Public Involvement Meeting Documentation
July 2011

FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Air Quality Conformity Determination and
Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Prepared by the
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
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This document is posted at

http://www.rpcgb.org/tip

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Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham,
Birmingham, Alabama
Email: stillman@rpcgb.org

Date Reported:  August 25, 2011
Date Adopted:  __________

This report was prepared as a cooperative effort of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham as staff to the MPO, by the requirement of Title 42 USC 741 et seq., Clean Air Act and 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93, Air Quality Conformity Rules and Regulations. The Contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy fo the USDOT.
BIRMINGHAM METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

MPO and Advisory Committee Officers
Fiscal Year 2011

Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Doug Brewer, Chairman                  Mayor, City of Graysville
Thomas Henderson, Vice Chairman        Mayor, City of Center Point
Wayne Sullivan, Secretary              Director, Roads and Transportation, Jefferson County

Transportation Citizens Committee
Ouida Fritschi, Chairman              South/Southeast Jefferson County
Vice Chairman                          Vacant

Transportation Technical Committee
David Hunke, Chairman                  Shelby County Planning Services Supervisor
Gregory Dawkins, Vice Chairman         Birmingham Traffic Engineer

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB)
Serving as staff to the MPO in development of TIP
Charles Ball, Executive Director
Scott Tillman, Director of Planning and Operations
Darrell Howard, Deputy Director of Planning
Lindsay Gray, Deputy Director of Operations
Michael Kaczorowski, Senior Planner
Harry He, Transportation Engineer
Cissy Edwards Crowe, Public Information Officer
Cynthia Barton, Office Administrator
TRANSPORTATION CITIZENS COMMITTEE (TCC)
July 2011

Chairman: Ouida Fritschi
Vice-Chairman: VACANT

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TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (TTC)  
July 2011

Chairman: David Hunke  
Vice-Chairman: Greg Dawkins  
(All persons listed below are voting members unless otherwise noted)

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## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)
### July 2011

**Chairman:** Mayor Doug Brewer  
**Vice Chairman:** Mayor Thomas Henderson  
**Secretary:** Wayne Sullivan

* Serves on MPO Subcommittee

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 1-1

Section 2: Outreach and Notification Procedures .................................................................................. 2-1

Section 3: Attendance and Distribution of Information ........................................................................ 3-1
  Sign-In Sheet .................................................................................................................................. 3-2
  Meeting Evaluation with Results ....................................................................................................... 3-5

Section 4: Summary of Comments and Questions ............................................................................. 4-1

Appendix A: Outreach Notification ..................................................................................................... A-1

Appendix B: Information Distributed .................................................................................................. B-1

Appendix C: Display Information ........................................................................................................ C-1

Appendix D: PowerPoint Presentation ................................................................................................. D-1

Appendix E: Additional Referenced Comments and Questions ....................................................... E-1
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Section 1

INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the public involvement meeting held on July 20, 2011, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, First Floor Conference Room, 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL. This meeting was conducted to discuss and document comments and questions on the FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The public involvement meeting was conducted in an open house format with a short formal presentation that provided an overview of the TIP and Air Quality Conformity Determination. Displays were posted around the room representing important aspects of the TIP and the Air Quality Conformity. RPCGB staff was available to respond to any questions and comments.

Attendees were provided a TIP/Air Quality Fact Sheet, an Amended RTP Fact Sheet, a comment form and a meeting evaluation form.

The results of a public involvement meeting are used by the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the adoption of plans, programs, and projects. The final written report is made available to the public.

This report has been prepared by the transportation planning staff of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham.
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Section 2

OUTREACH AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Material Preparation (Examples included in Appendix A)
- A standard size flyer was prepared for distribution.
- Postcards were prepared for mailing

Direct Mailing (Examples included in Appendix A)
- The postcard was mailed to 1,224 persons/organizations included in the Transportation Public Involvement contacts list May, 2011
- A letter to the Transportation Citizens, Transportation Technical Committees and the MPO was mailed beginning June 24, 2011.
- A letter and flyers were mailed June 24, 2011 to local librarians to distribute to patrons.
- A letter and flyers were mailed June 24, 2011 to City of Birmingham’s neighborhood association presidents for posting in their neighborhoods.
- A letter and flyers were mailed June 24, 2011 to the city clerk of each municipality in the MPO area to distribute to citizens.

