

# US 64 | CORRIDOR K

## Ocoee River Gorge Section



## Public Workshop July 2009

Welcome to tonight's meeting for the US 64 / Corridor K Ocoee River Gorge Section project.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide you with information and obtain your input regarding the proposed project. You will have an opportunity to review project information, study area maps and displays, talk with project team members, and offer your input.

## Tonight's Public Workshop Stations

- US 64 / Corridor K Video Presentation
- Project Background and Current Study Process
- US 64 / Corridor K Goals
- Resources and Preliminary Corridors
- Comment Station and Court Reporter

## Project Vision\*

Any US Highway 64/Corridor K project should address the unique safety, access and traffic flow issues caused by the different types of traffic and corridor users, as well as the difficult topography in the Ocoee River area. The project should creatively minimize adverse impacts to the human and natural environment, preserving unique attributes of the Cherokee National Forest, Ocoee River, and regional cultural resources. The project should enhance access to natural areas and recreational opportunities, and provide travelers a visually satisfying journey. The project should also support the current and future needs of local businesses, local and regional economic plans, and the objectives of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

*\*Drafted by the US 64 / Corridor K Citizens' Resource Team*

## Participating in Tonight's Meeting

### 1. Sign In and Collect Handouts

Sign in at the registration table, pick up a set of handouts, and provide your contact information to receive future project mailings or email correspondence.

### 2. Learn About the Study and Ask Questions

Project displays and other project materials are available to help you learn more about the project. Project team members are available to answer your questions and discuss the project; team members are identified by nametags.

### 3. Provide Your Input

This information packet includes a comment sheet. Comment sheet questions correspond to tonight's public workshop stations. We appreciate your taking the time to provide input. The information that you provide will help Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) ensure that the project is developed through a collaborative approach, involving all stakeholders. Please submit your comments tonight or mail your comments to the address on the comment sheet by August 12, 2009.



## About the Project

US 64/Corridor K is a route on the Appalachian Development Highway System which starts at I-75 near Cleveland, Tennessee and ends near Dillsboro, North Carolina. TDOT and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) have joint leadership roles in the early planning of this project. The portion of US 64 / Corridor K that lies within the current study area is a part of the Ocoee Scenic Byway which was designated the nation's first National Forest Scenic Byway. It is also a Tennessee State Scenic Parkway.

Corridor-level planning is currently underway for US 64 / Corridor K. Transportation corridor planning is a cooperative process that fosters the involvement of all users of a transportation system, including government resource agencies, businesses, community groups, environmental organizations, freight operations and the public. TDOT uses "Context Sensitive Solutions" (CSS) as a process for establishing and achieving transportation, community and environmental goals. Our commitment to CSS builds upon the creative and responsive project planning that has characterized much of our work over the past several years. The implementation of CSS helps TDOT achieve our mission of addressing the transportation needs in Tennessee by providing transportation modes that function as a true asset to the communities in which they serve.

## **Traffic & Safety Considerations\***

- Accident records
- Cross-over traffic at curves and parking locations
- Safety, reliability and efficiency for intrastate and interstate traffic
- Mix of vehicular traffic and users
- Pedestrians
- Need for turn lanes and turn-around locations
- Efficiency and safety of access to scenic and recreational resources
- Lack of alternate routes
- Speed and sight distances
- Parking and pull-off needs
- Safety during inclement weather
- Roadway hazards (such as rock slides, downed trees)

\*(TDOT Road Safety Audit Report, 2006)

## Project History

The US 64/Corridor K project is part of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) and was included in the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965. TDOT began studying areas of US 64 in Polk County in the 1970s. Several studies have been prepared by TDOT and ARC including a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued in 2003. That EIS was later rescinded.

TDOT identified roadway deficiencies that were made apart of TDOT's Road Safety Audit Report in 2006. Since that time many of these deficiencies have been addressed to the extent possible by TDOT however, the existing highway still has safety issues associated with it.

A Corridor K Economic Development and Transportation Study was completed in 2008. The study evaluated the entire length of US 64 / Corridor K and concluded there is an economic development need for an improved east-west transportation corridor to serve the region. In late 2008, TDOT initiated the current Transportation Planning Report corridor study.

## Transportation Planning Report Study

TDOT is currently preparing a project specific Transportation Planning Report (TPR) as part of its corridor-level planning process. The TPR is a report designed to streamline project development by including more of the information that is typically needed in the environmental document. Based on the conclusions from the Transportation Planning Report study, an Environmental Impact Statement would be initiated in 2010. Stakeholder outreach for US 64 / Corridor K will include consultation with agencies, local officials, interest groups and the US 64 / Corridor K Citizens' Resource Team.

## US 64 / Corridor K Citizens' Resource Team

The Citizens' Resource Team (CRT) is made up of citizens who live in or near the project area and/or individuals who represent the interests of different stakeholder groups active in or near the project area that may be affected by or have an interest in the project. This team will provide public input to the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and its partners, Appalachian Regional Commission and the Federal Highway Administration.

### CRT Members

Chris White	Jerry Hamby
Tom Tohill	Keith Dilbeck
Jan B. Beck	L.W. Smith
Denny Mobb	Cindy Moss
Larry Dunn	Eugene Kilgore
Sandra Goss	Jim Monfort
Betty Petty	Janice Cheek
Lance Luke	

## Community, Economic and Environmental Values

To help ensure that US 64 / Corridor K project planning reflects community, economic and environmental principles, the CRT developed the following list of values that are to be considered throughout the corridor-level planning process.

