

**Mobile Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization and
Technical Citizens Committee Meeting
September 10, 2008, 10:00 a.m.
SARPC Boardroom**

MPO Members Present

Mr. Russell J. Wimberly (Rep Norman Walton)
Mr. Vince Calametti
Mayor Jim Trout
Mayor Sam Jones
Mr. Tyrone Parker
Councilman Troy Ephriam
Ms. Betty Donald (Rep. Mayor Ken Williams)
Comm. Mike Dean
Councilman William Carroll
Mr. Joe Ruffer
Mayor Ron Davis

MPO Members Absent

Mayor Don Nelson
Mayor Stan Wright
Mayor William Bush
Councilman Reggie Copeland
Mr. Mark Bartlett
Mr. Robert Jilla

TCC Members Present

Mr. Thomas Hughes
Mr. Jackie Glasgow
Mr. James Jacobs
Ms. Betty Donald
Mr. Gerald Alfred
Ms. Margie Wilcox
Mr. John Bell
Ms. Jennifer Denson
Mr. John Murphy
Mr. Bert Hoffman
Mr. Bill Metzger
Ms. Casi Callaway
Ms. Sandra Forbus
Mr. James Foster
Mr. Bryan Kegley
Ms. Jennifer White
Mr. Ricky Mitchell
Mr. Janic Terry
Mr. Russell J. Wimberly
Ms. Tywanda Jackson
Ms. Sandra Forbus
Mr. Donald Watson

TCC Members Absent

Ms. Alfredo Acoff
Mr. Craig Thomas
Mr. Joseph Threadcraft
Ms. Ginny Russell
Mr. Cornell L. Tatum
Mr. Dave Harris

Guests:

Mr. Russell Howell
Mr. Randy Delchamps
Mr. Dwight Davis – ALDOT
Ms. Lindsay Hutchisson
Mr. Larry Landrum
Mr. Les Brown

Staff:

Mr. Kevin Harrison
Mr. Tom Piper
Mr. Thomas Michie
Ms. Monica Williamson

MPO 9/10/2008

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sam Jones.

The second order of business was to approve the minutes from the meeting on April 23, 2008. Motion was made by Mayor Jim Trout with a second from Mayor Ron Davis. Minutes were approved.

The third order of business was to approve the minutes from the TCC/CAC meeting on July 23, 2008. Motion was made by Ms. Margie Wilcox with a second from Mr. Donald Watson. Minutes were approved.

The next order of business was to adopt the FY2009 Unified Planning Work Program.

Mr. Kevin Harrison said the first item in your folder, you see the resolution adopting the fiscal year 2009 UPWP. This is basically our budget. This has been advertised for several months now. We've got no comments. It has been placed at 40 different locations around the county. This is what it looks like. Ya'll should have received this a couple of months back. The only thing different between this year and last year is that it is \$70,000 less. If you turn the page to the spreadsheet behind the resolution – Item #4.3 Freight Planning Studies is at \$46,400. That is federal dollars, the \$11,600 is the local share and that is a carryover from this year. The total federal dollars is \$573,970 which is a \$70,000 difference from last year. The following on the spreadsheet is total dollars federal and local per agency. The only consultant that we are hiring this year in FY 2009 is the University Alabama – Huntsville for the freight planning study at \$58,000.

There were no questions on the resolution. Motion was made by Mayor Trout with a second from Mr. Vince Calametti. Motion was approved.

The next order of business was to adopt the Mobile Urban Area Congestion Management Process Update Resolution.

Mr. Harrison said the next resolution in your folder pertains to the CMP which used to be called the CMS. It used to be called the Congestion Management System. Now it is called the Congestion Management Process. Ya'll should have received a copy of this a couple of weeks ago and we do have extra copies if you would like one.

I just want to review some highlights of the document. We had GPS transponders and the staff here drove all the freeways, principal arterials and some selected minor arterials a minimum of six times. We averaged the travel speed. We did this five years ago as

well and the system as a whole, we are 1.3 mph slower than we were five years ago. We are ranked 73rd in the country and we are actually ranked number 53 in the country for average annual delay which as an average, the average Mobilian spends 23 hours a year sitting in traffic and we are ranked 53rd in the country on that.

Mayor Jones asked out of how many?

Mr. Harrison said out of all the cities.

