



*Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham • 1731 First Avenue North Suite 200 • Birmingham, AL 35203
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June 17, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Citizens Committee

FROM: Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman /s/

**SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2009**

A meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee was held on Wednesday, June 17, 2009, 12:00 Noon, RPC 1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Lawrence Clark, Shelby County
Mrs. Nancy Clark, Shelby County
Mr. Butch Ferrell, South / Southwest Jefferson County
Ms. Jackie Dye, Shelby County
Mr. Willie Osborne, City of Birmingham
Mr. Jeff Hodgson, North / Northwest Jefferson County
Ms. Thelma Hodgson, North / Northwest Jefferson County
Ms. Judy Gordon, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Joel Gilbert, City of Birmingham
Mr. Jim Gunnin, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Ms. Peggy Cochran, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. David Russell, City of Birmingham
Mr. Steffen Waendelin, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Thurman Robertson, East / Northeast Jefferson County

Mr. Pittman Owen, City of Birmingham
Mr. Harry Giddens, City of Birmingham
Dr. Johnny Peebles, III, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Jim Ketchersid, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Bruce Ludwig, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Dr. John Springer, City of Birmingham

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Ms. Doris Powell, Vice Chairman, City of Birmingham
Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Ruthie Royster, City of Birmingham
Ms. Pat Hall, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Mr. John Saddler, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Mr. Gilbert Klein, City of Birmingham
Mr. Michael Morrison, City of Birmingham

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Bill Foisy, RPC
Ms. Cynthia Barton, RPC
Mr. Darrell Howard, RPC
Mr. Harry He, RPC
Ms. Carmen Mays, RPC
Honorable Cam Ward, Representative, State of Alabama
Honorable Patricia Todd, Representative, State of Alabama
Honorable Rod Scott, Representative, State of Alabama
Ms. Sandra Bonner, ALDOT
Ms. Barbara McKenna, Morris
Ms. Ruth Wright, League of Women Voters
Mr. Blake Harris, State of Alabama
Ms. Anna Brown, Birmingham
Mr. Courtney Newton, United Way

Chairman Ouida Fritschi called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. The meeting then proceeded with the scheduled agenda items.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Attendees introduced themselves. Dr. Johnny Peebles, III made a motion to approve the April 15, 2009 minutes. Mr. Willie Osborne seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote. Mr. Willie Osborne made a motion to approve the May 20, 2009 minutes. Mr. Bruce Ludwig seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

Mr. Bill Foisy presented a report on MPO actions. The MPO approved the request to amend the TIP to include the projects recommended by the TCC. The MPO received information on funding availability for supplemental discretionary grants for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) totaling \$1.5 billion. The MPO also received information on the CommuteSmart Rideshare program.

Mr. Darrell Howard presented a five-minute simulation video for the In-Town Transit Partnership that will be included as part of a discretionary grant request for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure. The simulation will be officially unveiled at the June 25th Operation New Birmingham meeting.

UPDATE ON STATE LEGISLATIVE TRANSIT BILLS

State Representatives Cam Ward, Patricia Todd and Rod Scott presented information on transit related legislation they presented in 2009. Extensive dialogue with Citizens Committee members followed concerning transit issues regionally and statewide.

Representative Ward presented a bill in January 2009 to establish the Alabama Transportation Commission. The responsibilities of the Commission include:

1. Establish a program of current and long-range planning, including a transportation facilities construction program plan
2. Establish transportation policies for the guidance and direction of the director
3. Establish transportation policies for general aviation airports, railways and waterways
4. Periodically review the status of the state transportation system
5. Establish transportation policies and review the status of public transit within this state
6. Adopt rules as may be necessary to give full force and effect to any of the provisions of the act

Members of the Commission will include five members of which three will be from the North, Central and Southern sections of Alabama and two will be At-Large members that represent transit interests (one regular public transit rider and one representative of a public transit authority within Alabama).

Representative Ward's Bill passed the House, but was not passed by the Senate.

A Resolution introduced by Representative Rod Scott, and passed by both houses, created a statewide Public Transit Commission. Members consist of representatives of the 11 existing

urban transit systems, one representative of ALDOT, one representative of the Alabama Transit Coalition, one member from the transportation industry appointed by the Governor, one member from the non-transportation business community appointed by the Governor, one member representing the Alabama Development Office, one member of the House of Representatives as appointed by the Speaker of the House, one member of the House as appointed by the Speaker Pro Tempore of the House, one member of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, one member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one representative of the Alabama Association of County Commissioners, a representative of the Alabama League of Municipalities, and a representative of the Alabama Association of Regional Councils. The purpose of the Commission is to determine how public transit systems can be established and funded in the State. The duties include:

1. Respond to the mobility needs of for a growing and ever-changing urban workforce
2. Meet the needs of rural communities
3. Respond to the mobility needs of the elderly, disabled and low income citizens in both urban and rural areas
4. Attract new riders
5. Spur economic development and urban revitalization with public transit as a core transportation element
6. Respond to rising energy costs and growing traffic congestion
7. Control health care costs by making routine health care more accessible

Representative Todd prepared but did not introduce a Bill that would propose an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901 to allow the proceeds from an excise tax on certain vehicles to be distributed for alternative transportation programs. The excise tax would be levied on vehicles annually based on EPA ratings. The projected dollar amount to be raised from the tax is \$60 million per year to be used on transit in the MPO area and approved through the MPO. The bill would exempt vehicles over 10 years old from the tax.

Representative Scott presented information on a bill that was passed to establish the Alabama capital Assistance Stimulus for Rail Projects Act of 2009. The bill requires ADECA to work with the Mississippi-Louisiana-Alabama Rapid Rail Transit Commission to establish and operate a program to promote passenger rail travel and service and to develop the state rail plan, describe the plan and require that the plan contain both freight and passenger rail service components and to provide funding.

OTHER

An announcement was included in the meeting packet for a public meeting to be held by ALDOT on the Finley Boulevard Extension project from 26th Street (US 31) to SR 79 in the vicinity of East Lake Boulevard. The meeting will be held Thursday, July 23, 2009 from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Bethel Baptist Church in Birmingham.

Chairman Ouida Fritschi appointed Ms. Peggy Cochran to the Nominating / Membership Committee to represent the South / Southeast Jefferson County corridor.

A list of upcoming meetings of interest to the group was included in the meeting packet. Meetings included:

- Transportation Technical Committee, June 24th, 10:00 a.m., RPC.
- MPO Subcommittee, June 25th, 1:30 p.m., RPC.
- MPO, July 8, 1:30 p.m., RPC.

The next meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee will be held Wednesday, July 15, 2009, 12:00 Noon, RPC 1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:17 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman
Transportation Citizens Committee

Date