- Create New Economic Opportunities (including tourism and education)
- Protect and Provide Appropriate Access to Forest (Cherokee National Forest)
- Continue to Improve and Restore Water Quality
- Recognize and Preserve Heritage Resources (Cultural and Historical)
- Preserve and Create Views
- Increase Access to Parksville/Ocoee Lake and Marinas
- Increase and Improve Access to Trails, Hiking, and Biking Opportunities
- Increase and Improve Access to the River
- Increase Unity for Polk County

### Project Schedule

**February 24, 2009** - Initiation of Citizens' Resource Team Meetings

**July 2009 and January 2010 (Tentative)** - Public Workshops

**January 2010** - Draft Transportation Planning Report

**July 2012** - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Tentative-The TRP will confirm whether there is a project need to carry forward into the NEPA project development process)

### Website

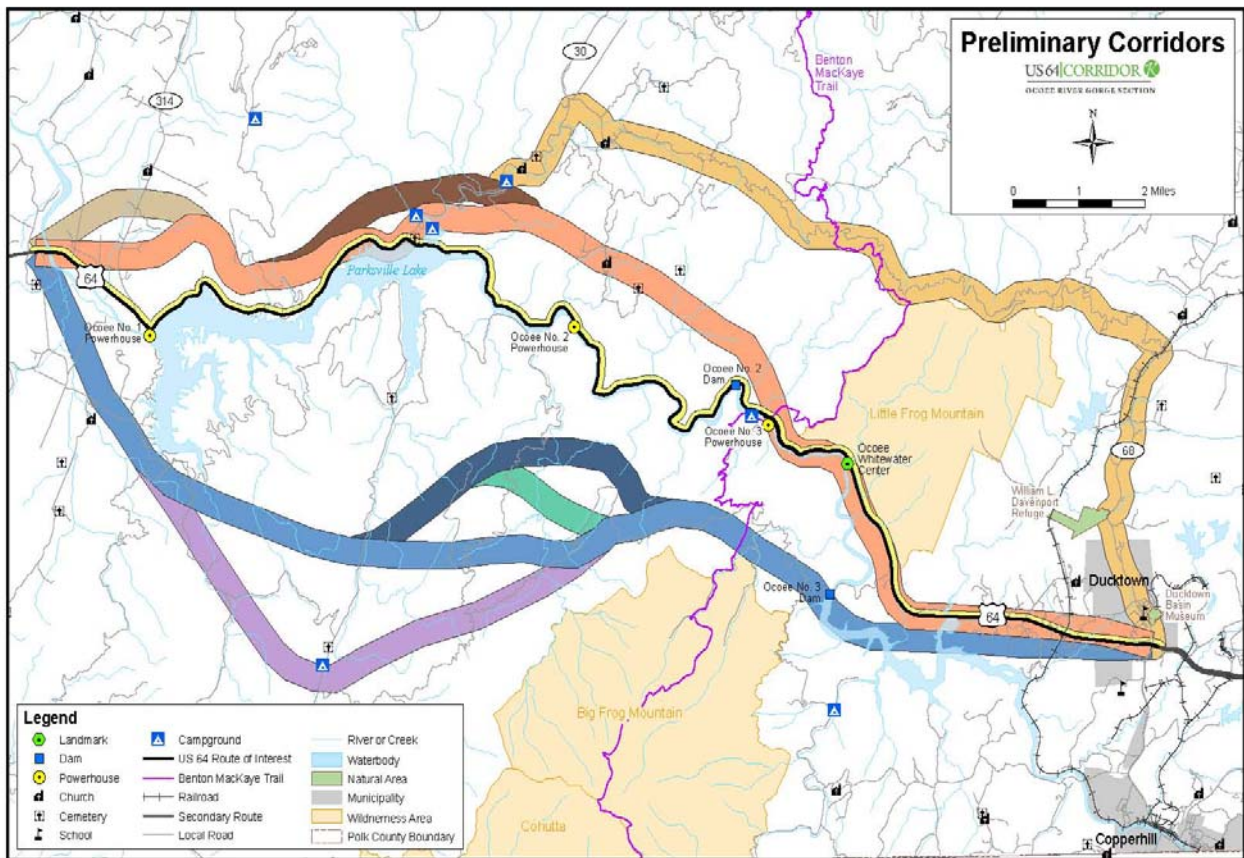
To obtain the most up to date information of the Corridor K project or to be added to our mailing list, visit the project website at:

[www.tdot.state.tn.us/CorridorK](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/CorridorK)



# Initial Study Corridors

TDOT is utilizing a “revolutionary” modeling system, QUANTM, during the early phase of corridor-level planning to develop preliminary corridors (see map below). QUANTM is a computer-based planning tool that uses environmental, engineering, community, and cost constraints identified by stakeholders to develop optimized routes. It is most effective for alignment studies in areas with steep terrain. Multiple route locations can be created that avoid or minimize impacts to known resources, such as critical wildlife habitat, water features and cultural resources using TDOT roadway design standards. Corridor modeling and the refinement and evaluation of those preliminary corridors will continue as we receive stakeholder and government input.



## Next Steps

Our next step will be to establish the preliminary Purpose and Need for US 64 / Corridor K which will serve as a foundation for future project decision-making and the basis for the evaluation and comparison of project corridors. Your input along with continuing government agency coordination will help us define more precisely the goals and objectives of the US 64 / Corridor K project.

Additional Public Workshops are tentatively scheduled for January of 2010. These workshops will provide additional opportunities to get updated on the progress that is being made in regards to the project and to share with us your opinion of this important project.

