



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



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MEMORANDUM

TO: TACIR Commission Members

FROM: Harry A. Green
Executive Director

DATE: June 30, 2010

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2011 Work Program

1. The proposed TACIR work program for fiscal year 2011 is attached for your review and approval.
2. A compilation of major Commission accomplishments for fiscal year 2010 is included as part of the work program.

Today and Tomorrow: TACIR's Work Program Fiscal Year 2011

General Assembly Requests

- **Veterans' Service Officers Compensation** [SB 1336 (Yager)/HB 0895 (Winningham)]:
TACIR has been directed to study the provisions of SB 1336/HB 0895 and report its findings and recommendations to the House State and Local Government Committee. The bill establishes minimum compensation and benefits for county and municipal veterans' service officers.

Due Date: None specified.
- **Underground Utility Damage Prevention Program** [SB 0818 (Norris)/HB 0852 (Odom)]:
Public Chapter 825 amended SB 0818/HB 0852 extending the deadline for the study. TACIR will continue to study the effectiveness of Tennessee's current one-call program and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

Due Date: January 17, 2011.
- **Non-emergency Public Service Answering Points** [SB 1006 (Johnson, J.)/HB 0999 (Lynn)]:
Public Chapter 473 directed TACIR to study the impact on public safety of non-emergency communications district affiliated PSAPs. Findings and recommendations will be reported to the House and Senate Government Operations Committees, including any proposed legislation or interim reports.

Due Date: December 1, 2011.

Recurring Mandates

- **Commission Meetings**
Conduct four commission meetings as required by T.C.A. § 4-10-105 and any other meetings of the commission or its committees, as necessary.
- **Education Fiscal Capacity**
Study the fiscal capacity of local governments to fund education; produce the Fiscal Year 2012 Fiscal Capacity Model.
- **Public Infrastructure Needs Inventory**
Compile and maintain an inventory of needed infrastructure within the state; present inventory of statewide public infrastructure needs and cost for provision of adequate and essential public infrastructure to the General Assembly at its next regular annual session following completion of the inventory each year.
- **Public Chapter 1101, Acts of 1998**
Monitor implementation of Tennessee's Growth Policy Act and periodically report findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

- **Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperatives**
Monitor whether the current wholesale power supply arrangements between the TVA and municipal utilities and electric cooperatives are likely to change in a way that could affect PILOTs from the TVA to the state and to its local governments.
- **Basic Education Program Review Committee (BEPRC)**
Serve on the State Board of Education’s BEPRC.
- **Strategic Planning and Performance Based Budgeting**
Maintain strategic plan and report performance in compliance with state requirements.

TACIR Initiated Projects

- **Research Support**
Provide research support based on TACIR initiative or requests from the General Assembly, the Executive Branch, and Local Government.
- **Tax and Fiscal Policy**
 - Analyze current and potential fiscal policies and initiatives in Tennessee.
 - Study fiscal challenges facing rural governments in Tennessee.
- **Inter-Agency Coordination**
 - Serve on TDEC’s Water Resources Technical Advisory Committee. Act as lead agency for designated chapters of two water resource planning pilots and for compilation of overall pilot reports.
 - Provide information about the condition of public school facilities to the Comptroller’s Office of Education Accountability for their work assessing schools on notice or probation.
 - Assist Comptroller’s Division of Bond Finance in developing application and process or the ARRA Qualified School Construction Bond program; review and rate completed applications and submit recommendations to Tennessee State School Bond Authority.
 - Participate with other state agencies in a TDOT initiated program with the National Governor’s Association to be known as “The Policy Academy on Shaping a New Approach to Transportation and Land Use Planning.”
 - Participate with other state agencies to join together in a working group to develop Tennessee’s role in a national initiative by the US DOT, HUD, and EPA known as a “Partnership for Sustainable Communities.”

- **County Profiles**
Continue to expand analysis of county profiles to better understand the policy implications of local fiscal and economic conditions across the state.
- **Growth Policy**
 - Complete study by University of Memphis on the relationship between school siting and land use planning.
 - Continue to study transportation issues related to growth, development, and infrastructure, a four-part series.
 - Monitor regional initiatives of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Rural Planning Organizations as related to growth and the relationship of land use and transportation planning.
- **Technology**
 - Continue to refine plan to maximize use of GIS in TACIR analyses.
 - Expand and update Internet feature reports on pertinent topics.
 - Provide web-based public access to tables and data from the Public Infrastructure Needs Inventory.
- **Administrative**
Efficiently manage all contracts.
- **Professional Development**
 - Effectively utilize staff training opportunities.
 - Attend Tennessee Municipal League and Tennessee County Services Association conferences and staff booths promoting TACIR's research.
- **Staff Initiated Research**
The following staff initiated research projects could be accomplished as time and resources allow.
 - An examination of the RLE (required local effort) model for fiscal capacity used in some other states. Such a model would require changes in how locals share local sales taxes, and would require everyone to have a school property tax rate. This study would flesh out an RLE model, making clear why an unwillingness to change local tax sharing arrangements will always make any fiscal capacity model translucent rather than transparent.