Advertising (Included in Appendix A)
- A legal notice was included in The Birmingham News- July 6, 10, 13 and 17, 2011
- A legal notice was included in the Birmingham Times- July 7 and 14, 2011
- A legal notice was included in the Shelby County Reporter- July 6 and 13, 2011

Media Outreach (Examples included in Appendix A)
- A Press Release was sent to all local media outlets on July 14, 2011
- A Media Advisory was sent on July 19, 2011

Additional Outreach
- Information about the public involvement meeting was posted on the RPCGB transportation website (http://rpcgb.org/events/2011/06/27/tip-public-involvement/) on June 24, 2011
- An online version of the presentation given during the Public Involvement meeting was available during the 21 day comment period.
- Information about the public involvement meeting was included in the RPCGB E-News Connections emailed July 7, 2011 to over 500 persons including local media.
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Section 3

ATTENDANCE AND DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

A total of 32 persons, exclusive of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham staff, signed the attendance sheet that is included in this section. (See page 3-2)

The following information was given to each attendee:

- Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Fact Sheet (See Appendix B)
- FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program and Air Quality Conformity Documentation Fact Sheet (See Appendix B)
- Meeting Comment Sheet (See Appendix B)
- Meeting Evaluation form (See results page 3-5)
- Post-it notes

The following information was available to attendees during the meeting:

- Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan
- FY2012 - 2015 Transportation Improvement Program
- Air Quality Conformity Documentation
- Website and Online Comment Information Postcard
- List of vacancies on the MPO Transportation Citizen’s Committee post card
- A Guide to Transportation Decision Making

Poster-sized maps and charts were displayed around the room. They included the following maps and charts (See Appendix C):

- 2.4.1 Surface Transportation Attributable Projects with Map ID, FY2012-2015
- 2.4.13 – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Projects with Map ID
- Total Dollars by Funding Category
- Total Dollars by Project Type
- Annual Particulate Matter Projections
- Ground Level Ozone Emissions

The PowerPoint presentation presented at the meeting is included in Appendix D.

During the open house, attendees could talk with staff and post comments/questions.
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<th>NAME</th>
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<td>Anna Brown</td>
<td>3115-24th St N, Birmingham</td>
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<td>Elysee Nelson</td>
<td>4614-13 41st St N, Birmingham</td>
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<td>Thomas N. Robertson Jr.</td>
<td>814 12th St, B'ham 35204</td>
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<td>TCC</td>
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<td>Robert Zuniga</td>
<td>CITY OF GLOUCESTER 3820 S. MIDDLETON</td>
<td>35073</td>
<td>Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana Brooker</td>
<td>716 Rutledge Dr, Middletown, AL 35209</td>
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<td>City of Middletown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herman Johnson</td>
<td>1150 Madison Dr, Montgomery, AL 36107</td>
<td>36107</td>
<td>Northern Ala. Law Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith Johnston</td>
<td>3022 11th Ave S., Birmingham 35207</td>
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<td>Joseph McFarland</td>
<td>1250 University Blvd Tuscaloosa 35401</td>
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<td>Tom Henderson</td>
<td>3 CITY OF BIRMINGHAM</td>
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<td>Rep. Abercrombie</td>
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<td>Ethel Vinue</td>
<td>600 Main St, Gadsden</td>
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<td>Sarah Stokes</td>
<td>2829 24th Ave S, Birmingham, AL</td>
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<td>Thomas Wilson</td>
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<td>Jim Byram</td>
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<td>Rosalie F. R. Banner</td>
<td>1023 Redbud Ave, Birmingham 35207</td>
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<td>AlDOT - 3rd Division</td>
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<td>Joy Tully</td>
<td>1020 Redbud Ave, Birmingham 35207</td>
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<td>AlDOT - 3rd Division</td>
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<td>Nancy Lindsey</td>
<td>674 Pendry Dr, Vestavia 35216</td>
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<td>Nancy Speiser</td>
<td>2530 RIVER TRC CIR, Vestavia 35219</td>
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<td>Calvin Rumph</td>
<td>5565 RIVER TRC CIR, Vestavia 35219</td>
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<td>Judith Day</td>
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<td>Joe Freeman</td>
<td>7338 N 2nd St. in the Woodbin Drive-a-line</td>
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<td>East Committee, Clay</td>
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<td>F. B. Freeman</td>
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<td>City Committee, Clay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larry Skold</td>
<td>1501 First Avenue North, Unit 54, Chicago</td>
<td>60625</td>
<td>East</td>
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<td>Dorothy Owen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Miller</td>
<td>3162 Bither Place, Athens, OH, 35214</td>
<td>35214</td>
<td>Rose Jones, City of Athens</td>
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<td>Peggy Carlson</td>
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<td>Joel Ann Ashew</td>
<td>1400 17th St. North,</td>
<td>35204</td>
<td>BJCTA TAC</td>
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<td>William Parker</td>
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<td>Anthony Williams</td>
<td>3621 Division Ave, 36,</td>
<td>33206</td>
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Public Involvement Meeting Evaluation
July 20, 2011

