

# CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from the  
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

March 2012

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5PM, 1st Floor Conf Rm

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RPCGB Offices  
Noon, 1st Floor Conf Rm

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Committee Meeting](#)  
March 28, 2012  
RPCGB Offices  
10AM, 1st Floor Conf Rm

[MPO Subcommittee  
Meeting](#)

## Former Planning Director Honored

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham was in attendance at the American Planning Association Alabama Chapter (ALAAPA) meetings on February 16 in Mobile for the honoring of its longtime planning director. Bill Foisy was the 2012 recipient of the Richard L. Platt Career Achievement Award. This award is named in memory of Richard L. Platt, former Northport Director of Planning, and recognizes a person who has provided outstanding contributions to the planning profession and who is near or at retirement.

ALAAPA is a non-profit public interest and research organization dedicated to urban, suburban, regional and rural planning. Membership is made up of planners at all government levels, private consultants, local planning board members, landscape architects, environmental scientists, lawyers, professors, students and other professionals dedicated to sound planning principles. The award was presented during the ALAAPA annual luncheon which was attended by planners and elected officials from all over the state.



Dave Hunke, Tom McGee, Bill Foisy and Charles Ball

March 29, 2012  
RPCGB Offices  
1:30PM. 1st Floor Conf  
Rm

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

Foisy's career spanned 37 years and included the creation of countless projects and plans. His involvement included the early discussions of Corridor X/I-22, the creation of I-459 and spearheading the development of and funding for CLASTRAN. He and his wife, Sue, relocated to Red Lodge, Montana in early 2011. The RPCGB congratulates Bill on this well-deserved acknowledgment!

### Rising Gas Prices See CommuteSmart Participation Spike



As the price of gasoline at the pump continues to rise, so do the number of people signing up for the RPCGB's commuter program, CommuteSmart. Through the promotion of carpooling, vanpooling, teleworking, biking, walking or taking public transit, CommuteSmart saves commuters money at the pump as well as and puts cash in their pockets. The program has seen a 36 percent increase in sign-up over the last six months as compared to the same time one year

earlier.

More than 10.7 million vehicle miles were reduced through the CommuteSmart program. Commuters saved more than \$3.5 million in estimated commuter costs and more than \$650,000 in fuels costs in the Birmingham area during 2011. With gas prices rising to nearly \$4/gallon, Birmingham area commuters are looking for a way to save money. Through its **Get Green program**, CommuteSmart **pays commuters \$1 per day, up to \$70 over a 90-day period** to change their commutes from driving alone to a qualified alternative commute. Commuters are paid for each day they carpool, telework, take transit, bike or walk to work. Through its ride-matching database, CommuteSmart can match riders to find the optimal potential carpool and vanpool partners.

**Commuter Club** is another incentive program open to residents and workers of Jefferson and Shelby counties. CommuteSmart provides **\$25 gift cards** on a quarterly basis to commuters logging at least 20 qualified commute trips during the course of the quarter. Participants in the Get Green program automatically roll over into the Commuter Club program after the initial 120 days.

CommuteSmart also provides a vanpool program designed to assist groups of seven to 15 people who ride to and from work each day with the use of a comfortable passenger van. The cost of vanpooling varies from van to van. Each van passenger pays an equal share of the operating costs which include the van payment, gasoline, parking, etc. So the more riders you have, the less you pay!

If you or your company are feeling the pain at the gas pump, contact CommuteSmart to find out how they can help. Visit the [website](#) or call 1-87-RIDEMATCH for more information.

## Revolving Loan Fund Highlight -- Compliance Specialists, Inc.



*This month's Revolving Loan Fund Highlight is Compliance Specialists, Inc.*

**Compliance Specialists, Inc.** (CSI) is a 17-year-old company providing consulting services to companies needing help in complying with federal and state regulatory requirements regarding safety, environmental, and health. CSI offers a full complement of training, engineering support, program development, auditing, and program management support in all areas of safety and environmental compliance.

Based out of the Bessemer Business Incubator system, CSI's market consists of companies operating in all industrial categories. Heavy industries such as steel and automotive, food processing and packaging, pulp and paper, high tech machine shops and fabricators, and commercial / residential construction are all industries that CSI supports as clients. CSI also works with retail companies in need of safety, health, and/or environmental support.

CSI has been a participant in the RPCGB's Account Receivables lending program since 2010. The company has used the program to grow its staff and expand its business.

