



*Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham • 1731 First Avenue North Suite 200 • Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone (205) 251-8139 • Fax (205) 328-3304 • [www.rpcgb.org](http://www.rpcgb.org) • [www.bhammipo.org](http://www.bhammipo.org)*

December 15, 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Citizens Committee

**FROM:** Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman /s/

**SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes  
December 15, 2009**

A meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 12:00 Noon, RPC 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, 1731 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ms. Doris Powell, Vice Chairman, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Willie Osborne, City of Birmingham  
Ms. Judy Gordon, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Butch Ferrell, South / Southwest Jefferson County  
Ms. Peggy Cochran, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Harry Giddens, City of Birmingham  
Dr. Johnny Peebles, III, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Steffen Waendelin, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Dr. John Springer, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Pittman Owen, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Thurman Robertson, East / Northeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Joel Gilbert, City of Birmingham  
Mr. David Russell, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Jeff Hodgson, North / Northwest Jefferson County  
Ms. Thelma Hodgson, North / Northwest Jefferson County  
Mr. Lawrence Clark, Shelby County  
Mrs. Nancy Clark, Shelby County  
Ms. Ruthie Royster, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Jim Gunnin, East / Northeast Jefferson County

Ms. Anna Brown, City of Birmingham

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Ms. Jackie Dye, Shelby County  
Ms. Barbara McKenna, East / Northeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Bruce Ludwig, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Mr. Gilbert Klein, City of Birmingham  
Mr. Jim Ketchersid, South / Southeast Jefferson County  
Ms. Pat Hall, East / Northeast Jefferson County

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Mr. Bill Foisy, RPC  
Ms. Cynthia Barton, RPC  
Mr. Mike Kaczorowski, RPC  
Mr. Darrell Howard, RPC  
Mr. Marshall Farmer, RPC  
Matt Lacke, Jefferson County Department of Health  
Mr. Darrell Skipper, Skipper Consulting  
Mr. Scott Skipper, Skipper Consulting  
Mr. John Echols, ALDOT  
Mr. John Wright, Birmingham  
Mr. Tom Simpson, CH2M Hill  
Mr. John Baker, Norfolk Southern  
Mr. Courtney Newton, United Way  
Ms. Carolyn Wynn, Birmingham

Vice Chairman Doris Powell called the meeting to order at 12:03 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 October 21, 2009 and November 17, 2009 meeting minutes. Ms. Nancy Clark seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

Mr. Bill Foisy presented a report on MPO actions. The MPO approved the TIP modification to include two additional Recovery Act projects and the Rail Service Development Resolution. The MPO was given an update on the In-Town Transit Partnership Request for Qualifications.

### **2010-2011 OFFICERS**

The Nominating / Membership subcommittee met October 15, 2009 to discuss recommendations for officers for 2010-2011. The committee recommended the following for officers:

Chairman: Ouida Fristchi  
Vice-Chairman: Doris Powell

A call was made from the floor for any additional nominations. Mr. Willie Osborne made a motion to close nominations. Dr. Johnny Peebles III seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote. Mr. Willie Osborne then made a motion to recommend Ms. Ouida Fritschi for Chair and Ms. Doris Powell for Vice Chair for 2010-2011. Dr. Johnny Peebles III seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

### **FY 2010 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM**

The Alabama Department of Transportation issued a directive noting that any capital expenditures above \$5,000 must be included in the Work Program as a line item. Thus, the RPC requested the MPO to modify Task 1.0 Subtask F for the FY 2010 UPWP PL (Planning) tasks to include the following line item:

1. ESRI GIS Software Products - \$8,500

The cost includes software updates and licensing fees and is included in the overall budget cost for the year.

Questions were raised regarding usability and functionality. Mr. Bill Foisy and Mr. Marshall Farmer explained the function of the software and noted that the cost includes not only the software upgrades but also the user licensing and permission fees for the RPC staff. Dr. Johnny Peebles made a motion to approve the UPWP modification. Ms. Anna Brown seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

### **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

Mr. Mike Kaczorowski presented a request from the ALDOT to modify the TIP to include the following projects:

**ALDOT Requests**

|                           |           |   |           |    |            |      |              |        |                                      |   |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|------------|------|--------------|--------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>STMAA-TE09(974)</u>    | 100054272 | Sidewalks along Ballpark Rd. from Bearden Rd. to US-31 in the City of Pelham. | 1/13/2010 | CN | 12/15/2009 | 2010 | \$214,607.25 | Exempt | Other Surface Transportation Program | 2 |
| <u>STMAA-STPAA 7273()</u> | 100054722 | Resurface CR-2133 (Deerfoot Parkway) from SR-7 (US-11) to I-59                | 1/13/2010 | CN | 3/26/2010  | 2010 | \$265,000    | Exempt | Other Surface Transportation Program | 2 |