Below are the results of the Meeting Evaluations completed at the Public Involvement Meeting. The number on the left represents the combined number of answers calculated from each individual evaluation including multiple answers to some questions by an individual. For all open ended questions, each comment is documented.

1. How did you find out about this public involvement meeting? Check all that apply.
   1. Newspaper, Which one? Not available.
   0. TV
   0. Radio
   2. Friend/Neighbor
   4. Internet
   0. Library
   11. Flyer in the Mail
   0. Church
   Other:
   2. Transportation meetings
   2. Connections

2. How often have you attended transportation related government meetings in the community in the past year?
   1. 0 times
   2. 1-2 times
   4. 3-4 times
   9. 5 or more times

3. People attend meetings for many reasons. What was the main reason you attended this meeting?
   - Learn more about TIP
   - Member TCC – stay informed
   - Work
   - Information
   - Information on transportation projects
   - VIP BJCTA member
   - Represent Congressman Aderholt’s office
   - To gain information on and promote public transportation
   - Desire for projects in Montevallo
   - To view transportation projects for my city as well as other areas
   - For presentation of TIP and AQ
   - Representing the City of Hoover and Shelby County
   - Keep up-to-date ongoing and proposed projects
   - To represent Shelby County

4. Overall, how did you like the format of this meeting?
   6. Liked it very much
   12. Liked it
0 Neither liked nor disliked it
0 Disliked it
0 Disliked it very much

5. How would you rank the information presented today?
   13 Very informative
   5 Somewhat informative
   0 Nothing new
   0 Not very informative
   0 Not informative at all

6. Did you ask a question during the meeting?
   3 Yes
   14 No

7. Were your questions and/or concerns addressed?
   11 Yes
   0 No

8. How would you prefer to get transportation project information?
   12 Through a formal presentation
   5 Talking one on one with staff
   5 Website
   5 Through the mail/newsletter
   6 Meetings
   7 Email

9. If you want to make a comment about a project or the process, would you prefer to:
   7 Make that comment for others to hear
   7 Make the comment privately, not heard by others
   10 Submit it in writing

10. Do you prefer a meeting format that is:
    7 A formal presentation at a specific time and citizens take turns making comments and asking question after the meeting
    4 Open house where citizens come and go at any time between certain hours to get information or make a comment
    9 A combination of both

11. Feel free to include other comments you have on how RPCGB can improve these meetings or communicate better with you and the public.
    • You have very information staff. Thank you.
    • Kaz did an excellent job. Intend to submit questions online.
    • Do not schedule public involvement meeting during lunch hour unless agency is willing to provide lunch.
Section 4

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Questions/Comments and Responses

As required by the Birmingham MPO’s Public Participation Plan, the following is a summary of questions and comments submitted during the comment period that opened July 20, 2011 and closed August 9, 2011 for the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Amended 2035 Birmingham Regional Transportation Plan, and Air Quality Conformity Determination.

Responses are noted in **Bold** following each question/comment.