Mr. Harrison said now this is the ranking of cities Mobile's size. The second part of the Congestion Management Process is screening of all the intersections in the urban area. The screening criteria is 45,000 average daily traffic entering an intersection. Two approaches over 7,000 vehicles a day. Another criteria was 1.5 vehicle collisions per million or if one of the committee members wanted us to look at the intersection or we found something from the travel time study for a selected intersection. We have a Congestion Management Process Committee which a lot of them are in here today. After a series of filters there were 14 intersections that have recommended improvements. We actually got into a van and went out to these intersections during a peak hour and looked at the intersection in operation. We came up with improvements for these fourteen intersections. All the intersections had the benefit cost ratios calculated to it which is time savings and collision savings over the cost of the project. The highest ranking intersection improvement was Azalea and Burma Road which the intersection improvement was to install protected left turns on Azalea, northbound, and Burma and install exclusive right turn lanes southbound on Azalea Road. We do this every 5 years. It is up to the project sponsor to take the next step. By adopting the Congestion Management Process, we are only adopting recommendations with a project ranking to it. If anybody has any questions of the congestion management process, I will be happy to answer them. Again we have copies of this document if anybody is interested.

Motion was made by Mayor Trout with a second from Mr. John Bell. Motion was approved.

The next order of business was to adopt the FY 2008 -2012 Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Harrison said the next item in your folder is a resolution with our attributable funding schedule on the back of it. The full blown Transportation Improvement Program has been advertised for several weeks now. We put this document in 40 different places around the county and advertise it for public review. We do have one comment that came in that there is a listing in the TIP for a project for biking and pedestrian improvement and a comment was made that curb cuts be considered at all of the pedestrian/bicycle facilities for the disable citizens. A lot of the projects in the TIP were moved backed. The state's discretionary fund projects, some of the major ones that were pushed backed. If you remember, we had an MPO meeting scheduled in August that we had to reschedule until today. This is the reason that we had to reschedule that meeting. We were waiting on the state to balance their state transportation improvement program. I just want to go over with you some of the projects.

Add lanes to Fillingham/Mobile Street from Springhill Avenue to Stanton Street was moved back from 2008 to 2009. The state route 158 extension from Schillinger Road to 98, it is ½ mile east from County Road 576.

Mayor Jones said on Mobile Street is that construction.

Mr. Harrison said the construction was moved back from 2008 to 2009. The cost estimate went up from \$3.1 million to \$3.85 million.

Mr. Harrison continued 158 Extension from Schillinger to 98 was actually two separate projects one was grade, drain, base, pave and bridge and the other is base and pave. Grade, drain, base, pave and bridge were moved backed from 2008 to 2010. The construction for base and pave was pushed back from 2010 to 2011.

Another interstate project that was pushed back was add lanes on I-10 from Carol Plantation to Halls Mill Creek. That was pushed back from 2011 to 2012 and that is 22.3 million dollars.

Another interstate project that got pushed back resurfacing of 165 from I-10 to 165 service roads was pushed back from 2010 to 2011 for \$28.9 million and resurfacing from 165 from 1 mile north of 43 to north of State Hwy 225; that was pushed back from 2011 to 2012. That project comes to \$9.6 million.

Also all bridge projects got pushed back a year. Now that's all of the projects that the state has. They are in charge of the schedule. They have the responsibility of scheduling those funds.

Your money, the MPO money, in the State Attributable Funds, the TCC/CAC met on July 23rd and came up with this funding scheduling that is attached to the resolution that we are adopting today.

The county had taken two projects off the attributable list. One was Theodore Dawes Road. One was Schillinger Road. So two projects that were on the attributable schedule were taken off which freed up some money and on July 23rd the schedule was updated to show all these projects that have xxx's as the ALDOT id number those are the projects we are voting on today to add to the system.

Mayor Jones asked which one was taken off, John?

Mr. Murphy said the south leg of the Schillinger Road of the urban loop from Cottage Hill to Three Notch and Three Notch down to old Pascagoula Road. We've added them to the pay as you go program to try to move them up quicker with that money.

Mayor Jones then asked what was the other one.

Mr. Murphy said that was two projects.

