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Mass Transit Ushers in a New Era in Transportation

by Ed Cole, Executive Director
The Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee

Transportation once was simple to understand. It included images of cars, trains, buses, airplanes and boats. This menu of transportation choices was supported by growing incomes, easy access to energy sources, publically established roads and bridges, public transit networks, and motor vehicle technologies...all combining to make our transportation world easy to comprehend and navigate.



Ed Cole

No more. Today, transportation is intertwined with a variety of complex issues. Transportation is demanding a larger portion of personal or family incomes; fuel prices are rising; our invest-

ments in roads and bridges are going more and more to maintenance; and, without question, there is growing frustration with the time and cost resulting from traffic congestion.

In this environment of changing perceptions, expectations and resources, there is a growing interest in mass transit as a possible ingredient in a new mix of transportation choices.

Cities such as Charlotte, Austin, Denver, Portland and Salt Lake City have made major public and private investments in mass transit in recent years. These investments include light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit, urban streetcars and much more intensive traditional bus routing networks. In short, cities and regions comparable to Nashville and Middle Tennessee have embarked on the creation of a new mixture of transportation choices.

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A light rail train moves along a street in Portland, Oregon. It is one of many mass transit options available in Portland. The Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee is working to promote a better understanding of mass transit options and their respective funding realities in this region of our state.

Engineers: The Time is Right to Step Up

by Mike Pohlman, PE
President, ACEC of Tennessee

Now that summer has flown by, our vacations are a distant memory and our children are back in school, it's time to get back to the work of making ACEC of Tennessee the organization for all Tennessee engineering firms to join and be active members.



Mike Pohlman

The recent 2011 ACEC / TSPE Annual Meeting was a good start for this effort. Attendance was high. The speakers were excellent in their content and delivery; I believe that the program delivered value to all who

attended because it held true to ACEC's mission to "provide leadership on business issues affecting member firms consistent with the fundamental canons of our professional practice." Our two ring leaders, Candy Toler and Judy Logue, orchestrated an outstanding event.

The Annual Meeting also kicked off our commitment to member firms to be a value-added organization. That commitment is reflected in our focus on the following items during the coming year:

- Increasing the size and scope of the Transportation Committee to allow more participation and exposure;
- Encouraging member firms to support their staff to be active participants on committees and get more involved in ACEC activities on a local and statewide level;
- Offering a Leadership Development program for future company leaders;
- Increasing public exposure for member firms and ACEC of Tennessee through our Public Relations Committee's efforts to tout our successes on a regular basis;
- Continuing to be the watchdog for legislative issues that affect the practice of engineering;
- Increasing our membership through efforts of the state and local chapters.

I thank all of you who participated in this year's Annual Meeting as well as those who have committed to actively serve on the various committees. Also a special thanks to Candy and Judy for their ongoing hard work and dedication. We are off to a great year!

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ACEC STAFF
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Mass Transit

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The Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, a non-profit organization, was created to work with citizens, elected officials, companies, service organizations and community groups across the ten counties of Middle Tennessee to assist in developing an understanding of the transportation choices that good planning and sound investments can make available. The Transit Alliance is sustained by gifts and grants from private sector firms, major employers, educational institutions and individuals committed to a future of transportation choices in Middle Tennessee.

Transit Citizens Leadership Academy

The Mayors' Caucus, consisting of all elected county and city mayors in Middle Tennessee, has made it clear that the Transit Alliance is essential in moving the public discussion of mass transit options forward in the months ahead. Working with the Mayors' Caucus, as well as with both the Nashville and Clarksville Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), the Transit Alliance is undertaking actions – including the establishment of a Transit Citizens Leadership Academy – to promote a better understanding of mass transit options and their respective funding realities.

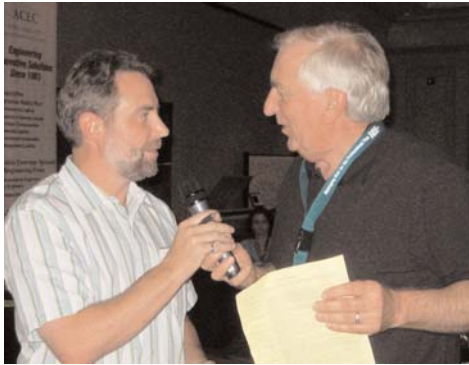
There is no question that creative development of dedicated local revenues in support of mass transit options will be required. The challenge will be to link the value of these investments with the benefits to be shared by all when the choices provided by mass transit become a reality in everyday life across the region.

Good planning and engineering will help define the best technical array of mass transit options. Such planning and engineering, however, will only be of value if the public perception of these options is consistent with the changing sense that we are entering a new era of transportation, one with new choices that make everyday life more enjoyable and affordable.

For more information about the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, go to www.thetransitalliance.org.

Annual Meeting Moments

A record number of people attended the 2011 Annual Meeting in Franklin, attracted by great educational sessions, outstanding speakers and excellent networking opportunities.



