

**TPO Technical Committee Minutes
October 11, 2011
9 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee met on October 11 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building in Knoxville. Chair, Andrew Sonner presided and called the meeting to order.

*Brian Boone	City of Maryville
*Don Brown	East TN Development District for Terry Bobrowski
*Rich DesGroseilliers	Lakeway Area TPO
*Mark Donaldson	Knoxville/Knox County MPC
*Steve King	City of Knoxville
*John Lamb	Blount County
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Barbara Monty	Knox County Community Action Committee
*Ted Newsom	Knoxville Commuter Pool
*Pat Phillips	Loudon County
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County for Dwight Van de Vate
*Melissa Roberson	Knoxville Area Transit
*Blake Sartin	Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority
*Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
*Andrew Sonner	City of Alcoa
Jeff Welch	Director, Transportation Planning Organization
Nathan Benditz	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Bryan Berry	Metropolitan Planning Commission Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ed Ellis	Knoxville Housing and Urban Development
Salin Geevarghese	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Terry Gilhula	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Alan Huff	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Chris Jenkins	Town of Farragut
Brent Johnson	City of Knoxville
Kelley Segars	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Becky Wade	City of Knoxville
Anne Wallace	City of Knoxville
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

***voting members**

Determination of Quorum

1. Approval of September 13, 2011 minutes

Action Possible Action Discussion Information

Presenter: Andrew Sonner, Chair

Item Summary: Approval of September 13, 2011, TPO Technical Committee minutes.

Attachment #1.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Darryl Smith to approve the September 13 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Jeff Welch stated that Knoxville was successful in receiving a HUD grant to develop a plan for improving livability, quality of life, transportation, etc. over the next three years. Today is the official kickoff at 11 a.m. at the East Tennessee History Center. This is the first formal announcement, and the chair of the Board of Mayors, Tom Beehan, who is Mayor of Oak Ridge, will preside. The grant is in partnership with local and county governments, private entities, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and others. Salin Geevarghese from HUD was introduced and gave a brief summary of the HUD program.

Mr. Geevarghese congratulated Knoxville for being awarded the grant. He stated that the competition was fierce with all regions in Tennessee and the country competing, but Knoxville won. This is a huge opportunity to create a regional vision. This region needs to prosper, during these tough economic times. HUD, EPA and US DOT are investing the money together. We need to think how we live our lives and coordinate together. HUD is not usually involved in metropolitan planning, and this is the first time HUD decided to work in this. Issues are interconnected, and we need to think of land use, economic development, transportation, clean air, jobs and housing. Half of the grantees were from rural places. Other cities will approach this grant differently. Results from this planning matter and the process is important. We are reaching out to commerce, energy and transportation for help. We need to give people an opportunity to share their stories and hear what they want for this area.

2. Recommend Approval of Amendments to the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Action Possible Action Discussion Information

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The following Amendments to the TIP were requested by our state or local governments and staff recommends approval.

- a. Add TIP Project 2011-231 (KAT Transit Vehicles – CMAQ Awarded Funds from TDOT). The project is to add \$3,600,000 to FY2012 for the purchase of three 40-foot diesel hybrid-electric buses and three 35-foot trolley diesel hybrid-electric buses for replacements to the existing fleet. **Attachment #2.**

Bryan Berry discussed the supplemental sheet that was distributed at today's meeting. In the spring of 2011, TDOT received applications for CMAQ-awarded funding, and Knoxville Area Transit was awarded a grant for the purchase of diesel hybrid-electric buses. This amendment adds a new project to the TIP.

A motion was made by John Lamb and seconded by Mark Donaldson to recommend approval of the TIP amendment to the Executive Board. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Expansion of Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries to Include the City of Oak Ridge

Action Possible Action Discussion Information

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff has prepared a draft technical memorandum that supports the expansion of the Metropolitan Planning Area boundaries to include the city of Oak Ridge. Staff is asking if there is any additional information that is needed before taking a formal vote on the expansion of the MPA boundaries. **Attachment #3.**

Jeff Welch discussed Attachment #3 which includes options for expanding the Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries of the TPO. Following are the four options that were given to the Executive Board. They are: Option A – Expand MPA to include entire MSA (Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon and Union Counties) as allowed under Federal Planning Regulations; Option B – Expand MPA boundaries based on areas expected to become urbanized over next 20 years using latest CBER population projections and using the TPO’s Urban Land Allocation Model as a tool to determine growth areas; Option C – Postpone MPA boundary expansion until new Census Urbanized Areas are released in 2012; Option D – Initiate process to add the City of Oak Ridge to current MPA and postpone further analysis or discussion on MPA boundary expansion until new Census Urbanized Areas are released in 2012.

