



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Issued: February 21, 2008

Media Contact:

Mike Conger
phone: 215-3813
e-mail: Mike.Conger@knoxtrans.org

Tolling Study on TPO Board Agenda

Knoxville—The Executive Board of the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) will meet Wednesday, February 27, to consider a resolution requesting the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) to study the feasibility of constructing the Knoxville Regional Parkway or a longer bypass route as a toll facility.

The TPO Executive Board meets at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room on the main floor of the City County Building in downtown Knoxville, and welcomes public input at all of its meetings. Members of the public who wish to address the TPO Executive Board are asked to sign up to speak when they arrive at the meeting.

The resolution to consider the Parkway or a longer Knoxville bypass as a toll facility, if approved, would be only an initial step in the process of one of these roads potentially being designated a toll road.

If approved, this resolution will be followed by additional study undertaken by TDOT of whether tolling is appropriate for the Parkway or the longer bypass route. After TDOT reports back to the TPO Executive Board with the results of that study, the Executive Board will decide whether to recommend one of these project to the Tennessee General Assembly as a pilot toll road.

The Knoxville Regional Parkway, also known as the Orange Route or State Road 475, is a planned link between I-75 in Anderson County to I-40/I-75 in Loudon County, and is included in the TPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. The longer bypass route would include the Parkway plus an eastern leg from I-75 north of Knoxville to I-40 east of Knoxville.

more

No definitive route has been selected for this eastern leg, and it has not been included in the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Knoxville region. The entire bypass route, including the Parkway and the eastern leg, was the subject of a conceptual tolling study completed by Wilbur Smith Associates for TDOT in 2007. The results of that study are available at TDOT website here:
<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/documents/tollstudy/SR475Conceptual.pdf>.

The Tennessee Tollway Act, approved by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2007, directed TDOT to study potential toll projects and to recommend two pilot toll projects by January of 2009. The Tollway Act prohibits the ownership of toll roads or bridges in Tennessee by private companies.

The voting members of the TPO Executive Board include the governor of the State of Tennessee; the mayors of Knox, Blount, Sevier and Loudon counties; the mayors of Knoxville, Farragut, Alcoa, Maryville and Lenoir City; the chair of the Knox County Commission; the vice mayor of Knoxville; and a representative of the East Tennessee Development District.

###