It's Your Turn – Les Beaver, Cannon & Cannon (left) and Tom Needham, Shelby County Director of Public Works, were co-auctioneers at the lively PAC auction.



Welcome, Commissioner – TDOT Commissioner John Schroer (center) was welcomed to the annual meeting by ACEC of Tennessee president Mike Pohlman (left) and Everett Cowan, AE Guidance, LLC. Commissioner Schroer spoke to a capacity audience at the Tennessee Engineering Foundation luncheon.



Board of Directors for 2011 – 2012 – Seated (left to right) Immediate Past President Steve Bostic, President Mike Pohlman, and President-Elect Steven Field; standing (left to right) Steve Lane, Harvey Matheny, Joe Ledford, John Wimberly, David Harrell, Mike Stomer, Steve Meyer, and Chuck Saunders. Board members Bill Johnson and Bob Murphy were unavailable for the photo.

Engineers Host Officials in Memphis & Nashville



Memphis -- The Tennessee State Architect, Secretary of State, and State Treasurer spoke at a breakfast meeting in Memphis co-hosted by the American Council of Engineering Companies, Associated Builders and Contractors, Associated General Contractors, Urban Land Institute, Construction Specifications Institute, U.S. Green Building Council and the American Institute of Architects. The state officials discussed new initiatives underway in the State Architect's Office and State Building Commission and responded to questions from more than 100 people in attendance. Pictured at the event, (left to right) are Richard Bursi, PE, OGCB, Inc.; Met Crump, F. AIA, The Crump Firm; State Architect Bob Oglesby, AIA; and David Bradford, PE, Smith Seckman Reid.



Nashville -- Senator Bob Corker (center) was welcomed to the Tennessee Engineering Center on August 19 by Steve Lane (left) and Rob Barrick, both with Smith Seckman Reid. During an informal luncheon with approximately 20 guests, Senator Corker expressed his support for surface transportation reauthorization and talked about federal budget negotiations.

CALENDAR

**SEPTEMBER
27**

Breakfast with U.S. Rep. Diane Black
Tennessee Engineering Center
Nashville
Information:
bobmurphy@rpmtraffic.net
or 615-370-8410

**OCTOBER
19 - 21**

ACEC Fall Conference
Caesar's Palace,
Las Vegas

**NOVEMBER
4**

Deadline to Submit
Entries for *Engineering
Excellence Awards*
Information:
jlogue@tnec.org

**NOVEMBER
30**

Professional Liability
Seminar
Knoxville
Information:
ctoler@tnec.org

**DECEMBER
1**

Professional Liability
Seminar
Nashville
Information:
ctoler@tnec.org

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2**

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Nashville, TN 37203

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Engineering Excellence Awards Entries due November 4

There are 13 opportunities to win the 2012 Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) competition according to Greg Brubaker, PE, EEA program chair and vice president, K. S. Ware & Associates. He points out there are 12 entry categories plus The Grand Iris Award will be presented to the project judged best overall.

“You’ll notice a change in the Call for Entry; it’s now in a postcard format,” he explains. “The postcard is inserted in this issue of the newsletter.”

“Be certain to return the Call for Entry by November 4,” says Kim King, PE, EEA co-chair and transportation engineer at AECOM, Nashville. “It’s the first step toward winning a coveted EEA award and the bragging rights that come with it.”

For more information, contact Judy Logue at 615-242-2486 or e-mail jlogue@tnec.org. Complete entry information is posted online at <http://www.acectn.org/CallEntry.htm>.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Great Events; More Ahead

by Candy Toler
Executive Director, ACEC of Tennessee

August was a great month for ACEC! ATDOT Commissioner John Schroer drew a full house at the Tennessee Engineering Foundation fundraising luncheon. There was a record number of attendees at the Annual Meeting where a lively Auction raised \$12,000 for the state PAC. Both the Transportation and Environment Committees met



Candy Toler

to plan for the new fiscal year. We also hosted a successful event for Senator Bob Corker at the Engineering Center.

And it does not stop there . . . we’re expecting to draw a big crowd at the joint ACEC/TSPE Nashville Chapter breakfast featuring Congressman (she prefers it this way!) Diane Black on September 27 when she will provide insights on *How What Congress Does*

Affects Tennessee. Visit the “What’s New?” tab at www.acectn.org for complete information and to sign up for the event.

It’s also time to kick off our scholarship program. The need for engineers continues to grow. To encourage the study of engineering, ACEC — at the national and state levels — continues to offer scholarships. ACEC of Tennessee has awarded scholarships for the last 10 years. If you know a college engineering student entering his/her junior, senior, or fifth year or someone who will be a graduate student in the fall of 2012, please share this information. Information about eligibility and deadlines is available at www.acectn.org/Scholar.htm

Involvement in ACEC of Tennessee committees continues to grow and participation at events is at an all-time high. Let’s sustain the momentum by encouraging more entries in the *2012 Engineering Excellence Awards* (EEA) program. Refer to the EEA tab at www.acectn.org for details.