



*Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham • 1731 First Avenue North Suite 200 • Birmingham, Al 35203
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December 16, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Technical Committee

FROM: Mr. David Hunke, Chairman /s/

**SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2009**

A meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee was held on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, 10:00 a.m., RPC 1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Greg Dawkins, Vice-Chairman, City of Birmingham Traffic Engineer
Mr. Eric Womack, Shelby County Development Services Representative
Mr. Richard Caudle, At-Large
Mr. John Stewart, At-Large
Mr. Tom Magee, City of Birmingham Chief Planner
Mr. Doug Hale, Bicycle / Pedestrian Representative
Ms. Rhonda Scissir, BJCTA Representative
Ms. Sheila Chaffin, UAB Exec. Dir. Campus Planning and Facilities Programming
Mr. Phillip Garratt, P.E., At-Large
Mr. Fenn Church, Trucking Representative
Mr. Matthew Cobb, City of Homewood Engineer
Mr. Richard Darden, At-Large
Mr. Al Folcher, At-Large
Mr. Chris Hatcher, Operation New Birmingham
Mr. Scott Holladay, Shelby County Highway Department Representative
Mr. Rod Long, City of Hoover Engineer
Mr. Wallace McCord, At-Large

Ms. Mary Margaret Nicholson, At-Large
Mr. Lance Taylor, ALDOT Preconstruction Engineer – Birmingham
Mr. Chris Reeves, At-Large

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY PROXY

Mr. David Hunke, Chairman, At-Large
 Represented by Mr. Eric Womack
Ms. Kim Fort, UAB Parking Services Dir. of Auxiliary Services
 Ms. Sheila Chaffin
Mr. John Tally, CLASTRAN Transportation Mobility Manager
 Mr. Fenn Church
Ms. Denise Hornbuckle, Traffic Safety Representative
 Represented by Mr. Doug Hale
Mr. Jason Howanitz, Jeff. County Dept. of Health Chief Meteorologist - Air Division
 Represented by Mr. Matt Lacke
Mr. Charles Malone, ALDOT Maintenance Representative-Birmingham
 Represented by Mr. Jesse Miles

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mr. Andrew Sullivan, At-Large
Ms. Alfredo Acoff, ALDOT Environmental Coordinator – Montgomery
Mr. Ken Boozer, Jefferson County Dept. of Roads and Transportation Representative
Ms. Nan Baldwin, Birmingham Business Alliance (Non-Voting Member)
Ms. Carletta Singleton, At-Large
Mr. Joe Bearrentine, At-Large
Mr. Ron Clement, Railroad Representative
Dr. Emmanuel Oranika, ALDOT Metropolitan Planning Engineer - Montgomery
Mr. Ron Gore, ADEM (Non-Voting Member)
Mr. Jeff Anoka, FTA (Non-Voting Member)
Mr. Dave Harris, FHWA (Non-Voting Member)

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Bill Foisy, RPC
Mr. Mike Kaczorowski, RPC
Ms. Cynthia Barton, RPC
Mr. Marshall Farmer, RPC
Mr. Randy Sain, Sain Associates
Mr. Darrell Skipper, Skipper Consulting
Mr. Scott Cothron, Sain Associates
Mr. John Baker, Norfolk Southern
Ms. Elizabeth Lawlor, Norfolk Southern
Mr. Randy Kemp, City of Birmingham
Mr. Tom Simpson, CH2M Hill

Mr. Charles McMillon, Norfolk Southern
Ms. Virginia Williams, Williams LLC
Mr. Fred Hawkins, EDT
Mr. Scott Skipper, Skipper Consulting

Vice Chairman Greg Dawkins called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The meeting proceeded with the scheduled agenda items.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Attendees introduced themselves. Mr. Tom Magee made a motion to approve the October 28, 2009 minutes. Mr. Al Folcher 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 addition 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

Mr. Richard Caudle presented a recommendation from the Nominating Committee for officers for 2010-2011. The Nominating Committee, including Mr. Richard Caudle, Mr. David Hunke and Ms. Sheila Chaffin, recommended the following:

Mr. David Hunke Chairman
Mr. Greg Dawkins Vice Chairman

Mr. Al Folcher made a motion to close the nominations. Mr. Scott Holladay seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote. Ms. Sheila Chaffin made a motion to approve Mr. David Hunke as Chairman and Mr. Greg Dawkins as Vice Chairman for 2010-2011. Mr. Rod Long 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.

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. Mr. Al Folcher made a motion to approve the UPWP modification. Mr. John Stewart seconded the motion that passed on a voice vote.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

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 72730</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 71120</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
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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. Scott Holladay made a motion to recommend approval of the TIP modification. Mr. John Stewart 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. Report entitled “The Crescent Corridor: A Broad Perspective.
2. Support letters from other agencies and governments in the corridor.
3. PowerPoint slides for the presentation by Norfolk Southern representatives.
4. 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 during the presentation:

- Will improvements to infrastructure be made?
- Which direction will the majority of loaded trucks be heading from the facility?
- What increase in train traffic will occur with the new facility?
- If this project does not receive TIGER funds, how will it be funded?
- Will Norfolk Southern be making changes to McAshan Drive?
- Were other sites evaluated?
- Will length of train create problems at grade crossings?

The questions were answered as follows:

- Lanes will be added on McAshan to include a right turn lane.
- Train traffic will leave the facility and head to Dallas or New Orleans, Truck traffic will primarily head NE.
- 95% of truck traffic is transport from North East and this project will reduce that number.
- 21 trains already travel the existing rail line and additions are only expected to be two additional trains.
- If TIGER money is not received, the project as a whole will have to be reduced in size.
- Other sites were reviewed but they were off of the main line. Two additional sites were struck due to environmental impact and grade crossings.

Mr. Bill Foisy read the proposed resolution of support for the MPO that is included as Attachment 1. Mr. Al Folcher recommended changing the word provision to conditions on page 2 of the resolution.

Mr. Al Folcher made a motion to recommend approval of the recommendation. Mr. Rod Long seconded the motion. Mr. Richard Caudle noted that the State TIP has not yet been approved by the FHWA and therefore does not yet include the MPO approved funding for the traffic study. In addition, the MPO could be on record as supporting a project which may, in the end, have an air or traffic report that shows negative impacts.

The motion passed with one abstention.

OTHER

Mr. Greg Dawkins reviewed the list of meetings of interest to the committee that included:

- MPO, January 13, 2010, 1:30 p.m., RPC.
- 2010 RPC Annual Conference, January 27, 2010, The Club.
- Announcement of next Technical Committee meeting for TUESDAY January 26, 2010, 10:00 a.m., RPC. Meeting day changed due to RPC Annual Meeting.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

DH:cb

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APPROVED:

Mr. David Hunke, Chairman
Transportation Technical 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