1. **Question/Comment:** It would be great to offer tips on how citizens can reduce their individual carbon footprint. A website could be provided to show the progress of improving air quality as the Transportation Improvement Program projects are being completed. Graphs and charts can be used to quantify the data. Citizens could also receive suggestions on how they can change their driving patterns, carpooling, reducing energy use through the type of vehicle they drive, etc. A carbon footprint calculator could be used to show citizens how they can have a direct impact on reducing the carbon footprint for the region.

   **Response:** The RPCGB’s Commute Smart and Ozone Awareness programs focus on many of the suggestions you have made. We will take the other suggested tools and measures under advisement.

2. **Question/Comment:** I would like to see air modeling conducted in environmental justice communities to show how their community’s air quality may directly be improved as a result of the TIP projects.

   **Response:** While transportation projects are assessed for their overall benefits and burdens to environmental justice communities, the Birmingham MPO’s evaluation of air quality for transportation projects is limited to consideration of a project’s impact at the regional level. The U.S. Environmental Protection agency has provided guidelines for when and how to conduct “hot spot” analyses for individual projects on an as needed basis. Hot spot analyses are performed for projects that meet threshold criteria, regardless of their location. This process is flexible enough to be sensitive to concerns over environmental justice.

The Jefferson County Department of Health, in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Administration, is currently undertaking a site specific, Air Toxics Study for North Birmingham. This study is intended to better understand the source of air...
pollutants in these communities and assess the risks to area residents. For additional information, please contact the Jefferson County Department of Health’s Air Division.

3. Question/Comment: Why has the Lakeshore Extension from SR150 to I-459 removed from TIP?

Response: The Lakeshore Extension was moved beyond Fiscal Year 2015 due to a lack of matching funds.

4. Question/Comment: MPO staff should take a more active and visible role to try to encourage the community and the country as a whole to adequately fund public infrastructure projects needed to improve transportation system safety, mobility, accessibility and economic development objectives. The ongoing federal rescissions to already inadequate funding levels is short-sighted. Increased investment in road, bridges, public transportation and other infrastructure is needed to preserve and enhance the country’s position as a world leader.

Response: Thank you for your comments. They will be shared with the appropriate officials.

5. Question/Comment: Informative, helpful and well-done presentation but more detail would be appreciated.

Response: Thank you for your comments. For more detailed information, please visit the website: www.rpcgb.org/tip

6. Question/Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to share my observations on the TIP. I was very disappointed to see $819 million for highway and road spending and only $82 million for public transportation. I think our priorities are inverted. I would much prefer to see the $819 million spent on public transportation. We could have a first class system in the greater Birmingham area, rather than continuing to pave over more and more property for highways with the attendant increase in air pollution, waste of petroleum, and negative national balance of payments due to oil imports. Availability of public transportation in our area is among the worst in the country, if not the world for a metropolitan area of over a million people. We need to look at what our sister cities, even those in the Southeast, are doing, and reorder our transportation priorities. I am not surprised that our dysfunctional US Congress as well as our Alabama legislature prefers building highways to providing public transportation. The trucking and highway lobbies have a strong influence, not balanced by proponents of good transportation alternatives.

Response: The MPO does advocate and actively encourages local officials to invest in public transportation infrastructure. In addition, the Birmingham MPO is leading several corridor studies to identify the public transit alternatives that would best serve the communities located along these corridors. The Birmingham MPO provides financial
support to the Birmingham area’s transit providers for planning, capital purchase of vehicles, and for the purchase of service. Of the 14 funding programs identified within the TIP, only two (2) are controlled by the Birmingham MPO. Funding from these two sources is regularly provided to the Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority and to the Central Alabama Specialized Transportation (CLASTRAN) services.

The funding balance shown within the TIP reflects the allocation of funding resulting from both formula programs and Congressionally appropriated funding. While we do not disagree that funding for public transit could be more robust, many of the funding sources identified in the TIP are limited in their uses and unfortunately cannot be provided to public transit. Additionally, federal funds are limited to capital expenditures and cannot be used to fund operational expenses.

7. **Question/Comment:** Please accept this as my support for the “TIP” and “RTP” project. Project badly needed for the increasing traffic area.

**Response:** Thank you for your support.

8. **Question/Comment:** There were 47 comments/questions related to the Northern Beltline project. Appendix E has been added to this document to include those questions/comments as presented.