Mr. Harrison said that did free up some money in the outer years so the following projects will move in: #8 McDonald Road, North of I-10 to Old Pascagoula; Dauphin Street from Sage Avenue to Springhill Memorial Hospital; Three Notch Road, Schillinger to McDonald Road; PE for Three Notch Road, McDonald to Ben Hamilton; the Demetropolis extension interstate feasibility study, corridor study; Three Notch Road, Ben Hamilton Road to Dawes Road; and PE for McGregor and Dauphin Street to Eslava Creek. At the same time, Old Shell project number 1, \$7.4 million was moved back from 2008 to 2009 and Zeigler Boulevard, was moved back to 2009.

Mr. Harrison said that leaves us with a balance in the outer year and as ya'll recall we have to maintain a positive balance for 2008, 9, 10, and 11. The fifth year doesn't have to be a positive balance. That's kind of like a wish list. These projects enter the TIP. The fourth year now, the balance is \$794,162.

Mayor Jones asked if there were any questions.

Councilman Ephraim said Chairmen I just have a point of clarification on the resolution that indicates the rebalancing updated FY08 through 2011 for the TIP, but the TIP for the attributable projects was through 2012. Is there a reason for the 12 on the attributable funds?

Mr. Harrison said we are required to have a four year balanced schedule and ALDOT, Montgomery sent us this resolution to adopt it. Actually, we are one of the only MPO's that has that outer 5th year. We are not actually required to have 2012. We are required to have through 2011. This resolution is actually an ALDOT resolution that they are requesting that we adopt.

Mayor Jones asked for any further questions.

Mayor Davis said as you know I have been constantly trying to get Main Street done and it was agreed upon by Commissioner Dean that he would be working to make sure that was in the pay as you go. I want to make sure that is in there since we don't have it in the MPO section.

Commissioner Dean said if we can keep a Commissioner in District 1 we can make that happen.

Mayor Davis said well, the thing is, you made that commitment.

Commissioner Dean said and I will work with the Commissioner in the district and I think you will find that Commissioner Ludgood will work with you on that and I'll support her.

Someone said we are in the process of the pay as you go now and basically I think that she already has got hers planned and getting ready to announce it. I'll be looking at her plan right now and I'll check on that for you.

Mr. Harrison said US 45 was brought up from Wilson Ave to 65. The question was asked what project was that.

Mr. Harrison said 45 from Wilson Ave to 65. It's not in the TIP, but it's....

Someone said you have to come up with \$18 million match or 20% of that.

Mayor Davis said but it's not on the schedule is it?

Mr. Harrison said it's not on the 5 year schedule.

Mayor Jones asked if it was a state project.

Mr. Harrison said yes, that's on the state

Someone asked did you have anything up around Shelton Beach?

Mayor Davis said we are supposed to be getting some lanes put in, I think. Me and Vince talked the other day. I think that has been funded pretty much for that intersection.

Someone said that's an intersection improvement on 45?

Mayor Davis said yes.

There being no further questions, a motion was made by Commissioner Dean with a second from Mayor Ron Davis. Motion was approved.

The next item on the agenda was to adopt the Mobile Urbanized Area Functional Classification Map.

Mr. Harrison said the last item in your folder is a resolution that and there's a reason it follows the Transportation Improvement Program format. Our functional classification has to follow our 5 year plan which is the TIP we just adopted. The full map is over here. There are two projects that we do not have anything in the 5 year plan that we have on our federal aid system which is the Outer Loop and Rangeline Road extension from Laurendine to Fowl River. By taking these projects off the functional classification system it doesn't mean that we are taking them off the long range plan. These are projects that are still eligible for federal assistance; they are still in the 25 year long range plan. Just our federal aid system has to match our five year plan

Ms. Callaway said if this map has the bridge, the I10 Bayway Bridge is there something on that in there right now?

Mr. Harrison said that first stage of the bridge, the PE, is in the 5 year plan.

Ms. Callaway said right, but that's actually putting a location on the map.

Mr. Piper said no, it's just a corridor, a representation of where it might be.

Mr. Harrison said if any stage of a project is on the five year plan, it gets put on a federal aid system.

Ms. Callaway said so if people vote to support this, they will not be voting to support a bridge in this location under any circumstances, just some other access across Mobile Bay?

