

TDOT Liaison Committee Final Report 2018

The year 2018 saw the much anticipated completion of two projects, the resurfacing of the Tellico Village Parkway (Highway 444) and the widening of Highway 321 including the construction of three bridges.

In February 2015 a joint committee between the Home Owners Association (HOA) and the Property Owners Association (POA) was chartered to work with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) to resurface the Tellico Parkway and to make improvements to the road that would increase safety and improve traffic flow. During the past three years TDOT and the Liaison Committee established an excellent working relationship that resulted in many enhancements to both projects for the benefit of the HOA and POA members.

TDOT senior staff met quarterly with the HOA/POA TDOT Liaison Committee to plan the Tellico Parkway resurfacing project. The Committee also had input to the ongoing project to widen Highway 321 and build three bridges over the Tennessee River, the Tellico Canal and the Norfolk Southern Railroad. The TDOT Liaison Committee members applied their experience in road construction, traffic/transportation safety, and project management to gather and analyze highway data (including traffic counts, crash data including deer/vehicle interactions), and consideration for neighborhood demographics, to make recommendations to TDOT for highway improvements. Input from HOA and POA members was an important part of the information that the Committee provided to TDOT.

The presentation made by the TDOT Region 1 Operations Director at the HOA General meeting on September 20th is an excellent overview of TDOT and a summary of both projects as well as an update on the project to widen Highway 321 in Lenoir City, expand the intersection with Highway 11 and realign the intersection at Dixie Lee Junction.

Tellico Parkway Resurfacing Project

The resurfacing project is complete except for just a few tasks. The entire 11 miles of highway were resurfaced this fall including the shoulders and there were numerous improvements to enhance safety and maintain smooth traffic flow. The addendum to this report compares what TDOT would normally do when resurfacing a state road with what was actually done during the resurfacing of the Tellico Parkway.

The last few remaining tasks include completing the painting of miscellaneous striping and installing center lane reflective pavement markers, which aid in night-time travel. The pavement marking and installation of pavement markers can only be completed on dry days with warm temperatures, so as weather permits, this work will be completed.

Guardrail installation along the corridor is currently being finalized. TDOT is coordinating with the utilities in the area to determine if new guardrails can be installed without damaging the cables or if those cables have to be moved. New powder coated guardrails have been installed on several sections of the Parkway, while some areas will continue to have the galvanized guardrail sections. When the

installation of the new guardrails is complete our Tellico Parkway will look very much like the beautiful parkways in the Smoky Mountains National Park.

Highway 321 Bridge and Widening Project

After six years of construction activity the widening of Highway 321 southeast of Highway 11 and construction of three bridges was completed in June of this year when the new bridges over the Tennessee River, the Tellico Canal and the Norfolk Southern Railroad were fully opened to traffic. The new bridges include a designated shared path for pedestrians and bicycles. The total cost of the project was \$71.6 million dollars. During the course of construction TDOT provided updates on the progress and issued alerts when traffic delays were expected so the Liaison Committee could keep HOA and POA members informed. The addendum has more information about the project.

Addendum

Comparison between Standard Resurfacing and Resurfacing of Tellico Parkway

When TDOT resurfaces state roads about every ten to twelve years they repair damaged sections of the road and shoulder and resurface the existing road. For example here is a list of the work normally done.

1. Repair potholes and level low spots
2. Resurface road with the same durable asphalt used on interstate highways
3. Resurface the shoulders
4. Repair and smooth the transition between the highway and bridges
5. Add edge line rumble strips
6. Add shoulder stone to fill the edge of pavement
7. Remark the road with center and edge lines
8. Repair or replace road signs as determined by a safety study

In addition to this work, which is normally done to resurface a state road, the work described below was added to the project. The strong working relationship between TDOT and the HOA/POA TDOT Liaison Committee enabled the Committee to develop and present proposals for safety enhancements and ways to maintain traffic flow. TDOT reviewed the proposals to determine if they met state and federal safety standards and if the additional work could be done within budget. The work summarized below met both criteria.

1. Added
 - 1.1. Four left turn lanes at high volume intersections to improve traffic flow
 - 1.1.1. Coyatee Shores and Coyatee Drive (north and southbound Highway 444)
 - 1.1.2. Ritchey Rd (northbound Highway 444)
 - 1.1.3. Amohi Rd (northbound Highway 444)

- 1.2. Four right turn lanes at 3 intersections including one northbound at Chatuga, one northbound at Cayuga and two at Poplar Ridge Rd both north and southbound
- 1.3. New sign for Maryville at intersection of Highways 444 and 321
- 1.4. Warning signs with street names at selected intersections
- 1.5. Center line reflectors
- 1.6. Approximately two hundred twenty five feet of new guardrail between Amohi Rd and Ritchey Rd
2. Increased the capacity of existing left turn lanes to allow more cars to make turns without interrupting the flow of traffic on the main lane
3. Enhanced pavement markings such as
 - 3.1. Turn arrows
 - 3.2. Dotted left turn guidelines
 - 3.3. Center median acceleration lane for left turns on to northbound Highway 444 from Davis Ferry and from Tanasi Clubhouse to southbound Highway 444
 - 3.4. Enhanced reflectivity center and edge line 6" pavement markings
4. Replace galvanized guardrail with brown powder coated guardrail at most segments
5. Eliminated or shortened 3 dangerous passing zones
 - 5.1. Poplar Springs boat ramp
 - 5.2. Clear Creek boat ramp
 - 5.3. Coyatee/Tommotley Cove bridge

Highway 321 Bridges and Highway Realignment

TDOT provided project updates and motorist alerts throughout the project to the TDOT Liaison Committee so the Committee could notify members when construction and deliveries were likely to temporarily halt traffic. The Committee explained to TDOT that residents of Tellico Village wanted to restore the view of Lake Loudon which had been obstructed by the temporary flood control barriers that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) erected in 2009 along the road under the Tellico Canal Bridge. TDOT worked with TVA to find a way to eliminate the flood barriers (the sand baskets) but still provide a barrier in the event of a major flood. Their solution was to raise the intersection on the Tellico Parkway where it meets the Highway 321 Maryville entrance and Lenoir City exit ramps. The raised intersection is now the flood barrier and the view of Fort Loudon Lake was restored when the temporary barriers were removed.

Another example of the cooperation between TDOT and the Liaison Committee is when TDOT agreed to open the exit ramp from Highway 321 to Highway 444 a year ahead of schedule. Opening that ramp eliminated the dangerous sharp right turn that traffic had to make when travelling to Tellico Village.