



*Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham • 1731 First Avenue North Suite 200 • Birmingham, AL 35203
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January 19, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Citizens Committee (TCC)

FROM: Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman /s/

**SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2011**

A meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, 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
Ms. Doris Powell, Vice Chairman, City of Birmingham
Mr. Thurman Robertson, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Mr. Jim Gunnin, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Mr. Joel Gilbert, City of Birmingham
Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Peggy Cochran, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Anna Brown, City of Birmingham
Ms. Judy Gordon, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Jackie Dye, Shelby County
Dr. Johnny Peebles, III, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Joanne Adcock, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Ms. Barbara McKenna, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Mr. Nichalaus Sims, West / Southwest Jefferson County
Mr. Lawrence Clark, Shelby County
Mrs. Nancy Clark, Shelby County
Mr. Harry Giddens, City of Birmingham
Mr. Pittman Owen, City of Birmingham
Ms. Ruthie Royster, City of Birmingham

Mr. Gilbert Klein, City of Birmingham
Mr. Bruce Ludwig, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Robert Smith, City of Birmingham
Mr. Calvin Rumph, Shelby County
Mr. Jeff Havercroft, Shelby County

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mr. Willie Osborne, City of Birmingham
Mr. Butch Ferrell, West / Southwest Jefferson County
Mr. Steffen Waendelin, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. David Russell, City of Birmingham
Mr. Courtney Newton, West / Southwest Jefferson County
Ms. Pat Hall, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Dr. John Springer, City of Birmingham

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Charles Ball, RPC
Mr. Darrell Howard, RPC
Ms. Cynthia Barton, RPC
Ms. Cissy Crowe, RPC
Mr. Scott Tillman, RPC
Mr. T. Ray Mauldin, RPC
Ms. Lindsey Gray, RPC
Mr. Jason Howanitz, JCDH
Mr. Matt Lacke, JCDH
Ms. Ruth Wright, League of Women Voters
Ms. Sandra Bonner, ALDOT
Ms. Marva Douglas, Greater Birmingham Ministries

Chairman Ouida Fritschi called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m. A quorum was declared. The meeting then proceeded with the scheduled agenda items.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Attendees introduced themselves. Dr. Johnny Peebles III made a motion to approve the December 14, 2010 minutes. Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote. The MPO did not meet in December so no report was given.

NOMINATING / MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Vice Chairman Doris Powell gave a report from the Nominating / Membership Committee. The Nominating / Membership Committee met January 13, 2011 to discuss additions and deletions to the Transportation Citizens Committee. Members of the Committee include:

- Ms. Doris Powell, Nominating Committee Chairman
- Ms. Ouida Fritschi, TCC Chairman, ex-officio, South / Southeast Jefferson County
- Ms. Jackie Dye, Shelby County
- Mr. Butch Ferrell, West / Southwest Jefferson County
- Mr. Harry Giddens, City of Birmingham
- Mr. Willie Osborne, City of Birmingham
- Mr. T.H. Robertson, East / Northeast Jefferson County
- Ms. Peggy Cochran, South / Southeast Jefferson County

Three people were recommended for membership based on district vacancies and bylaws attendance criteria.

The following people were recommended for membership:

- Mr. Jeff Havercroft, Shelby County
- Mr. Calvin Rumph, Shelby County
- Mr. Robert Smith, City of Birmingham

Two people were removed based on attendance requirements.

Dr. Johnny Peebles, III made a motion to add the three recommended people to the TCC. Mr. Bruce Ludwig seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Darrell Howard presented a request from ALDOT to modify the FY 2008-2011 TIP to include the following projects:

ALDOT Requests

<u>UMTAC-53100</u>	100055976	Section 5310 Transit, City of Alabaster, Capital Vehicle	2/9/2010	TR	2/10/2011	2011	\$55,356	Exempt	Transit Projects	9
<u>IM-10200</u>	100055915	I-20/I-59 Interstate Median Crossover Protection from I-459 Interchange to CR-56 (Valley Road) Interchange	2/9/2010	PE	2/10/2011	2011	\$100,000	Exempt	Interstate System	5
<u>IM-10200</u>	100055916	I-20/I-59 Interstate Median Crossover Protection from I-459 Interchange to CR-56 (Valley Road) Interchange	2/9/2010	CN	6/24/2011	2011	\$1,800,000	Exempt	Interstate System	5

<u>IAR-037-000-004</u>	100056047	CR 2303 (Lakeshore Parkway) improvements including acceleration and deceleration lanes, traffic signal and an approximately 700 foot long industrial access road 0.5 miles north of SR-150 in the City of Bessemer	2/9/2010	CN	3/15/2011	2011	\$1,365,000	Exempt	State Funded Projects	7
<u>IAR-037-000-005</u>	100056048	Interchange improvements, traffic signal and striping on Tallapoosa Street (40th Street) from north of I-59/I-20 Interchange to approximately 1,200 feet south of I-59/I-20 Interchange for City of Birmingham	2/9/2010	CN	3/15/2011	2011	\$1,276,800	Exempt	State Funded Projects	7

These projects are exempt from regional emission analysis under 40 CFR 93.126. Table 2.