- An analysis of the relative fiscal burden of MSA central and outlying counties and of rural counties. This report, a continuation of TACIR's work on the relative fiscal capacity and conditions of Tennessee's local governments, will evaluative fiscal and demographic data to determine whether certain local governments bear disproportionate fiscal burdens related to others. The report would incorporate research provided within the Public Infrastructure Needs Inventory.
- An analysis of how the Internet is and could be used by government officials and agencies to communicate effectively and increase public participation? This report would include an analysis of both service provision and citizen participation aspects of e-government, as well as address data security and privacy concerns.
- A study of how to attract, cultivate, and maintain a diversified work force that will in turn attract new economic opportunities. This would look at both (1) creating programs to teach specific skills sets for technical positions and (2) keeping creative talent in Tennessee for knowledge-based positions (i.e., avoid brain drain).
- An evaluation of the effect of the economic recession on TN counties. This report would explore how different counties were and are being affected by the recession. Many counties lost major employers or industries in the recession and experienced very high unemployment rates. Along with a discussion about the experiences of different counties, this paper would go on to explore what the state has done or can do to promote economic development and recovery in the hardest hit counties.
- A review of workforce development practices in the evolving economy. This report would take a broader look at the changing face of industry in America, and how Tennessee is faring. Many of TN's counties still depend on industries that are shrinking, such as manufacturing. The report would incorporate analyses of educational attainment trends and related issues with the intent of informing the formulation of new workforce development strategies.
- An evaluation of the privatization of local services focusing on program effectiveness and efficiency. This report would examine both direct and indirect cost factors associated with privatization, to include outsourcing. In addition to economic factors, it will examine other pros and cons, to include accountability, representation, and service quality.
- An update on TACIR's analysis of fiscal federalism incorporating changes resulting from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, healthcare reform, and other federal, state, and local programs and actions.

Major Achievements in Fiscal Year 2010

Performance Standard Achieved: Received a 92% favorable rating.

Commission Meetings Held: Conducted required meetings.

Fiscal Year 2010 Reports Pending Commission Approval

- Mandates
 - ▶ *Regional Jails*
 - ▶ *Water and Wastewater Treatment Authorities*
 - ▶ *Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperatives*
 - ▶ *County Revenue Partnership Fund*
 - ▶ *Emergency Communications District Funding*
 - ▶ *Building Tennessee's Tomorrow*

- TACIR Initiated
 - ▶ *Land Use and Planning (Part of a four-part series)*
 - ▶ *Transportation Issues (Part of a four-part series)*
 - ▶ *Statewide Water Resources Planning*
 - ▶ *Summary of TACIR Property Tax Reports 1999-2010*

Published nine reports, briefs, or web publications:

- 📖 *Gains in Education Spending Equity—Ten Years After Fully Funding the BEP*—Staff Education Brief, August 2009

- 📖 *Building Tennessee's Tomorrow: Anticipating the State's Infrastructure Needs*—Commission Report, September 2009

- 📖 *Capital Expenditures for Public Schools*—Staff Education Brief, October 2009

- 📖 *Taxing Utilities in Tennessee: Ongoing Challenges in Providing a Level Playing Field for Telecommunication Businesses*—Staff Research Brief, October 2009

- 📖 *Intergovernmental Challenges and Achievements*—Biennial Report FY 2007-2008, December 2009

- 📖 *Personal and Family Economic Well-Being: Status and Momentum of Tennessee Counties (Volume 6, Issue 1)*—Fast Facts, February 2010

- 📖 *Regional Governance Districts*—Staff Research Brief, February 2010
- 📖 *High Growth, Low Pressure*—Staff Report, March 2010
- 📖 *The Cost of a Property Tax Circuit Breaker Program in Tennessee*—Staff Research Brief, March 2010

Provided the following presentations:

- "Powers and Functions of a Planning Commission" for the Tennessee County Services Association (October 8, 2009)
- "Intergovernmental Relations in Tennessee" for Public Policy Class at Vanderbilt University (October 20, 2009)
- "How the Change in Fiscal Capacity Affects Davidson County" for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce Report Card Committee (November 20, 2009)
- "Utility Taxation" for the Joint Select Committee on Business Taxes (December 17, 2009)
- "Protection of Open Space in a Growing County" to Leadership Blount (March 9, 2009)
- "Qualified School Construction Bond Program for 2010" for the Tennessee Development District Association (April 14, 2010)
- "Where Do We Go From Here?" for the Tennessee Chapter of the American Water Resources Association (April 15, 2010)

Requests for Information:

- Responded to requests for information and assistance from members of the General Assembly and legislative committees.
- Responded to requests for information and assistance from local government officials, the public, and the media.

Administered 16 contracts:

- Nine development districts—support the public infrastructure needs inventory projects
- Tennessee Department of Education—server support
- Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration—shared administrative support services
- University of Memphis—school siting and land use study

- University of Tennessee, Knoxville—water supply planning study
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville—population forecast for Tennessee counties and cities
- CRS Incorporated—regional jail study
- Middle Tennessee State University—economic indicators website

Using Technology for Public Information

Improved website to include three major public information enhancements

- TACIR Clearinghouse on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- Tracking Tennessee’s Economic Recovery in partnership with Middle Tennessee State University
- Updated and enhanced Tennessee county profiles to include commuter maps