

Minutes
West Tennessee Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) Meeting
August 20, 2013
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
University of Memphis-Executive Training Center

FAC Members Attending: Chad Bowman, City of Memphis/Aerotropolis; Scott Sigman, Port of Cates Landing; Dexter Muller, Greater Memphis Chamber; Jeanne Sebring, International Paper; Allen Hester, Dyersburg Chamber; Pragati Srivastava, Memphis MPO; David Dallas, Milan Express; Neely Mallory, Mallory Alexander Int'l Logistics; Bruce Hohorst, TenKen/West TN Railroad

Others Attending: Toks Omishakin, TDOT Bureau Chief, Environment and Planning; Tanisha Hall, TDOT Long Range Planning; Ralph Comer, TDOT Environment and Planning; Marty Lipinski, University of Memphis; Liza Joffrion, TDOT Multimodal Division; Dan Pallme, University of Memphis; Bob Rock, TDOT Long Range Planning; Mike Golias, University of Memphis; Brain Caldwell, TDOT Aeronautics; Carlos McCloud, TDOT OCT; Aury Kangelos, TDOT OCT; Greg Dyer, TDOT Project Planning

Opening Comments

Dan Pallme welcomed the FAC members to the University of Memphis. Tanisha Hall had the FAC members briefly introduce themselves. Bob Rock talked about the partnership between TDOT and the University of Memphis.

Toks Omishakin spoke about TDOT's missions to be the best multimodal department in the nation by looking at air, water, and land to determine how we can best serve the public. He asked members to look at different needs in the freight community, because our local and regional partners know more about freight movement and activities from a regional prospective. TDOT would like FAC members to serve in an advisory role, providing input and feedback into the development of both the Freight Plan and the Long Range Transportation Plan. TDOT's Commissioner John Schroer, has explicitly stated that he doesn't want to waste any person's time, and he wants to emphasize that this effort is not simply to "check off a to-do for FHWA." TDOT is committed to increase its freight planning effort throughout the state.

Presentations

Carlos McCloud made a presentation on the MAP-21 freight legislation. He explained that high priority corridors haven't been identified since the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). As we develop the Statewide Freight Plan under the guidance of MAP-21, "Critical Rural Freight Corridors" will be identified to connect rural roads with primary roads in the entire network. Most information hasn't been updated since 2008, yet the infrastructure in

TN has changed significantly, with many facilities being recognized as being of national significance. Data from the MPO plans and the state plans need to be shared. In order to assess conditions and performance in TN, private sector input is very important (barriers to first/last mile, RR crossings, etc.), as this information will go into the strategic plan. The regional data gathered from this process will assist in providing a cost/benefit analysis for prioritizing projects. Collaboration between MPOs and TDOT on performance measures and targets is needed to address the goals that will be identified during the development of the freight plan.

Bob Rock made a presentation on the framework and role of the Regional and Executive FACs. He discussed the recommended makeup of the committees from the MAP-21 perspective which suggests including state DOTs, independent airport/port authorities, infrastructure owners, freight shippers, etc. The recommended roles of the Regional and Executive FACs would include advising the state and sharing information. The structure would include Regional Committees for the East, Middle, and West Grand Divisions. University, State and Federal members will be ex-officio members. Each Regional FAC will elect a chairperson to facilitate meetings. The chairperson will conduct meetings and keep meetings on track. There will also be a vice-chairperson to fill-in when necessary. Meetings will be held two to three times per year, but this number is flexible.

Open Discussion

Listed below are the main points from the discussion:

- The freight plan should be a catalyst for economic vitality.
- An assessment or inventory of intermodal facilities should be conducted (this information will be updated as staff completes the development of the freight plan)
 - including Mega Site
 - Rail access is an issue to accessing the Mega Site
 - Identify freight terminals statewide. TDOT has a partnership with the universities (UT, UM and Vandy) and they already collect some data regarding freight related facilities. LRP staff will work with our partners to improve this database.
- There are not that many transportation projects that are not road related.
- Identify “low hanging fruit” freight related projects.
- Additional emphasis should be placed on waterway connectivity and networking.
- Identify multi-modal project opportunities.
- Possible committee task but not recommended by staff: address or identify how to communicate transportation revenue gaps with the general assembly through the advisory committee process:
 - TDOT’s ten (10) year strategic vision possibly will address some concerns regarding transportation revenue gaps.
 - Tanisha and Ralph are working with a committee that will possibly conduct a funding survey.

- Provide additional information regarding “Class of Track” data and speed limitations:
 - How many miles of “Class of Track” information is available? The TDOT Multimodal Office will assist in providing additional information regarding “Class of Track”. The Multimodal Office is already working with the universities (UT, UM and Vandy) in developing additional data regarding Short Line Railroad access.
- The FAC will not have any sub-committees.
- Some attendees expressed a desire for quarterly meetings, in which staff noted that there very well may be a need as we go through the process of identifying regionally significant projects and the finalization of the freight plan.
- Right now we have 10 times more projects than money to fund them. Big, expensive projects may take fifteen (15) years. We can do a lot today to address the safety and congestion issues. When you take out the mandatory expenditures, we have only \$350 million to spend at our discretion.
- Many DOT freight committees do field trips in addition to their quarterly meetings.

Final Remarks

Tanisha Hall informed the group that the Executive Committee is meeting in November of this year, and the date would be forthcoming. This meeting will be a joint meeting of all of the Regional Committees in conjunction with the Executive Committee. TDOT’s Commissioner will attend the meeting and a guest speaker will be invited. Upcoming initiatives will be discussed.

At the November meeting there will be an election of officers. Tanisha asked the members to give some thought to who would be a good candidate to serve on the Executive Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.