**These requests are for a sidewalk and a resurfacing project and are exempt from regional emission analysis under 40 CFR 93.126. Table 2.**

|                           |           |   |           |    |           |      |              |            |                                      |   |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|-----------|------|--------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>STMAA-STPAA 7112()</u> | 100054742 | Widen and resurface CR-17 from approximately 85 feet north of CR-270 to 125 feet south of Lacey Ave. – includes bridge replacement at Beaverdam Creek | 1/13/2010 | UT | 12/1/2009 | 2010 | \$265,000.00 | Non-Exempt | Other Surface Transportation Program | 2 |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|-----------|------|--------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---|

**This request is for utilities for a widening project (2 to 5 lanes) and is non-exempt from regional emission analysis. The project is within the limits of project, 100000074 on page A-13 of the 2030 LRTP and modeled in air quality conformity analysis year 2025.**

Mr. David Russell asked about the Sidewalk Committee that was formed two years ago and wanted to know why they had not reviewed this sidewalk request. Mr. Foisy noted that the Sidewalk Committee was for projects funded with Birmingham MPO Surface Transportation Program funding. This particular request is an ALDOT project using statewide funds.

Ms. Judy Gordon made a motion to recommend approval of the TIP modification. Dr. Johnny Peebles II seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

**CRESCENT CORRIDOR INTERMODAL FREIGHT PROJECT**

Mr. John Baker of Norfolk Southern presented a request to the MPO for support of the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project. Included in the meeting packet was the following information:

1. Request letter from Mr. John Baker, Norfolk Southern Corporation.
2. Report entitled “The Crescent Corridor: A Broad Perspective.
3. Support letters from other agencies and governments in the corridor.
4. PowerPoint slides for the presentation by Norfolk Southern representatives.
5. Proposed resolution of support from the MPO, written by the RPC staff.

Mr. Tom Simpson of CH2M Hill presented information on the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project, including the following:

**Goals of the Presentation**

- To describe the Crescent Corridor
- To listen and answer questions

- To request support from the BRPC for the five state Crescent Corridor TIGER application

#### What is Intermodal?

Two or more modes of transportation for the continuous movement of freight from origin shipper to destination receiver, usually in a container.

#### What moves intermodally?

- Automotive – 8%
- Building Materials – 7%
- Finished Goods – 7%
- Food – 23%
- Household Goods – 14%
- Paper – 5%
- Retail – 36%

#### Crescent Corridor Program

- 2,500 mile network linking the South and the Northeast to provide truckers with high-quality rail intermodal service.
- A group of stand alone individual terminal and route projects that collectively can divert over one million truckloads from our interstate highways.
- The Crescent Corridor Program will reduce highway congestion and bring economic benefits and jobs to the communities it serves.
- Proposed as a public-private partnership, this program has support from the Governors of Alabama, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee and Mississippi.

The Crescent Corridor will serve as an engine of economic growth:

- 3,600 direct construction-related full time equivalent jobs.
- 23,000 construction-related full time equivalent jobs from at risk and potentially benefited industrial expansions.
- 56% of Crescent TIGER funding will occur within economically distressed areas.
- 73,000 jobs created or benefited by 2030.
- \$40 billion in cumulative economic impact from 2009 – 2030.

Crescent at full development will annually deliver:

- \$1 billion in Logistics Savings.
- \$146 million in Safety Savings.
- 1.9 million tons of CO2 eliminated.
- \$90 million in Highway Maintenance Savings.
- \$575 million in Congestion Savings.
- 170 million gallons in Fuel Savings.
- \$2 billion in Total Monetized Public Benefits.

Mr. Simpson reviewed the highway capacity consumption of truck traffic. Mr. Simpson also reviewed the benefits of the Virginia Inland Port Front Royal, Virginia Intermodal Facility, including:

- Intermodal Facility opened in 1989.
- ¼ size of proposed McCalla Facility.
- Companies locating near VIP since opening.
  - Investment over \$600 million
  - Over 6 million square feet of buildings
  - Employing over 7,000

Mr. Simpson reviewed the Intermodal Project Employment Impact Analysis including the number of permanent jobs projected by 2020, construction “job-year” equivalent positions, and cumulative impacts, both economic and revenue.

