



**MEETING OF THE
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AND THE POLICY COMMITTEE
OF THE
OWENSBORO-DAVISS COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

June 29, 2021

M-I-N-U-T-E-S

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Policy Committee of the Owensboro-Daviess County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met in a joint meeting at 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 28, 2021. The meeting was held in person, with a Zoom option available for out-of-town members. Quorums for both committees were present with the members, as listed:

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Nate Pagan, Owensboro City Manager, Chairman
Nick Hall, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 2
Tim Lyons, Owensboro Municipal Utilities
Barry House, KYTC Division of Planning (via Zoom)
Brittaney Johnson, Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation
Brian Howard, Owensboro Metropolitan Planning Commission
Sean O'Bryan, Regional Water Resource Agency
Brian Wright, Owensboro Riverport Authority
Mark Brasher, Daviess County Engineer
Sgt. Mike Page, Owensboro Police Department
Scott Atherton, Kenergy
Candance Brake, Greater Owensboro Chamber of Commerce
Kevin Collignon, Owensboro City Engineer
Charlie Castlen, Daviess County Commissioner
Sgt. Tyler Free, Daviess County Sheriff's Office
Bernadette Dupont, Federal Highway Administration (via Zoom)
Eric Perez, KYTC Office of Transportation Delivery (represented by Carrie Elliston, via Zoom)

TAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Joanna Shake, Green River Area Development District
Pamela Canary, Owensboro Transit System
Tristan Durbin, Owensboro-Daviess County Regional Airport

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Al Mattingly, Daviess County Judge/Executive, Chairman
Tom Watson, City of Owensboro Mayor, Vice-Chairman
Deneatra Henderson, KYTC District 2

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Todd Jeter, KY Division Administrator, FHWA
Yvette Taylor, Regional Administrator, FTA

GUESTS AND STAFF PRESENT

Elizabeth Griffith, Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation
George Wathen, Daviess County Fiscal Court
Nathan Havenner, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer
Tom Lovett, GRADD

I. CALL TO ORDER

Policy Committee Chair Al Mattingly called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 27, 2021, joint Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meeting were presented for approval.

A motion was made by Charlie Castlen and seconded by Candance Brake to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2021, Technical Advisory/Policy Committee meeting. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A motion was made by Deneatra Henderson and seconded by Mayor Tom Watson to move the Public Comment portion of the meeting to later on the agenda, to allow an opportunity for anyone not yet at the meeting to speak. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. SHIFT Update

Tom Lovett told committee members that he had submitted the list of road projects approved at the April 27 meeting for consideration in the SHIFT process. He informed members the SHIFT rankings were expected to be returned to the MPO in mid- to late July.

Mr. Lovett also informed the committees that he had submitted a draft of the MPO's SHIFT Prioritization Plan to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. He explained that the Plan outlines the criteria and methodology the MPO uses in selecting road projects for the SHIFT process and for assigning boost points later in the process. He said he prepared the draft of the new document by revising the final version of the document the MPO approved and submitted for the 2020 SHIFT.

He said the document was included in the agenda and said he would seek member's comments and suggestions before he submitted the final version for MPO approval before the due date in September.

B. OTS Safety Targets

Mr. Lovett told the committees that the Federal Transit Administration had issued new regulations for transit agencies, requiring them to create a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). As part of the plan, the agency needed to set a series of Safety Targets. He said Owensboro Transit set these targets last year and they were presented to the MPO as an information-only item at the November meeting.

He said the MPO was now required to approve the targets and amend them into its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). E said the targets had not changed since they were presented in 2020 and was asking the MPO to approve them so he could add them to the TIP. He explained the targets were determined by looking at the last five years of data for each target and selecting a realistic and achievable goal.

The Safety Targets are:

Annual Fatalities: 0

Annual Serious Injuries: 0

Annual Safety Events: 10% reduction from the previous year

Annual System Performance Incidents: 10% reduction from the previous year

Mr. Lovett defined the Targets, saying the while the definition of "Fatalities" was self-evident; "Serious Injuries" was any incident in which someone was taken to the hospital for treatment He said a "Safety Event" was any incident in which the damage exceeded a set price. He said he couldn't remember off the top of his head, but that price was either \$20,000 or \$25,000. And he explained System Performance Incidents were incidents that took a bus or trolley out of service for three days or more.

A motion was made by Charlie Castlen and seconded by Candance Brake for the TAC to recommend the Policy Committee approve the OTS Safety Targets. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

Deneatra Henderson then made a motion for the Policy Committee to approve the OTS Safety Targets. It was seconded by Mayor Tom Watson. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

C. Outer Loop study update

Deneatra Henderson of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 2 office addressed the members about Outer Loop study. She told the members that the response has been “overwhelming.” She said there was some discussion among members of the Outer Loop Study Team about possible closing the public comment period early because the response was so voluminous and one-sided, but the idea was rejected. She told the committees the public comment period will close July 2 and then the consultant will compile the responses.