**Response:** All federally funded transportation projects are required to be listed in the TIP. Additionally, all planned regionally significant transportation projects, regardless of funding, are required to be listed in the TIP. This requirement of the transportation planning process includes all projects funded in the High Priority / Congressional Earmark program. This funding program provides a significant portion of the funding for Corridor X-1 i.e. the Northern Beltline projects. Congressional earmark funding can only be used on the project for which the earmark was made. The Northern Beltline is one of three corridors in Alabama that is eligible to receive Appalachian Highway System funds. In the Birmingham area, only Corridor X (Future I-22) and the Northern Beltline are eligible recipients projects for this funding program.

The project budgets displayed in the TIP coincide with typical project construction schedules. As with all transportation projects, project sponsors develop a schedule that takes a project from “concept to concrete”. The project sponsors establish project funding time frames by taking into account typical construction schedules. The phases of a project that correspond with the timeframe of the TIP are included in the TIP. Planning in this way provides an accurate way of predicting when funding will need to be available for various phases of a project.
Additional public meetings will be conducted by ALDOT to address concerns about facility design and routing. All comments provided to the MPO during this public involvement process for the TIP will be forwarded to ALDOT.
APPENDIX A

(Outreach Notification)
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Public Involvement Meeting Announcement

FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Wednesday, July 20, 2011
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Presentation - 12:30 p.m.
4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Presentation - 5:00 p.m.

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB)
1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 First Avenue N - Birmingham, AL 35203
Online presentation available at www.rpcgb.org/tip

Purpose: To obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 TIP, Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 RTP for Jefferson and Shelby Counties.

Sponsored by: RPCGB on behalf of the Birmingham MPO

Visit www.rpcgb.org/tip for additional information. Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact Cissy Edwards Crowe at RPCGB (205-251-8139) at least one week in advance.

Understanding the TIP: The TIP is a short-term list of federally funded transportation projects scheduled to be undertaken over the next four fiscal years and is prepared by the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which serves Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Projects in the TIP support the vision in the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted June 2010. The latest federal transportation legislation, the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requires TIPs include a four year list of projects with each year demonstrating fiscal constraint.
Public Involvement Meeting Announcement

FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Wednesday, July 20, 2011
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1st Floor Conference Room, 1731 First Avenue North- Birmingham, AL 35203
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Purpose: To obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 TIP, Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 RTP for Jefferson and Shelby Counties.

Sponsored by: RPCGB on behalf of the Birmingham MPO

Visit www.rpcgb.org/tip for additional information. Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact Cissy Edwards Crowe at RPCGB (205-251-8139) at least one week in advance.
June 24, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
    Transportation Citizens Committee
    Transportation Technical Committee

FROM: Scott Tillman, Director, Planning and Operations

SUBJECT: Public Involvement Meeting
        July 20, 2011

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, on behalf of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, will be holding a public involvement meeting Wednesday, July 20, 2011, from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm, presentation 12:30pm and 4:30pm – 6:00pm, presentation 5:00pm at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham located at 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203. If you are not able to attend the meeting, an online presentation will be available along with an online comment form the day of the meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

For additional information, visit [www.rpcgb.org/tip](http://www.rpcgb.org/tip). Documents will be posted no later than July 13, 2011.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

ST: cec
June 24, 2011

Dear Librarian:

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, on behalf of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), will be holding a public involvement meeting **Wednesday, July 20, 2011, from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm and 4:30pm – 6:00pm** at the **Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham located at 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203**.

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

We would appreciate your support by placing the fliers in a prominent place for your patrons. If you are in need of more materials, please do not hesitate to call me at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, (205) 251-8139.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Cissy Edwards Crowe
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
June 24, 2011

Attention: City/Town Clerk

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, on behalf of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, will be holding a public involvement meeting **Wednesday, July 20, 2011, from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm and 4:30pm – 6:00pm at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham located at 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.**

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

We would appreciate your support by by placing the fliers in a prominent place for your citizens. If you are in need of more materials, please do not hesitate to call me at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, (205) 251-8139.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Cissy Edwards Crowe
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
June 24, 2011

Dear Neighborhood Association President:

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, on behalf of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, will be holding a public involvement meeting **Wednesday, July 20, 2011, from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm and 4:30pm – 6:00pm at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham located at 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.**

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

We would appreciate your support by distributing the fliers in your neighborhood. If you are in need of more materials, please do not hesitate to call me at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, (205) 251-8139.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Cissy Edwards Crowe
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS COMPANY

PUBLISHERS OF

THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS

On this 18th day of July

A.D. Two ThousandEleven, Vickie Webb declares that she is an Accounting Clerk of "The Birmingham News" published in the City of Birmingham, in the County of Jefferson, in the State of Alabama, and that the advertisement, a true copy of which is herewith attached, appeared in "The Birmingham News" on the following dates:

July 17, 2011
July 13, 2011
July 6, 2011

Signed- Vickie Webb

State of Alabama
County of Jefferson

On 7-18-2011, Vickie Webb personally appeared before me, who is personally known to me to be the signer of the above document, and she acknowledged that she signed it.

Nancy S Bridgman, Notary Public

NANCY S BRIDGMAN
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF ALABAMA
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES DEC. 22, 2014
Publisher's Certificate of Publication

STATE OF ALABAMA
SHELBY COUNTY

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned Notary Public, in and for said state and county, TIM PRINCE, who, being duly sworn according to the law deposes and says that he is Publisher of the Shelby County Reporter a newspaper published in said county, and the publication of a certain notice, a true copy of which is hereto affixed, has been made in said newspaper 2 week(s) consecutively, to-wit in issues thereof dated as follows:

6th day of July, 2011
13th day of July, 2011

Publisher, Shelby County Reporter

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 13th day of July, 2011.

Mary Jo Eskridge
Notary Public,
State of Alabama at large
My commission expires April 13, 2014

LEGAL NOTICE
Public Involvement Meeting

PURPOSE: To obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). DATE/TIME/PLACE: Wednesday, July 20, 2011, 12:00pm – 2:00 pm, presentation 12:30pm and 4:30pm – 6:00pm, presentation 5:00pm at the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham located at 1731 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203. SPONSORED BY: Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) on behalf of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Visit www.rpcgb.org/tip for additional information after July 13, 2011. Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact Cissy Edwards-Crowe at RPCGB (205) 251-8139 at least one week prior to the meeting.

Shelby County Reporter
July 6 and 13, 2011

MEETING
AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

James E. Lewis, Sr., President/Publisher
The Birmingham Times
Agents for the State of Alabama, County of Jefferson

On this day: 7/14/11

James E. Lewis appeared before me, Mary Jo Robinson, Notary Public, in and for the County and State, who being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is the President/Publisher of The Birmingham Times Publication, in the City of Birmingham, County of Jefferson, State of Alabama, that the advertisement, a true copy of which, is herewith attached, appeared in The Birmingham Times on the following dates:

1. 7/10/11
2. 7/14/11
3. 
4. 

Signed: 

Subscribed and sworn to me, Mary Jo Robinson, this day 7/14/11

My commission expires: July 25, 2012

Notary Public
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
7/14/11

Contact Information
Greg Wingo, RPCGB
205-264-8458
gwingo@rpcgb.org

RPCGB ANNOUNCES PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING FOR 2012-2015 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINATION AND AMENDED 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) announced today that it will hold a public involvement meeting for the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on July 20 at the RPCGB offices at 1731 First Avenue North in downtown Birmingham. The public may attend one of two sessions from noon to 2:00 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A presentation on the documents will occur at 12:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The TIP is a short term list of federally funded transportation projects scheduled to be undertaken over the next four fiscal years and is prepared by the RPCGB acting as staff for the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which serves Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Projects in the TIP support the vision in the current RTP adopted in June 2010. The meeting will also cover a summary of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis. The FY2012-2015 TIP includes a wide range of transportation projects and about $1.1 billion of federal transportation funds.