Mr. Simpson reviewed information pertaining to the McCalla site, including:

- Next to the Norfolk Southern mainline.
- Sufficient site size and configuration.
- Favorable topography.
- Close to the customer base.
- Close to I-20/59.
- Sufficient distance from grade crossings.
- Avoids or minimizes wetland and stream impacts.

Mr. Darrell Skipper reviewed the traffic impact study conducted by Skipper Consulting noting the anticipated minimal impact. It was noted that ALDOT is also conducting a traffic study for which funds were approved by the MPO in October.

Mr. Simpson reviewed the draft air quality analysis for the McCalla project. Information included the following:

- Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility will neither cause nor contribute to a violation of any National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS).
- NAAQS are established by EPA to protect the public health, including children, asthmatics, sensitive groups and the elderly.
- Based on EPA-developed models.
- Assumed maximum continuous facility operation.
- Used 5-years of meteorological data (43,800 hrs).
- Maximum predicted impact: Facility Impact + Ambient Background < NAAQS.
- Details will be available in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review and comment, as required by NEPA.

The following questions were raised regarding this request:

- Why wasn't information made available to the committee prior to the meeting?

December 15, 2009

- What impact will be made on the gas tax?
- What type of buffer will be used between the school, local business and the facility?
- What is the impact on PM 2.5?
- Will Alabama be a funding partner?
- Will this rail line be used by Amtrak?
- Will this take away business from the trucking industry?
- Who maintains the tracks?
- How many new trains will be added?
- Could train schedules be altered to arrive outside of school hours?
- Will roads be widened for trucks?
- Who hired the consultant, CH2M Hill?
- Who has oversight of operations?
- What is in place to stop Norfolk Southern from altering this project once it is in place?

The consultants answered as follows:

- Reduction on trucks will reduce damage to roads which reduces the money used from gas taxes for repairs
- An Air study is currently being reviewed that shows the project is below the acceptable level of set standards
- A large burr will be put in place along with a double fence as a buffer
- Alabama is not a funding partner for this project
- Amtrak does utilize this rail line
- Studies conducted show truckers like this project as it will allow for more jobs and shorter trips
- Norfolk Southern will maintain rail lines
- Currently there are only two trains per day are slated for addition
- Train schedules are sketchy and cannot be altered to fit into specific time frames
- Eastern Valley Road will not be widened as no truck traffic will be allowed
- Norfolk Southern hired the consultants for this project and has oversight

Mr. Bill Foisy read the proposed resolution of support from the MPO that is included as Attachment 1.

A question was asked about rescinding the resolution if the terms are not met. A recommendation was made to hold the vote until hearing from other groups that approve or oppose this project. Vice Chairman Powell noted that this request was moving forward to the TTC and MPO Subcommittee and any vote taken on recommending this project would be an up or down vote on recommendation.

Ms. Judy Gordon made a motion to table this item until January. Dr. Johnny Peebles seconded the motion. Mr. Pittman Owen noted that this is a very positive project economically as it is a clean business and would benefit job recruitment. Mr. Willie Osborne motioned for a roll call

vote. Mr. Stephan Waendelin seconded the motion for a roll call vote. The motion to hold a roll call vote passed on a voice vote.

Vice Chairman Doris Powell ordered a roll call vote on the motion to table the request until January. The vote was recorded as follows:

| Last Name    | First Name | Membership District                | Yes      | No        | Abstain  | Absent   |
|--------------|------------|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Brown        | Anna       | City of Birmingham                 | X        |           |          |          |
| Giddens      | Harry      | City of Birmingham                 | X        |           |          |          |
| Gilbert      | Joel       | City of Birmingham                 |          |           | X        |          |
| Klein        | Gilbert    | City of Birmingham                 |          |           |          | X        |
| Osborne      | Willie     | City of Birmingham                 |          |           | X        |          |
| Owen         | Pittman    | City of Birmingham                 |          | X         |          |          |
| Powell       | Doris      | City of Birmingham                 |          | X         |          |          |
| Royster      | Ruthie     | City of Birmingham                 | X        |           |          |          |
| Russell      | David      | City of Birmingham                 | X        |           |          |          |
| Springer     | John       | City of Birmingham                 |          | X         |          |          |
| Gunnin       | Jim        | East / Northeast Jefferson County  | X        |           |          |          |
| Hall         | Pat        | East / Northeast Jefferson County  |          |           |          | X        |
| McKenna      | Barbara    | East / Northeast Jefferson County  |          |           |          | X        |
| Robertson    | T.H.       | East / Northeast Jefferson County  |          | X         |          |          |
| Hodgson      | Jeff       | North / Northwest Jefferson County |          | X         |          |          |
| Hodgson      | Thelma     | North / Northwest Jefferson County |          | X         |          |          |
| Clark        | Lawrence   | Shelby County                      | X        |           |          |          |
| Clark        | Nancy      | Shelby County                      |          | X         |          |          |
| Dye          | Jackie     | Shelby County                      |          |           |          | X        |
| Cochran      | Peggy      | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          | X         |          |          |
| Fritschi     | Ouida      | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          |           |          | X        |
| Gordon       | Judy       | South / Southeast Jefferson County | X        |           |          |          |
| Ketchersid   | Jim        | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          |           |          | X        |
| Ludwig       | Bruce      | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          |           |          | X        |
| Peebles, III | Johnny     | South / Southeast Jefferson County | X        |           |          |          |
| Waendelin    | Steffen    | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          | X         |          |          |
| Wiedmeyer    | Phillip    | South / Southeast Jefferson County |          |           |          | X        |
| Ferrell      | Butch      | West / Southwest Jefferson County  |          | X         |          |          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |            |                                    | <b>8</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>7</b> |

The motion to table until January failed. The request from Norfolk Southern will move forward to the MPO for consideration.



**OTHER**

Vice Chairman Doris Powell reviewed a list of upcoming meetings of interest to the group. Meetings included:

- MPO, January 13, 2010, 1:30 p.m., RPC.
- 2010 RPC Annual Conference, January 27, 2010, The Club.

The next meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee will be held January 20, 2010, 12:00 Noon, RPC 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, 1731 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, Birmingham.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman  
Transportation Citizens Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RESOLUTION**  
**BIRMINGHAM METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**  
**SUPPORTING NORFOLK SOUTHERN CRESCENT CORRIDOR INTERMODAL**  
**FREIGHT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Program centers on the continued development of a faster more efficient rail intermodal route for a distance of 2,500 miles from the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic including terminal host cities of Memphis, Birmingham, Atlanta, Charlotte, Knoxville, Roanoke, Greencastle, Harrisburg, Bethlehem, Philadelphia and Northern New Jersey, and

**WHEREAS**, Cambridge Systematics has made a corridor-wide assessment for long-term outcomes concerning economic benefits and job creation, sustainability including vehicle miles traveled eliminated from highways and public environmental benefits, and safety, and

**WHEREAS**, \$15 million is proposed to be spent statewide in Alabama on capital projects that would increase speed and upgrade tracks, and

**WHEREAS**, intermodal facilities are proposed to be expanded or developed in Memphis, Birmingham Franklin County, Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and

**WHEREAS**, a \$112 million, 165 acre intermodal facility is proposed to be constructed in Birmingham consisting of pad and support tracks, trailer and container parking areas, lead tracks, and related ancillary buildings and features to perform a projected 165,000 annual lifts, and

**WHEREAS**, the draft 2035 Regional Transportation Plan for the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area includes a Freight Transportation Element, and

**WHEREAS**, one of the leading issues cited in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan is the proliferation of large trucks using the major highway system, and

**WHEREAS**, Metropolitan and Regional Planning Organizations along the Crescent Corridor have provided letters of support, and

**WHEREAS**, Norfolk Southern Corporation, in a letter dated November 23, 2009, has requested that the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization provided a resolution of support for the Crescent Corridor Project,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Birmingham Area Metropolitan Planning Organization does hereby support efforts to develop the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Program from the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic, with the following provisions:

- (1) That the Interagency Air Group, composed of representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, the Alabama Department of Transportation, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, the Jefferson County Department of Health, and the Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority, determine, through the results of a Technical Memorandum concerning the PM2.5 Air Quality Impact Analysis for the proposed Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility, that emissions from the proposed project do not cause or contribute to any new localized violations or increase the frequency or severity of air quality nonattainment.
- (2) That the Traffic Study accessing the proposed Norfolk Southern Railroad yard, for which funds were approved by the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization on October 14, 2009, adequately assesses the traffic impacts of the proposed intermodal facility and provides recommendations to mitigate impacts.
- (3) That the Environmental Document for the proposed project that includes assessments of air, traffic and other environmental impacts, being coordinated by the Alabama Department of Transportation in an announced letter dated July 17, 2009, be approved by the appropriate state and federal agencies.

#### CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization at a meeting held on January 13, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kenneth R. "Randy" Cole, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date