Mr. Harrison said that's right. Because right now under high priority category of the TIP there is a project for I10 Mobile River Bridge from Broad Street to East of US 98. The PE is in there for \$1.2 million. Bridge, utilities, and construction are all in 2012 in that outer year that we are not required to balance. We don't know if it's going to happen yet.

Ms. Callaway said I think the most important thing is that we are not voting on this location or this place.

Mayor Jones said I don't think the MPO will be making the decision on the location at any point.

Ms. Callaway said there are just a lot of questions like that that come up in terms of well you voted on it, you supported it. You should have known about it.

Mayor Jones said well the MPO wouldn't have any part of the site for the bridge.

Mr. Harrison said and that's the same as the outer loop. That's just a line on the map.

Mayor Jones said on the Outer Loop and the West Alabama Freeway. I know that the state has been really involved in that and I've seen several different alignments for the West Alabama Freeway. I think that the West Alabama Freeway would really replace our loop if it came into Mobile County. The last draft that I saw does not bring the West Alabama Freeway into Mobile County. It's at Hwy 59 in Baldwin County. I'm concerned about that because of the container terminal that we have here and the amount of traffic that is going to be put on 65 and 10, we'll be overtaxed before you got to 59. We would never make it to 59. I really would like for us to look at that and talk with whomever we need to talk to at the Department of Transportation about that because that is something that will affect us for many, many years into the future. If the West Alabama Freeway did come into Mobile County, we could probably forego that outer loop and use that connector to the West Alabama Freeway to serve the same purpose. In fact, it would relieve a lot more traffic. I'm going to talk to Lieutenant Governor Folsom today about that because I think it's a very serious mistake if we allow that to happen that the West Alabama Freeway does not come down into our county. So I'm going to talk to him and I don't know who we need to talk to at the state level. Be glad to meet with them and talk to them because I think that is extremely important to the future of this, I mean the entire community. It's going to really take some of the stress that we have on Interstate 10, especially when it comes to going towards Tuscaloosa and that area. We would be really interested in that. I don't know if there's any formal action we need to take locally, but whatever that action is, I've talked to folks at the county about it, we certainly have an interest in it and I'm sure every other city here wants to make sure that we don't bog down interstate 65 and Interstate 10 with all the traffic. With the actual plan that I saw here is bringing the West Alabama Freeway and dumping it into 59 and goes over Interstate 10 and we don't get any relief from that whatsoever.

Commissioner Dean said and the county agrees with that. We'll do a resolution or whatever to that affect we want to support tying it into the county.

Ms. Callaway said I want to add also Mayor Jones, I've been talking to folks in Baldwin County who are widely opposed to some of the routes that are being proposed to go through Baldwin County as well so you have some supporters on location from them as well.

Mayor Jones said I'm pretty sure even if it came into Mobile County, they would probably have an exit at 59 somewhere, but right now they are talking about terminating it at 59 so it wouldn't even get into Mobile County. They had two options. One coming into Mobile County and one going 59. The one that I've seen lately is the one that goes 59. At some point, I think locally, we need to have some discussion about that because I think that has a whole lot of bearing as to what happens here with infrastructure in the future for our community as a whole. So I'll be talking to you about that and maybe we can put together some meeting among all of us and talk about the implications of that. I think it is probably one of the most important projects that is on the table right now.

Mr. Harrison said Mayor, Lieutenant Governor Folsom about a month and a half ago created a West Alabama Freeway Commission and has appointed members to it to look at that. They have one year to come up with answers to Lieutenant Governor Folsom about the West Alabama Freeway. I think William Adams at ALDOT Montgomery might be a contact for that.

Someone asked have you heard who the representatives are.

Mr. Harrison said I do not know who the representatives are.

Mayor Jones said I will call him today and try to find out if we have a representative on it. I have not heard of one.

Someone said me either.

Mayor Jones said we do need to make sure that we have some representation on that.

Mr. Harrison said we have a problem with 65 between airport, north of airport and to Springhill we have a capacity about 88,800 and last year we had a volume of 97,500. Now when you include Choctaw Point with over 325,000 TEUs per year, those are all going out by truck, predominantly north. So we need to start looking.

Mayor Jones said yes

Ms. Wilcox asked would not be proper to do a resolution and express our wishes formally from this meeting today?

