



February 16, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Citizens Committee (TCC)
FROM: Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman /s/
**SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2011**

A meeting of the Transportation Citizens Committee was held on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, 12:00 Noon, RPCGB 1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Jim Gunnin, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Ms. Peggy Cochran, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Anna Brown, City of Birmingham
Ms. Judy Gordon, South / Southeast Jefferson 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. Pittman Owen, City of Birmingham
Ms. Ruthie Royster, 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
Mr. Willie Osborne, City of Birmingham
Mr. Butch Ferrell, West / Southwest Jefferson County
Mr. Steffen Waendelin, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Ms. Pat Hall, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Dr. John Springer, City of Birmingham

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Ms. Doris Powell, Vice Chairman, City of Birmingham
Mr. Thurman Robertson, East / Northeast Jefferson County
Ms. Jackie Dye, Shelby County
Mr. Harry Giddens, City of Birmingham
Mr. Joel Gilbert, City of Birmingham
Mr. Phillip Wiedmeyer, South / Southeast Jefferson County
Mr. Gilbert Klein, City of Birmingham
Mr. David Russell, City of Birmingham
Mr. Courtney Newton, West / Southwest Jefferson County

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Darrell Howard, RPCGB
Ms. Cynthia Barton, RPCGB
Mr. Mike Kaczorowski, RPCGB
Mr. Greg Wingo, RPCGB
Ms. Cissy Crowe, RPCGB
Mr. Matt Lacke, JCDH
Ms. Ruth Wright, League of Women Voters
Ms. Sandra Bonner, ALDOT
Ms. Marva Douglas, Greater Birmingham Ministries
Mr. George Henry, City of Alabaster
Ms. Willa Dean Hinson, Leeds Scenic Byways
Mr. Paul Godsey
Ms. Carolyn Wynn
Ms. Peggy Gargus

Chairman Ouida Fritschi called the meeting to order at 12:05 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 January 19, 2011 minutes. Ms. Nancy Clark seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote. Mr. Darrell Howard gave an update on MPO actions.

The MPO met February 9, 2011 and approved the TIP modification as recommended by the TCC. The MPO also reviewed the CommuteSmart Annual Report and the MPO concurred with the annual TCC and TTC Membership.

TRANSIT NEW STARTS PROGRAM

Mr. Darrell Howard gave a history of Congressionally Appropriated FTA New Starts Program Funding in the Birmingham Region. Information presented included the following:

Authorized Funding

Authorization Year	Amount	Status	Project
FY 1998	\$87 Million	TEA-21 Expired in August 2006	\$13.2 Million of the \$87 million (15.3%) was appropriated
FY 2006 (SAFETEA-LU)	\$0	Eligible for annual appropriation	To date, no funding has been appropriated by Congress
FY 2006 (SAFETEA-LU)	\$100 Million	Eligible for annual appropriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifically limited to develop • I-65 South Bus Rapid Transit • To date, not funding has been appropriated by Congress

Appropriated Funding

Appropriation Year	Amount	Status	Project
FY 1999	\$992,000	Expended	Regional Transit System Plan a.k.a. Alternatives Analysis Phase I
FY 2000	\$2,943,236	Expended	Regional Transit System Plan a.k.a. Alternatives Analysis Phase I (\$1,815,450) In-Town Transit Partnership (\$1,127,786)
FY 2001	\$4,853,216	Obligated / Active	I-65 HOV/Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study Alternatives Analysis Phase I Environmental
FY 2002	\$1,980,216	Expired	No Project
FY 2003	\$1,967,165	Expired	No Project
FY 2004	\$755,000	Obligated / Active	In-Town Transit Partnership Support Tasks
FY 2004	\$2,689,626	Obligated / Active	Southwest Corridor (Bessemer Super Highway) \$1,367,214 East/Northeast Transit Corridor \$1,322,412
FY 2005	\$992,000	Obligated / Active	Southeast Corridor (U.S. 280)

Funded projects / studies include:

- RPCGB Transit System Plan (RTIS)
www.rpcgb.org/download/mpo/RPCGB-MPO-Complete-2004.pdf

- In-Town Transit Partnership (ITP)
www.ITP-project.com
- I-65 / US 31 Mobility Matters
www.i65-us31mobilitymatters.com
- US 280 Corridor Transit Study
www.us280transitstudy.com
- Southwest Corridor Study
www.swcorridor.org

Monies received could not be used for construction. Mr. Howard noted that there are currently no appropriations coming out of Washington. The MPO previously received notice of appropriation for the I-65 project, but no money has been received to date.