TDOT staff has reviewed this Technical paper and has asked for changes before submittal to TDOT and the Governor for consideration. TDOT staff would like more discussion on the economic and commuting pattern linkages that support the addition of Oak Ridge to the MPA. Staff will revise this paper based on comments received from TDOT and the Technical Committee. The issue of expanding the MPA boundaries will then be brought forward for a vote before the end of the year.

4. Discussion of Ranking of Highway Priority Projects

Action Possible Action Discussion Information

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff has included two documents for your review regarding ranking of highway projects. **Attachment #4a** is a spreadsheet that includes additional data and comments on the list of projects that are to be prioritized by the TPO. The Executive Board asked that the Technical Committee and staff consider economic development in ranking these projects. **Attachment #4b** is a proposed approach that staff will use to recommend a ranking of the projects. **Attachment #4c** is a project location map.

Mike Conger stated that TDOT asked the TPO to provide a ranking of major highway projects being considered for funding in our area over the next three years. One set is for the next fiscal year (FY 13) and the next is for the following two fiscal years (FY 14 and 15). Mike noted that information obtained from each of the jurisdictions on their specific projects was obtained and included in the item information. This committee asked staff to rank projects from staff prospective. Attachment #4b is the proposed scoring criteria staff will use to rank TDOT projects. Mike stated that the TPO staff came up with a proposed scoring system that is based on the current Long Range Transportation Plan project selection scoring process. There are six measures: congestion ranking; safety and security; system preservation and efficiency; mobility options; regional and economic benefits and project readiness. Staff welcomes the Technical Committee input on weighing points differently. Afterwards we will score each project.

Andrew Sonner asked if would be fair to include mobility options in the scoring since some projects such as the Alcoa Parkway will be controlled access and therefore will not get points in this category. Mike Conger responded even though some projects have controlled access there is sometimes an opportunity to include a greenway in the corridor such as with parts of Alcoa Highway and those projects will receive points under this measure. Mike noted that the staff

decided to separate out the two ITS projects and rank those first since they are smaller cost projects that involve only operational improvements that should be a first priority. The Technical Committee and Executive Board will have the final say for the final ranking.

Cindy Pionke asked if the Technical Committee members were supposed to score the projects based on the score sheet. Mike responded that TPO staff will first score the projects based on this criteria and will provide the rankings to the Technical Committee before a final vote will be taken. Mike noted that the scoring is not an exact science and it is impossible to generate a completely objective way to rank all the projects since they involve different types of improvements. He stated that a workshop may be held next month to further discuss the staff ranking based on this scoring criteria. Angie Midgett reminded the committee that the information provided to TDOT is just one component in which projects will be selected by TDOT and the State Legislature. Other factors we look at geographic equity across the whole state, project rediness, etc. Balanced funding is considered. Some highway projects are eligible for multiple funding and some just one funding source.

5. Update on Ozone Non-attainment Designation for Knoxville Regional Area

Action Possible Action Discussion Information

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: The current National Ambient Air Quality Standard is 0.075 ppm. EPA is proceeding with initial area designations under this standard, starting with the recommendations made by the state in 2009 and updating them with the most current, certified air quality data. Staff will provide a brief overview of this issue. **Attachment #5.**

Mike Conger stated he mentioned the possibility of this Ozone standard being enacted at the previous Technical Committee meeting. He noted that there is still not an exact schedule for when the nonattainment designations will be made for this standard but it appears that it could occur sometime in the middle of 2012.

Jeff Welch announced that Jeanne Stevens is leaving TDOT as Director of Long Range Planning. Joe Carpenter has retired.

6. Other Business

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

Jeff stated that the Senate was to vote today regarding the American Jobs Act. The Act includes tax breaks and additional transportation investments.

Jeff reminded the committee to obligate their STP and CMAQ funds as soon as possible.

PlanET Kickoff Event, Tuesday, October 11, 11 a.m. The event will be held at the East Tennessee History Center - PlanET is an opportunity for east Tennessee to hear peoples' visions for the future. It will mean economic prosperity of future generations.

- Executive Board Meeting, October 26, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

- Technical Committee Meeting, November 8, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

7. Public comment

There was no public comment.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.