Comments on the draft TIP and Air Quality Conformity Determination are being taken from July 20, 2011 until August 9, 2011. The TIP will then be finalized and forwarded to the full MPO for adoption in September 13, 2011. Comments regarding the documents may be emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org, faxed to 205-264-8480, or hand delivered or mailed to 1731 First Avenue North, Suite 200, Birmingham, AL 35203. Additional information and online comments can be submitted to www.rpcgb.org/tip

About the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) is an advisory planning agency, providing services in the areas of community, economic and transportation / transit planning and GIS data development and mapping. RPCGB’s service area includes Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby and Walker counties. For additional information about the RPCGB, please visit www.rpcgb.org.
Public Involvement Meeting Announcement

FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Wednesday, July 20, 2011 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Presentation - 12:30 p.m.

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) 1st Floor Conference Room,
1731 First Avenue N - Birmingham, AL 35203

Purpose: To obtain public comments on the FY 2012-2015 TIP, Air Quality Conformity Determination & Amended 2035 RTP for Jefferson and Shelby Counties.

Sponsored by: RPCGB on behalf of the Metropolitan Planning Organization

Media Notice: Any media needing requests or assistance can contact Greg Wingo, Public Affairs Officer, at gwingo@rpcgb.org or 205-264-8458.
Greg Wingo
Public Affairs Officer
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
205.264.8458
www.rpcgb.org
gwingo@rpcgb.org
APPENDIX B

(Information Distributed)
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The Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) develops and maintains the metropolitan transportation plans for the urbanized areas, as well as any areas anticipated to become urbanized over the next 20 years. Named the Birmingham 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), this long-range planning document includes a balanced mix of projects such as bridges, trails, sidewalks, transit services, new and upgraded roadways, safety improvements, transportation demand management initiatives and emission reduction strategies. By federal law, the RTP must cover a minimum planning horizon of 20 years and be updated every four years in areas that don’t meet federal air quality standards.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) allocates federal funds for use in construction of transportation projects and programs in the near term of the financially constrained RTP. A project cannot be included in the TIP if it is not in the RTP. Like the RTP, the TIP must be consistent with the long-range objectives of the RTP and must be financially balanced. Additionally, the TIP is analyzed to ensure that it still conforms to the National Air Quality Standards. The FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program reflects the near-term projects and programs of the RTP.

The project listing below identifies the project and program changes that have occurred in the RTP since its adoption on June 2010. This includes projects and programs that have been added, removed, or modified as part of the FY 2012-2015 TIP’s development.

### Birmingham 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Amendments  
(adopted June 2010)

**New Roadway Capacity Projects**
- OXMOOR Boulevard - Green Springs to Barber Ct. - roadway widening
- Huetown Rd-Virginia Dr Intersection Improvements -
- Chalkville Rd - from Vann Circle to US 11 - 2 lanes to 3 lanes -

**Visionary Plan Roadway Capacity Projects Added to Fiscally Constrained Plan**
- South Shades Crest Interchange with I-459
- I-59 - from 1st Ave. N (mp 132) to I-459 (mp 137) - 4 lanes to 6 lanes
- Old Springville Rd (CR-30) Intersection Improvements (City of Clay)

**Roadway Capacity Projects Moved to Visionary Plan**
- Lakeshore Extension - from SR 150 to I-459
- I-59 - from North of CR-80 (Ave I) to South of SR-5 (Arkadelphia Rd) - add lanes
- I-65 @ 16th Street Interchange(Exit 262A) - add NB On-Ramp & SB Off-Ramp
Understanding the TIP?
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a short term list of federally funded transportation projects scheduled to be undertaken over the next four fiscal years and is prepared by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) acting as staff for the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which serves Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Projects in the TIP support the vision in the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted June 2010. The latest federal transportation legislation, the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users or SAFETEA-LU now requires TIPs include a four year list of projects with each year demonstrating fiscal constraint.

Funding Categories
There are 14 different funding categories in the TIP. The categories are defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). The United States Congress specifies the amount of funding for each category (except the State funding category) as well as the types of projects for which the funds can be used. For example, the largest funding category is the Appalachian Highway System category and those funds can only be used on the Corridor X (I-22) or the Northern Beltline (SR-959). These funds can only be transferred to other projects by the US Congress.

The FY2012-2015 TIP includes a wide range of transportation projects and about $1.1 billion of federal transportation funds. The charts below depict funding by project type and by funding category.