She said the next project team meet was set for July 20, at which time the team will discuss the comments and make a preliminary recommendation for the study, which will be released to the media and general public.

She said she regretted that the team hadn’t anticipated the reaction to the study and presented it in a way less likely to spark controversy.

Ms. Henderson said while unpopular, the study was necessary. There are necessary connections needed in the MPO’s transportation system. An alternative might be improving existing roadways rather than a new road. She said the project team will look at the data and see where new connections are needed and how those might be achieved. She cited the west side of the county as an area where connections might not be needed at this time, but near I-165 where some connection may be needed.

Judge Mattingly spoke about a transportation plan from 1975 that contained what at the time seemed to be unneeded projects. But he said he was amazed by the forethought that went into that plan and some of the things that were proposed even today would make transportation in the area much safer and quicker. He said the Outer Loop was discussed in that document and again in Judge Haire’s administration.

He said you have to prepare for the future, you can’t just snap your fingers and make something happen when a need pops up.

Ms. Henderson suggested the 1975 document be digitized and posted to the MPO web page. Other members concurred.

Barry House said that 1975 plan was the first Long Range Plan for the MPO, which was established after the 1970 Census.

Owensboro Mayor Tom Watson said that communities have to talk about this type of thing. He said communities never stay the same, they either get better or they get worse. And when the community doesn’t grow, and it doesn’t improve and your tax base drains, school systems suffer, infrastructure suffers and public safety suffers as well.

Judge Mattingly’s asked Ms. Henderson about rumors floating around on the internet; specifically about the government making offers on land for the project.

She said no; there is no money for the project to move forward.

Judge Mattingly asked if there's a route that's been determined already. She again said no.

Judge Mattingly said it was his understanding the study contained 14 or 15 sections that could be assembled in different ways to design an Outer Loop if you wanted to and said he thought one option was not to build a new road, just improve sections of existing roads.

Judge Mattingly asked Ms. Henderson about rumors that this project had been going on in secret for two years. She told the judge that KYTC gave the consulting firm the notice to proceed on the study on April 21, 2020. She said at that point the COVID crisis was just starting and we all thought we'd be wearing masks for two weeks and that it would be over. So the start of the study was postponed to allow COVID to pass. The decision to go ahead was made around Thanksgiving and the team held its first meeting on November 20, 2020.

Judge Mattingly said that on behalf of the MPO he didn't want to minimize the upset people were feeling but community leaders have to plan. Without planning, a community can implode.

Commissioner Castlen said he has done his best to encourage people who contacted him to go to the study site and post their comments on the survey. She told him that emails we receive will be forwarded along to the consultants to be included in the final report, but the best way for them to make their voice heard is to complete the survey.

Mayor Watson commended Ms. Watson for her handling of the Outer Loop study and the comments from the public.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Daviess County Commissioner George Wathen asked if the survey was the entirety of the study. He was told no, the study is looking at potential routes and the consultant identified three possible routes as part of the study's findings. The survey is just seeking public comment on the data produced in the study. Ms. Henderson told him that in the absence of public comment, the members of study committees use their expertise and institutional knowledge to assess a project. But when there is public comment, it definitely factors into the final decision. He asked if specific problems were identified. Ms. Henderson told him that's the kind of data the MPO is hoping to get out of the study.

VII. UPDATES

A. Highway District Office Update

Deneatra Henderson of KYTC's District 2 Office told the members the governor had announced funding for several school safety projects, including one in Daviess County, KY 298 near Southern Oaks Elementary School.

- The right-of-way on KY 54 continues to progress well, and the project will move into the utilities phase but a letting date has not yet been set. There is no construction date set as yet, but the Legislature will address that when they go into session in 2022.

- There is an area on I-165 south in the right lane shortly after merge onto the road in Owensboro that is deteriorating at an accelerated rate. KYTC has tried patching it, which has not solved the problem. The area is being excavated to determine the cause of the settling and it will be repaired.
- Judge Mattingly asked about pursuing federal funds for the KY 54 project. She said KYTC is in the process of applying for a RAISE federal grant (formerly a BUILD grant) for the project. She said if the grant is received it would be used to accelerate future sections of the overall KY 54 project.
- Mayor Watson asked about potential federal infrastructure money. He asked if we were in position to apply for additional federal money now. She told him the office is already working on the application for the RAISE grant.

B. MPO Update

Tom Lovett gave the following updates:

- He has been working with Owensboro Transit on grants applications for the organization and the Wendell Foster Center. OTS has received ARP money and is administering CARES and ARP money for the Wendell Foster Center. OTS's 2020 formula grant has been submitted and is expected to be approved.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

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