

BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2025 Interim

September 17, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fourth meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Transportation of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on September 17, 2025, at 10:30 AM in Room 131 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Ken Upchurch, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Ken Upchurch Co-Chair; Senator Donald Douglas Co-Chair; Senator Jimmy Higdon; Representatives Josh Branscum, Randy Bridges, Thomas Huff, Mary Beth Imes, Tom Smith, and Ashley Tackett Laferty.

Guests: James Ballinger, State Highway Engineer, Dept. of Highways, KYTC; John Moore, Deputy State Highway Engineer, Dept. of Highways, KYTC; Matt Cole, Commissioner, Dept. of Vehicle Regulation, KYTC; Sarah Jackson, REAL ID Project Manager, KYTC; Mikael Pelfrey, Transportation Engineer Director, Dept. of Highways, KYTC; and, Bobbi Jo Lewis, Commissioner, Dept. of Rural and Municipal Aid, KYTC.

LRC Staff: Jeremy Simpson and Spring Emerson.

Maintenance Update

James Ballinger, State Highway Engineer, Dept. of Highways, KYTC, and John Moore, Deputy State Highway Engineer, Dept. of Highways, KYTC, presented an update on Highway Maintenance.

In response to Senator Higdon, Mr. Ballinger said the implementation of roundabouts has resulted in an eighty percent decrease in serious injuries and a ninety percent decrease in fatalities. The absence of a traffic light will also result in a reduced cost over time.

Chair Upchurch commented that statistics are needed. Mr. Ballinger said they are seeing a significant improvement by using innovative intersection technologies for safety, and more information will be provided.

Co-Chair Douglas commented that roundabouts slow down traffic to speed it up. Mr. Ballinger said when determining the diameter of a roundabout, the context of the area and type of traffic is considered.

Approval of Minutes

Senator Higdon moved to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2025 meeting. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Douglas, and the minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

Regional Offices

Matt Cole, Commissioner, Dept. of Vehicle Regulation, KYTC, and Sarah Jackson, REAL ID Project Manager, KYTC, presented information on Drivers Licensing Regional Offices.

In response to Representative Tackett Laferty, Mr. Cole said all drivers testing is performed by the Kentucky State Police (KSP), and their website indicates the testing schedule. The written test is available in almost all of the KYTC Regional Offices.

In response to Co-Chair Douglas, Mr. Cole said drivers testing requirements are determined by KSP.

In response to Senator Higdon, Mr. Cole said out of thirty-five Regional Offices, only a few do not have KSP presence. They include Bardstown, Leitchfield, and four Louisville locations. One Saturday per month is available for testing.

Ms. Jackson said other types of identification can be accepted at airports rather than the REAL ID drivers license, such as passports. Fraud can become an ongoing battle, and precautions are in place to prevent it. This matter is taken very seriously.

Representative Smith commented that the costs incurred in transitioning should be analyzed and considered for discussion during the next Session of the General Assembly.

SHIFT Scoring

James Ballinger, State Highway Engineer, Dept. of Highways, KYTC, and Mikael Pelfrey, Transportation Engineer Director, Dept. of Highways, KYTC, presented information on SHIFT Scoring.

Chair Upchurch commented that their efforts are very much appreciated.

Representative Tackett Laferty expressed her appreciation for the work taking place on the Mountain Parkway expansion.

In response to Senator Higdon, Mr. Ballinger said there have been six cycles of the SHIFT Program, and it has been successful and continues to have value. Mr. Pelfrey added that during the even-numbered years work is being performed behind the scenes to

continuously improve the program. Mr. Ballinger said there are projects that include pedestrian accommodations, such as sidewalks and crosswalks. Those expenses can be broken down separately to be provided to the members.

In response to Representative Smith, Mr. Pelfrey said the addition of turning lanes is considered a capacity improvement, and would be included in the SHIFT Program. The scores are based on engineering criteria, as well as local input.

In response to Representative Bridges, Mr. Ballinger said the context of the roadway is considered when looking at adding sidewalks or bike lanes, such as number of pedestrians and types of traffic. Also considered is local usage and future growth.

Local Assistance Road Program

Bobbi Jo Lewis, Commissioner, Dept. of Rural and Municipal Aid, KYTC, presented information on the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP).

Senator Higdon expressed his appreciation for Commissioner Lewis and the work she does.

Commissioner Lewis said monthly reports are being submitted in accordance with the requirements laid out in House Bill 546.

Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2025. There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:51 AM.