Mayor Jones said I would like to do that. I just want to make sure that we are directing the resolution in the right way because they haven't settled on one of those routes yet and I think that we want to do at this point is make sure that we get some input before them doing that. At that point, we can pass a resolution on what that route might be, but I

agree that at some point we want to do that. I really would like to talk to the people at the state to find out where we are, and talk to Lieutenant Governor Folsom and let him know how we feel about it and see what kind of response we get then I'll get direction from him as to whether we need to send a resolution to that committee or to the Department of Transportation or who we need to send it to. I'm not sure who that is at this time.

Ms. Wilcox asked when's our next meeting.

Mr. Harrison said we don't have one scheduled.

Mayor Jones said if this becomes urgent, we will call a special meeting.

Mr. Calametti said I think that William Adams is the contact. Again, possible routes are being studied. A preference is not there.

Mayor Jones said I get kind of concerned when the largest metropolitan region in the area is left out of the route. That kind of concerns me. I'm real interested in making sure that that is certainly not the case. What the alignment is, we can talk about that later, but it at least has got to cross the border.

Commissioner Dean said and this is a top priority of the county for the next four years, the outer loop, or whatever way it goes. That's a major focus for us. I mean we've got to have it. I mean the growth in the area is just taking off.

Mayor Jones said we'll get together and find out who we need to contact and how we need to move on it, but I wanted to bring it up here because it is something that we are going to have to deal with here in the near future and it's something that you haven't seen a lot of publicity on. We haven't heard a lot about it, but it's extremely important corridor from the north end of the state down here.

With no further discussion on the resolution motion was made by Motion was made by Commissioner Dean with a second from Mayor Davis to approve the Unified Area Functional Classification Map was adopted.

Mayor Jones asked for any old business.

Mr. Harrison said I do have an item under old business. AS you all recall we adopted the new TCC/CAC bylaws and we agreed upon having one joint committee – the TCC and CAC. Since that time, I have received documented appointments from all committee members. We do not need a resolution, but the bylaws do say that the members have to be voted on by the MPO. What Tom is handing out is the appointment list to the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee. There are some spots that are vacant and they can be added by the MPO members except for the County Health Department who wish not to be on the board. This is not a resolution, but I do need a vote from the MPO according to the bylaws.

Mayor Jones said Kevin

Commissioner Dean asked do you need a motion.

Commissioner made the motion to accept the members with a second by Mayor Davis. The motion was approved.

Mayor Jones said this is Mayor Trout's last meeting with us as mayor and we really have enjoyed working with him over the years and really appreciate all of your work with the MPO and with the entire community so thank you so much for all your dedication and hard work and we really appreciate the service that you've given so thank you.

Mayor Trout said thank you and I've enjoyed working with you.

Mayor Jones said let me also congratulate Mayor Davis and congratulate all of the people in the Prichard area on getting their permit from the corp of engineers this morning for the race track.

Commissioner Dean said are you going to find me a place over there where I can watch a good race?

Mayor Davis said you pave my street.

Mayor Jones said I mention that because I'm sure and you will probably hear this also from Mr. Davis in the future there are going to be some projects that they are really going to be concerned about as this development takes place. It's going to be a major development as it relates to infrastructure needs also. I'm sure that we are going to be seeing some of that and point that project is ongoing and moving forward and we really just congratulate the city and that entire region for what's going to happen out there.

Mayor Jones asked for new business.

Mr. Harrison said I have one item of news that everybody needs to be aware of the US Highway Trust Fund needs about \$8 million this month from Congress by the end of next week to cover short fall from the shrinking fuel tax receipts. I just wanted to make everyone aware of that. In September the fund will take in \$2.7 billion and spend about \$4.4 billion. One of the things that they are probably going to do is instead of 80%; they will refund 80% of that 80% which is 64% of those federal projects so it's something that everybody needs to be really aware of.

Mr. Piper said tomorrow at 5 Rivers from 2 to 4 we are having a public meeting on the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. That involves FTA transit funds for Jobs Access Reverse Commute, 5310 which is elderly and disabled, and the New Freedom, 5317, which are projects that go above and beyond ADA standards. If you want to apply for any of that funding for transit, we need to know what projects you want to do and make sure it's in the plan. If it's not in the plan, it's not eligible to receive funding. That's tomorrow, 2 to 4, at 5 Rivers.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.