<u>STPAA-7112(605)</u>	100055394	Demolition and structure removal at 10 locations along SR-261 for widening project from Bearden Road to US-31	12/8/2010	CN	1/14/2011	2011	\$126,403	Non-Exempt	Other Surface Transportation Program	2
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These projects are non-exempt from regional emission analysis. These projects are part of larger projects which were included in the adopted and approved regional emissions analysis. See Appendix 5C of the Birmingham 2035 Regional Transportation Plan.

Discussion was made regarding Jefferson County project lists being available for review online. A suggestion was made to ask Mr. Wayne Sullivan or a representative of the Roads and Transportation Department to attend a TCC meeting and discuss Jefferson County road projects.

Mr. Howard then announced the call for projects to be included in the FY 2012-2015 TIP. A workshop will be held Tuesday, January 25, 2011 in the RPC 1st Floor Conference Room during the Transportation Technical Committee meeting to review the application process. Attendees were encouraged to speak with their local government about submitting projects. It was noted that only the local governments can submit projects.

Dr. Johnny Peebles, III made a motion to recommend approval of the TIP modification. Ms. Doris Powell seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

Vice Chairman Doris Powell agreed to speak with Commissioner Sandra Little Brown on behalf of the TCC in regards to posting project lists to the Jeffco website.

COMMUTESMART PROGRAM

Ms. Lindsey Gray presented the CommuteSmart Annual report. As of October 2009 the RPCGB has managed the CommuteSmart program internally. VPSI is the current vanpool provider. The program added 1,488 new applicants to the ridematching database for an increase of 13.37% in participation for the year. More than 8.6 million vehicle miles were reduced for the year.

Program Tracking Data for October 2009 – September 2010 included:

- Ridematch Applications 1,488
- Emergency Ride Home 19 at a total cost of \$895
- Total VMT Reduced 8,614,646

The Get Green Program is in its 3rd year. 862 commuters registered for the program, reducing 580,000 vehicle miles. The program cost for the year was \$40,800. The Commuter Club Program registered 440 new commuters and eliminated 3.2 million vehicle miles at a cost of \$48,000. Participants receive quarterly \$25 gift cards.

VPSI maintained an average of 30 vanpools each month, reducing emissions nearly 2000 tons and more than 4.7 million vehicle miles travelled. Annually, each vanpooler saved \$700 - \$1,000. The total number vanpool riders were 3,379 for a total of 6,758 passenger trips per day. The total number of cars removed from the highway was 66,352 and a total of 100,789 trips eliminated. The total number of VMT reduced was 4,758,416.

As part of the CommuteSmart team outreach efforts, the 67 company partners were validated and the team cultivated existing partnerships. 126 company meetings were held along with 90 commuter events. Currently there are 12 Community Partners, 34 Bronze Partners, 13 Silver Partners and 8 Gold Partners.

The PR campaign consisted of promotion items, information brochures, Speaker's Bureau and Outreach Events. As part of the growing social media network, Commutesmart now has 449 Facebook "friends" with 43 messages and 244 Twitter followers with 347 tweets. The Online Advertising campaign ran from October 2009 to December 2009 with 600,000 impressions per month at a cost of \$4,000 per month.

A question was asked in reference to tracking transit riders and making the rider numbers available. Riders can complete the tracking form if they are registered for the CommuteSmart program and those riders' trips can be tracked. Information can only be made available upon request. It was noted that the CommuteSmart program is only for to and from work commutes. The CommuteSmart team is working with the BJCTA to offer \$25 quarterly fare passes to program participants that ride the bus in lieu of the \$25 quarterly gas cards.

Chairman Ouida Fritschi thanked the RPC staff for the work they do for the committees. She also reminded attendees that only the Chairman or Vice Chairman can speak on behalf of the TCC.

