

Building Tennessee's Tomorrow: Anticipating the State's Infrastructure Needs

July 2004 through June 2009

Appendix B: Project History

The Public Infrastructure Needs Inventory Act was adopted by the Tennessee General Assembly on April 11, 1996, and signed into law by Governor Don Sundquist as Public Chapter 817 on April 25, 1996. The bill was sponsored by Senator Robert Rochelle (Senate District 17) and Representative Shelby Rhinehart (House District 37) at the request of the Rebuild Tennessee Coalition (RTC) and the Tennessee Development District Association (TDDA). The RTC was established in 1992 as a chapter of the national Rebuild America Coalition. The RTC is an association of public and private organizations along with individuals who are committed to encouraging investment in Tennessee's infrastructure. The TDDA comprises the nine development districts that provide economic planning and development assistance to the local governments in their respective regions.

The Act, which became effective July 1, 1996, directs TACIR to compile and maintain an inventory of needed infrastructure within this state. TACIR staff manages the implementation of the inventory and gathers information from state agencies, while staff from each of Tennessee's nine development districts survey public officials within their jurisdictions to develop the inventory under TACIR staff direction.

The first inventory was completed in 1998, and the first report was published in January 1999. The infrastructure inventory is a dynamic and progressive program that has evolved since its inception. This is the sixth report in the continuing inventory of Tennessee's infrastructure needs. It reflects several improvements over the first inventory.

- Communication and partnerships among stakeholders have been improved.
- A dedicated effort has been made to better capture new school construction needs.
- TACIR staff have developed procedures to incorporate needs reported by state officials, including state transportation needs, into the inventory.
- The format of the report has been updated to include a more analytical perspective by standardizing cost estimates based on population and land area and investigating the relationship between reported need versus funding-based variables and need-based variables.
- Standardized procedures have been clarified to enhance reporting consistency.
- Quality control has been augmented with statistical analysis.
- TACIR staff review information to ensure that all required fields are entered and that valid information is entered for each field.

- For each type of need, TACIR staff compare the amount over time. Unusually large increases or decreases are examined thoroughly. Sometimes the changes are due to one or more large projects being cancelled or needing to be recategorized.
- Every mayor, county executive, and school district superintendent is provided summary information for their municipality, county, or district. This allows a review of the information to make sure needs are being accurately captured.
- For the fourth year in a row, local officials were provided an opportunity to report whether projects were funded, and if so, from what source.
- This report is the second to contain a full section on funding.
- The inventory forms have been redesigned to capture new data to support further analysis in future reports of fiscal and growth policy.
- The database has been redesigned to facilitate more efficient data management.