, Chair

**Item Summary:** Approval of August 12, 2008, TPO Technical Committee minutes.

**Background:** Attachment #1 – August 12, 2008, Minutes.

**A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Cindy Pionke to approve the August 12 minutes with two minor changes noted. In item #5 change the spelling of Barbara Monty and Item #10 change the spelling of Allen Jones to Alan. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **2. Status of Alcoa Highway and Pellissippi Parkway Projects**

**Presenter:** Mike Russell, Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Staff

**Item Summary:** TDOT staff will provide an update on tasks/studies that are underway for these two major highway projects.

**Background:** Both of these studies continue to have ongoing environmental/traffic studies underway.

Jeff Welch introduced Mike Russell, Project Manager with TDOT for the above-referenced projects.

Mike Russell advised the Technical Committee that the Alcoa Highway and Alcoa Highway Bypass studies are currently underway where a level of service analysis is being conducted for those projects. TDOT anticipates a draft environmental impact statement will be submitted to the federal government later this fall, and early next year, the environmental document will be available for public comment. Mr. Russell then went on to discuss the Pellissippi Parkway project. Consultants will continue doing field work for the next two or three months on the options that will be evaluated in the environmental document. There are four options being considered, (1) a no-build, (2) improvements to the existing road system, (3) & (4) include two different alignments for the parkway extension. TDOT anticipates a draft environmental document late next year, but there would be additional public meetings probably in the spring of 2009 based on the evaluation of the options.

## **3. Update on Air Quality Issues**

**Presenter:** Alan Jones, TDOT, and Marc Corrigan, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)

**Item Summary:** TDOT and TDEC staff will make a presentation on Air Quality issues in Tennessee and for our specific area.

**Background:** Our area continues to be nonattainment for ozone and PM2.5.

Alan Jones, TDOT, and Marc Corrigan, TDEC staff, were introduced to the Technical Committee. Marc Corrigan started off the presentation by discussion of ozone and fine particulate matter data for east Tennessee and, particularly, the Knoxville area. He discussed the latest results of the 2005-2007 eight-hour ozone design values, noting that three areas exceed the standards, and 2007 was an especially difficult year for ozone. Mr. Jones and Mr. Corrigan discussed several scenarios regarding the future designations of this area for both particulate matter and ozone. There could be additional counties added to the nonattainment areas. However, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be looking at 2006-2008 in the upcoming year for redesignation. There are many dates out there that will need to be met by EPA to determine the final designations, and some of these dates are still flexible. The next conformity determination will be based upon the update of the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which will be in June 2009. As a result of redesignations, there may be additional conformity analysis conducted in 2010-2011 and perhaps other years. There was a question regarding potential for litigation based on the new standards not meeting the area's health standards that the experts were requesting. The response was most likely not, but that the standards have to be evaluated by EPA every five years.

There was a question regarding Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and its distribution by TDOT to ozone nonattainment areas. Jeff Welch indicated that 80 percent of the funds are expended outside the nonattainment areas for ozone. Alan Jones responded that most of the CMAQ funds are expended in nonattainment areas, including PM 2.5, i.e., Hamilton County, which the bulk of the CMAQ funding is being spent to construct a transportation management center/ITS system there.

## **4. Review of Information being discussed at Mobility Plan Public Meetings**

**Presenter:** TPO Staff

**Item Summary:** Staff will share with the Technical Committee initial ideas on Principles, Strategies and Actions that are being discussed at round two public meetings.

**Background:** The Long Range Mobility Plan is scheduled to be completed by May of 2009.

Amy Brooks, TPO staff, gave committee members an update on the status of the second round of mobility workshops. She emphasized that the presentation being given at the workshops is to review what we heard in the first round of public meetings and to seek input from the public on strategies and actions that can lead us to address

the direction the plan needs to be moving toward. Jeff Welch added that one of the main issues with the Long Range Mobility Plan update is to keep the plan financially constrained. That being said, TDOT programming office is using a 12 percent annual increase in the cost of projects for the short-term. In addition a report recently released on the I-40/I-81 Corridor Study showed an approximately 4 percent annual increase in the cost of road construction projects over the next 30 years. TPO staff is looking for any assistance to help us to determine costs through their experience that we can use to develop the Long Range Mobility Plan financial forecast. He also indicated that at the federal level the Highway Trust Fund will be running out of money the end of September unless Congress adds additional funds to the Highway Trust Fund. This could result in the slowing down of projects and less funds being available to TDOT.

## **5. Review of Highway Projects that were included in the past LRTP.**

**Presenter:** TPO Staff

**Item Summary:** Staff is requesting review and input from the Technical Committee on the attached project listings from the most recent LRTP in order to obtain the most current information on items such as timeframes, costs and project descriptions. This information will provide a starting point for developing travel demand model networks as part of the Mobility Plan update.

### **Background: Attachment #2 – Projects by County**

Mike Conger, TPO staff, reviewed the Knoxville Regional Long Range Transportation highway projects list by jurisdiction that is in the current Long Range Plan. He asked that representatives from each jurisdiction review the project list and provide feedback to staff on whether the project is still a priority for their community, review the project description, horizon year of when the project would be open for traffic and any cost estimates. This is our first attempt at looking at the project lists and for the staff to begin to do modeling and analysis for the plan update.

Carl Koella, City of Rockford, asked to speak to address project No. 149 of the LRTP. Project No. 149 is State Route 33 from Hunt Road to the Knox County line in Blount County. In the current plan the proposal is to widen it from a two-lane to a four-lane facility by the year 2020. Mr. Koella indicated that the City of Rockford has passed resolutions twice, which were distributed to the Technical Committee members, opposing any widening of this project in the Rockford city limits. The town feels that widening this roadway would have negative impacts on the community. He felt there should be some minor improvements, but it should not be widened. John Lamb, Blount County planner, asked Mr. Koella if he felt there were additional improvements that were needed in this corridor to accommodate the growing population. Mr. Koella responded that the bridge structure needs help in widening and also Williams Mill and State Route 33 could use a traffic light in potential turn lanes installed. Mr. Lamb indicated that the City of Rockford should look carefully in that corridor to see if there are modifications other than widening that could be made to this facility and suggested that the project not be dropped entirely from the Long Range Mobility Plan update list but include modifications.

## **6. Other Business**

Jeff Welch distributed a one-page outline of freight planning opportunities that TDOT is seeking. TDOT has an on call consultant to assist in some freight planning projects that typically are regionally focused to assist local governments. They have set criteria in the outline that communities need to prepare and submit to the TPO who will forward it on to TDOT. Angie Midgett from TDOT indicated that the consulting contract is only for \$200,000 and therefore, large requests for studies, i.e., above \$100,000 or more, would limit the amount of studies that could be conducted by the consultant.

- **Technical Committee Meeting, October 14 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.**
- **Executive Board Meeting, October 22 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.**

## **7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment, and the meeting was adjourned.