TRANSIT FUNDING

Mr. Darrell Howard presented a draft letter on transit funding as suggested by the TCC at the December meeting. The body of the letter read as follows:

To the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, and all funding partners of public transit:

We are a group of citizens who are concerned about public transportation in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area. The size and density of Birmingham, along with its average per capita income of \$19,724 (compared to a U.S. average of \$27,041) should be a clear indicator of the need for reliable public transportation. We understand that in today's economy, everyone is

scrutinizing their priorities and budgets. We also understand that the responsibility for funding public transportation should not be placed in one basket, so to speak, but should be widespread and diverse. Without transportation, people are static, and immobilization cripples individuals as well as the economy.

We respectfully request that you work together in an effort to devise ways to pay for public transportation and/or collect for payment not received or leveraged. (For example, there has been discussion with regard to a bill that passed in the 1980s authorizing a transit tax on tobacco.) One thing is for sure, dedicated funding needs to be implemented quickly. No agency can plan to operate, much less improve, without having a secure source of income.

Although the effects may be felt more severely here in the Jefferson and Shelby County area, this is a statewide problem that needs cooperation and legislation for statewide funding. Please hear our collective cry and give this your immediate attention. Mobility in the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area is critical for its future success.

After review of the letter, the TCC recommended making the following changes:

- Add a paragraph explaining who the TCC is
- Remove financial planning from the first line and add funding in its place
- Send to legislators / municipalities

Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer made a motion to correct the letter with the recommended changes. Mr. Bruce Ludwig seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

A discussion was raised about removing Birmingham from the letter as this is a statewide issue, not just Birmingham. Mr. Ball noted that the state delegation is looking into the transit funding issue. Staff reminded attendees that the two-county area is part of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area.

Another recommendation was made to add the list of TCC members to the letter and add the words “representative” and “statewide, but most especially” to the sentence “We are a group of citizens who are concerned about public transportation in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area.”

Dr. Johnny Peebles, III made a motion to send the letter with the additional changes. Vice Chairman Doris Powell seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

A copy of the revised letter is included as an attachment.

OTHER

Chairman Fritschi reviewed the list of upcoming meetings, including:

- Transportation Technical Committee (including FY 2012-2115 TIP workshop), January 25, 2011, 10:00 a.m., RPC.
- Announcement of next Citizens Committee meeting for February 16, 2011, 12:00 Noon, RPC.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman
Transportation Citizens Committee

Date

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January 19, 2011

TRANSPORTATION

CITIZENS

COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

Ouida Fritschi,
Chairman
Doris Powell,
Vice Chairman

Joann Adcock
Anna Brown
Lawrence Clark

Nancy Clark
Peggy Cochran

Jackie Dye
Butch Ferrell

Harry Giddens
Joel Gilbert

Judy Gordon
Jim Gunnin

Pat Hall
Jeff Havercroft

Gilbert Klein
Bruce Ludwig

Barbara McKenna
Courtney Newton

Willie Osborne
Pitman Owen

Johnny Peebles, III
T.H. Robertson

Ruthie Royster
Calvin Rumph

David Russell
Nichalaus Sims

Robert Smith
Dr. John Springer

Steffen Waendelin
Phillip Wiedmeyer


To the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Shelby County, Jefferson and Shelby County Legislative Delegations and all funding partners of public transit:


The Transportation Citizens Committee is a representative group of citizens who are concerned about public transportation statewide, but most especially in the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area that provides recommendations concerning Regional transportation programs and projects to the elected officials on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Citizens Committee membership is composed of representatives from the City of Birmingham, South/Southeast Jefferson County, West/Southwest Jefferson County, East/Northeast Jefferson County, North/Northwest Jefferson County and Shelby County.

The size and density of Birmingham, along with its average per capita income of \$19,724 (compared to a U.S. average of \$27,041) should be a clear indicator of the need for reliable public transportation. We understand that in today's economy, everyone is scrutinizing their priorities and budgets. We also understand that the responsibility for funding public transportation should not be placed in one basket, so to speak, but should be widespread and diverse. Without transportation, people are static, and immobilization cripples individuals as well as the economy.

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Although the effects may be felt more severely here in the Jefferson and Shelby County area, this is a statewide problem that needs cooperation and legislation for statewide funding. Please hear our collective cry and give this your immediate attention. Mobility in the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area is critical for its future success.

Sincerely,

Ouida Fritschi, Chairman
Transportation Citizens Committee


Doris Powell, Vice Chairman
Transportation Citizens Committee

cc: Jefferson and Shelby County Mayors