"We have added two employees since our initial RPCGB loan," said CSI's Ron McClenny, "We plan to bring on one to one and a half new employees every 12 months for the next five years. This will result in more than doubling our annual revenue over those five years."

To learn more about CSI and the work they are doing to help companies comply with safety, health and environmental regulations, visit [their website](#). For more information on the RPCGB's Revolving Loan Fund, please visit the [RPCGB website](#).



CSI team members at work

## SAVE THE DATE -- Public Involvement Meeting

### Transportation Planning Process Public Involvement Meeting

**Purpose:** This meeting is part of a review that will assess compliance with Federal regulations pertaining to the transportation planning process conducted by the Birmingham MPO, Alabama Department of Transportation, Birmingham / Jefferson County Transit Authority, and units of local government in the Birmingham area.

**Hosted By:** Representatives of the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Alabama Department of Transportation, Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham.

**Thursday, March 15, 2012, 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham 1731 1st Avenue North, 1st Floor Conference Room Birmingham, Alabama 35203**

If you are not able to attend the meeting, please address your comments to: Federal Highway Administration, Alabama Division, 9500 Wynlakes Place, Montgomery, AL 36117-8515  
Anyone requiring special accommodations should advise Cissy Edwards Crowe (205-251-8139) at

least one week in advance. For additional information concerning the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), please visit [www.rpcgb.org](http://www.rpcgb.org)

## Mayor Profile



*Each month we will profile a mayor within the six county region. This month's profile is Mayor Joseph Hughes of Locust Fork.*

### Joseph Hughes, Mayor of Locust Fork

- Attended Marion Military Institute and studied public relations at Auburn University
- Works in the highway construction industry, first in his family business and now with APAC.
- Asked by the former mayor to fill a vacant position on the Locust Fork Planning Commission in 2006. Shortly after, he was nominated to the town council and ran for mayor in 2009 when his council term ended.
- Spends free time field trialing throughout the Southeast

**Mayor Hughes on the difficulties facing small towns:** *Locust Fork has around 1,300 citizens. We are a bedroom community to Birmingham and Cullman. Being a town with little tax base, it's tough to provide services and grow. Our biggest problem is not having a sanitary sewer system. We have tried to make it happen through federal grants and state funds. We hired an engineer and designed the system without having a funding source. Ultimately, it wouldn't fund itself and other sources aren't available. We need a sewer system to attract new businesses and restaurants. They won't locate in a town without one.*

**On creating projects with a tight budget:** *We recently purchased a rescue truck for the fire department. We have an agreement with the Blount County Sheriffs Department in which deputies patrol the town, eliminating the need for a police force. We are paving the worst roads throughout the municipality. We are working with St. Vincent's to create a medical clinic in town, as we have no doctors here. The clinic will be up and running in July. We are building a community center for town events and gatherings. All of this is being done while borrowing very little money and trying to stay within our means.*

**On the future:** *Prior to the economic crash a few years ago, we had proposals of new subdivisions every month. There was a lot of suggested new growth. As the economy grows, so will Locust Fork. I think people will migrate into our area and as they arrive, their desires and demands for services will put pressure on the town and we will rise to their demands.*

## Employee Profile



*Each month we will profile an employee of the RPCGB. This month's profile is Tameeka Dennis, Medicaid Waiver Program Case Manager.*

### Tameeka Dennis Medicaid Waiver Program Case Manager

- **Hometown:** Albany, GA
- **Education:** Undergraduate Degree in Healthcare Administration and Master's Degree in Public Health Administration and Health Care Management.
- **How long have you been with the RPCGB?:** 5 months
- **Give a short overview of your job:** As a case manager, I assist individuals in gaining

access to appropriate, needed and desired waiver and other State Plan services, as well as needed medical, social, educational, and other appropriate services. I help provide necessary coordination with providers of non-medical, non-waiver services, when the services provided by these entities are needed to enable individuals to function at the highest attainable level or to benefit from programs for which he or she might be eligible.

- **What is your favorite aspect of your job?:** I enjoy talking with the clients and helping them out. We have so many clients in need and I love to see them smile.
- **Tell us one thing we don't know about you:** I love to watch Lifetime and spend time with my family.
- **Finish this sentence: "Ten years from now, I hope to...":** be traveling, watching my child grow into a young adult and enjoying every aspect of my life.

CONNECTIONS is brought to you by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham  
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