



CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from the
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

October 2011

In This Issue

RPCGB Conducts Community
Forums for SW Corridor Study

Building Communities Conference

CommuteSmart Announces Incentive
Changes

Revolving Loan Fund Highlight

Mayor Profile

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

[RPCGB Program Budget](#)

October 12, 2011

RPCGB Office

9:00am, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

[Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting](#)

October 12, 2011

RPCGB Office

1:30pm, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

[APCA Steering Comm.](#)

October 13, 2011

RPCGB Office

1:30pm, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

[RPCGB Board of Directors Meeting](#)

October 19, 2011

RPCGB Office

10:30am, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

[Transportation Citizens Committee Meeting](#)

October 19, 2011

RPCGB Office

Noon, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

[Transportation Technical Committee Meeting](#)

October 26, 2011

RPCGB Office

10:00am, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

RPCGB Conducts Community Forums for SW Corridor Study



Connecting Communities, Charting a New Course

The RPCGB hosted two community forums on Tuesday, September 20 at the Lawson State Community College in Bessemer and Wednesday, September, 21 at the Birmingham MetroPlex for citizens who live and work in the Southwest Corridor. Citizens had the opportunity to participate in open house discussions about improving their community's economic and neighborhood conditions along with ways to improve public transit. The Southwest Corridor is centered on U.S. 11 / Bessemer Super Highway and includes the cities of Birmingham, Midfield, Fairfield, Bessemer, Brighton, and Lipscomb as well as surrounding areas of Jefferson County. The RPCGB and a team of consultants, led by Atkins, Inc., were on hand to encourage participants to share ideas for improving transit service.



RPCGB's Darrell Howard discusses the project with a

[MPO Subcommittee Meeting](#)

October 27, 2011

RPCGB Office

1:30pm, 1st Floor Conf. Rm

For meeting information, including postings of any meeting notices and cancellations please visit the [RPCGB website](#).

citizen

"This community forum is about letting the people have a hand in shaping the future of mass transit in our region," said Darrell Howard, project manager, RPCGB. The last community forum provided valuable input to the corridor vision, and about what features of the corridor, such as neighborhoods and retail areas, needed the most attention. Participants also shared that 2/3 of them would use transit more often if it were a frequent, reliable and quality service.

This third community forum provided information to the attendees about transit mode options for the corridor and engaged them in exercises that sought their opinions about suitable transit modes, potential routes for improved transit, and their opinions on transit-related issues. The study team also conducted a joint session of the four study working groups (Public Involvement, Community Development, Economic Development, and Transportation), and made a briefing to the study Steering Committee as part of the forum.

For additional information, please visit the [project website](#) or contact Darrell L. Howard, project manager, at dhoward@rpcgb.org.



Forum participants examine a map of the Southwest Corridor



Brandon Wilson (center) of the Wilbron Institute examines a map

Building Communities Conference

2011 Building Communities Conference Transformation: Creating New Life from Existing Assets

Thursday, November 3, 2011, 8:30am - 3:30pm
McWane Science Center, 200 19th Street North, Birmingham, AL 35203

Free parking in parking deck adjacent to McWane Center on 2nd Avenue North.
Enter Events Center on Level C.

Agenda

8:30 am - 9:00 am

Registration

9:00 am - 9:15 am

Welcome and Introduction
Charles Ball, Executive Director, RPCGB

9:15 am - 10:15 am

Diamonds in the Rough
Steve Ostaseski, RPCGB
Andy Mayo, City of Birmingham
Evan Williams., Jefferson County

10:15 am - 10:30am

Break

10:30 am- 12:00 pm

Real Estate Development / Supply and Demand
Michael Robinson, ASLA, MRED Chair
Harris Hollans, Ph.D. MAI
Auburn University's Master of Real Estate
Development Program

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch - Keynote Speaker
John B. Norris, Managing Director,
Head of Wealth Management
Oakworth Capital Bank

1:00 pm - 1:15 pm

Break

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm

Downtown vs Greenfields
Joe Minicozzi, Executive Director
Asheville, NC Downtown Association

2:15 pm - 3:30 pm

Implementation Toolkit
Philip Amthor, Planner, RPCGB
Avery Livingston, Cumberland School of Law

More information and registration available on the [RPCGB website](#)

CommuteSmart Announces Incentive Changes

In early October, CommuteSmart announced some changes to the incentives for the GetGreen program. As a result of an increase in participation in the program after the rise in gas prices and the effects of commuting from the April tornadoes, the CommuteSmart team adjusted the incentives and requirements for the GetGreen program. Highlighted below are the updates to the program.



GetGreen is a one time program that offers commuters **\$1 per day** for everyday an alternative commute is taken in the first 90-days of participating in CommuteSmart. Each commuter is eligible to receive up to **\$70** during this period. Commuters are paid for each day they choose to carpool, telework, take transit, bike or walk to work. **A minimum of 20 alternative commutes must be taken during the 90-day period to qualify for a check** (this would equal a \$20 check). Commuters must live or work in Jefferson or Shelby counties to be eligible. For more on the GetGreen program, visit the [Incentives](#) page on the CommuteSmart website. Also, don't forget to download the latest issue of *the route*,

CommuteSmart's quarterly newsletter. Visit the homepage of the [CommuteSmart website](#) to find the latest issue.

Revolving Loan Fund Highlight



Each month, we will highlight a recipient of our Revolving Loan Fund Program. This month's highlight is Vaxin, Inc.

Vaxin is an emerging biotechnology company developing vaccines and other biological products to address market and public health needs. The company uses proprietary technology for non-invasive delivery to the nasal passages or to the skin, and has shown proof of principle in animals and in initial human clinical studies. The company's lead programs include vaccines for Influenza, Anthrax, Avian Influenza, Tetanus, and Alzheimer. Vaxin is a tenant in the Innovation Depot in downtown Birmingham.

Through the RPCGB's Revolving Loan Fund Program, Vaxin received two large Appalachian Regional Commission loans, as well as being and was the first RPCGB Accounts Receivables loan recipient. The Accounts Receivable lending program is only for incubator tenants of the Innovation Depot and the Bessemer Business Incubation System. This program provides quick, low-cost working capital loans to small business using their receivables as collateral over a 30-day term.

Vaxin was recently awarded a \$14.7 million federal grant through the National Institutes of Health for work on an anthrax vaccine. Vaxin will continue researching and developing manufacturing processes for its vaccine candidate, AdVAV, with funding from the two-year grant. The vaccine Vaxin is developing would be administered as a nasal spray and could act faster than injected vaccines.

To learn more about the Revolving Loan Fund Program and how your business might benefit, please visit the [Loan Program](#) page in the RPCGB website.

Mayor Profile



Each month, we will profile a mayor within the six county region. This month's profile is Mayor Darryl Ray of Oneonta.

Darryl Ray, Mayor of Oneonta

- Born and raised in Blount County
- Served as a City Councilman and Police Commissioner for four years prior to being elected the Mayor of the City of Oneonta
- Worked for Liberty National Life Insurance as an agent, sales manager, district manager, and consultant serving Oneonta and Blount County for thirty-nine years before retiring in 2008
- Member of Fairview Missionary Baptist Church for fifty years and a Deacon in the church
- Family: Martha Ray and three children Donny, Anna and Todd
- "There is not a better place to live and raise your family than Oneonta and Blount County due to the wholesome environment that we are blessed with."

CONNECTIONS is brought to you by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
Find out more at www.rpcgb.org