Questions / comments made in regards to the funding included:

- Senator Richard Shelby authorized \$87 million and \$13 million was used. All we get are studies.
- Out of \$13 million, how much is left?
- What happened to stimulus money? Were not any of these projects “shovel ready?”
- What about potholes on I-65?
- These funds are basically soft money.
- When we use this money, will we have brick and mortar funding plans in place?
- How is local match being addressed? What about a transit authority that can come up with a match stream?
- With new census numbers coming out, all feasibility information will be moot. New studies will need to be conducted.
- Is the government still reducing money for next year if not all money is spent?
- The problem with the ITP project is not getting funding from other areas and no one wanting to run it. Why are we spending the money on this instead of other projects? The ITP has substantial operating costs so why would anyone do a study with no operator?

Mr. Darrell Howard and Mr. Mike Kaczorowski addressed the questions and comments. Monies received are required to be spent on planning activities. There are different funding sources for different areas of programming i.e. money from a blue pot cannot be used for projects in a red pot.

The ITP project was considered a “shovel-ready” project, but there was not enough financial support. The ITP project was then submitted for a TIGER grant. With no securement of matching funds, the project was not selected under the TIGER grant program. There were also three different administration changes within the study period that affected the project as well as the inability to locate someone to operate the system once it was completed. Staff tried to secure three years of CMAQ funding for the project, but were unsuccessful.

The I-65 HOV/BRT project was a multi-phased project and included a feasibility study, an alternatives analysis identification and phase I of the environmental study.

The majority of projects require matching funds and in the current climate, those funds are typically not available. Public / private partnerships are being used in other areas of the country with success.

ALDOT currently has a major project for repairing / repaving I-65 that will begin when the weather allows. ALDOT will be requested to present information on the I-65 repaving / repair project at a future TCC meeting.

TRANSPORTATION WEBSITE

Mr. Greg Wingo presented an overview of the new RPCGB website. The website includes information on the MPO, which has been integrated from the original MPO website. Mr. Wingo pointed out that all study related websites mentioned in the previous agenda item can be found on the RPCGB website. Under the Transportation link, you can find information about the MPO, TTC and TCC as well as copies of the current adopted plans, latest news, upcoming events, meeting calendars, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, Thoroughfare Plan and transit plans. The RPCGB can also be found on Facebook and Twitter. Comments or suggestions about the website can be directed to Mr. Greg Wingo at (205) 264-8458 or gwingo@rpcgb.org.

OTHER

Mr. Darrell Howard announced a series of community forums to be held February 22-24, 2011 regarding the Southwest Corridor. The meetings dates and locations are as follows:

February 22, 2011	RPCGB 1 st Floor Conference Room	5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
February 23, 2011	Bessemer YMCA	5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
February 24, 2011	Brighton Community Center	5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact Darrell Howard at (205) 264-8441 or dhoward@rpcgb.org.

Ms. Anna Brown noted that a previous study was conducted along the US 11 Corridor with no further improvements made. Mr. Darrell Howard noted that the study mentioned was conducted by the BJCTA for their Transit Development Plan. The current study being conducted on behalf of the MPO is looking at the long-term, high capacity and redevelopment of the corridor.

Ms. Peggy Gargus requested the TCC and RPCGB provide information on US 280, including how much has been spent on studies and how much money has been appropriated for US 280 and the I-459 interchange to date, as well as, the square footage of the US 280 / 459 interchange in the 2002

plan. Mr. Willie Osborne made a motion to have ALDOT present information on Ms. Gargus' request to the TCC. Dr. Johnny Peebles, III seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

Chairman Fritschi reviewed the list of upcoming meetings, including:

- Transportation Technical Committee, February 23, 2011, 10:00 a.m., RPC.
- Announcement of next Citizens Committee meeting for March 16, 2011, 12:00 Noon, RPC.

Dr. John Springer commented on the lack of completion of studied projects / corridors. He asked if there was an effective way to move the completed studies forward to project completion. Mr. Darrell Howard noted that a working group of the TTC, project sponsors and ALDOT is currently reviewing this issue and are working towards solving this problem. Funding issues are one major reason why projects are not completed in a timely manner.

Ms. Barbara McKenna made a motion to do a study on how to bring projects to completion. Mr. Howard reiterated that the working group previously mentioned is working on this issue with a goal of the end of the fiscal year to determine what can be done to move projects forward in a timely manner. Chairman Ouida Fritschi asked that in light of the working group looking at this issue would the committee like to withdraw the motion. The committee did not withdraw the motion. Ms. Anna Brown seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote with three no votes. Mr. Darrell Howard noted that a report on the actions and findings of the working group will be prepared and presented to the TCC upon completion.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ms. Ouida Fritschi, Chairman
Transportation Citizens Committee

Date