Public Input
Comments on the draft TIP and Air Quality Conformity Determination are being taken from July 20, 2011 until August 9, 2011. The TIP will then be finalized and forwarded to the full MPO for adoption in September 13, 2011. If you have a comment regarding the documents, please send an email to mpo@rpcgb.org or fax comments to 205-264-8480. Comments can be hand delivered or mailed to 1731 First Avenue North, Suite 200, Birmingham, AL 35203. Additional information and online comments can be submitted at the following website www.rpcgb.org/tip.
Transportation conformity determination is an analytical process required of MPOs pursuant to the Clean Air Act. Under the metropolitan planning requirements, projects cannot be approved, funded, or advanced through the planning process or implemented unless those projects are in a fiscally constrained and conforming Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and TIP.

The Clean Air Act requires the State to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that addresses each pollutant for which the State fails to meet the air quality standards. The SIP indicates how the State intends to meet the standards on schedules prescribed in the Clean Air Act. In the Birmingham area, Jefferson and Shelby counties are in attainment for the eight-hour ozone standard but are in non-attainment for the Particle Pollution (PM2.5) standard.

Transportation officials are responsible for finding ways to reduce emissions from on-road mobile sources such as cars and trucks linked to highway and transportation infrastructure. The SIP assigns an emission reduction target for mobile sources, referred to as a motor vehicle emissions budget (MVEB). The MVEB included in the SIP represents the highest level or ceiling of emissions allowed from all projects included in the RTP and TIP while demonstrating attainment of the air quality standards. The chart below shows that emissions from planned transportation projects fall within the MVEB.
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), in cooperation with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB), is conducting a public involvement meeting to obtain public comments concerning the FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). All documents are located at www.rpcgb.org/tip

Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Comments may also be faxed to 205.264.8480, or emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org. Comments can also be submitted on line at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: ____________________________________________________________
Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
Fax Number: ____________________________________________________________
E-mail: _________________________________________________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes_____ or  No____

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes_____ or  No____

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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APPENDIX C

(Display Information)
2.4.13 - CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY PROJECTS WITH MAP ID
FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program

Note: The following projects are not mapped.
232 CBD Incident, Birmingham
240 Congestion Management/TCC Operation
241 Ozone Awareness Program
269 Birmingham Arterial CCTV
337 ITS Traffic Signalization, Birmingham
518 Paratransit Consortium
736 Sidewalks, Bessemer
739 Retiming Signal, ALDOT
740 Sidewalk Master Plan, Birmingham
743 Sidewalks, Hoover
745 Traffic Signal System Upgrade, Hoover
1011 Birmingham Transit Bus

Legend
- Highways
- Interstate Hwy
- US Highway
- Other Functional Classified Routes
- Jefferson and Shelby County Line
- Railroads
- Parks
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Airports
- Churches
- Rivers
- Park Limits
- Airport Limits

2.4.13 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Projects

Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area

July 2011
Birmingham MPO - FY2012-2015 TIP
Total Dollars by Funding Category (in millions)

- Interstate System, $145
- Appalachian Highway System, $443
- STP-Birmingham Attributable, $148
- National Highway System, $46
- Other STP (Any Area), $0
- State, $11
- Bridges, $49
- Enhancement, $8
- Transit, $69
- Safety, $3
- Maintenance, $3
- Other Federal & State, $54
- High Priority & Earmark, $47
- Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality, $63
Birmingham MPO - FY2012-2015 TIP
Total Dollars by Project Type
(in millions)

- Environmental and Air Quality, $5
- Non-Motorized Travel, $70
- Freight, $58
- Safety, Systems Management, & Operations, $35
- Public Transportation (Transit), $82
- Maintenance, $20
- Roads and Bridges, $819
Annual Particulate Matter (PM 2.5)*

Emissions (Short Tons/Year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2024</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2035</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PM2.5</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>293</td>
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<tr>
<td>Base Year PM 2.5</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>813</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*: Particulate Matter with a diameter of up to 2.5 microns for annual PM2.5 Standard
**: Base year is 2008, baseline year test
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Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Air Quality Conformity Analysis

Fiscal Year 2012-2015
TIP Development Process/Timeline

• Fall 2010 – Transportation Committee Members and Local Officials were encouraged to start discussing the projects that they would submit for funding
• January, 10 2011 – Call for projects
• February 28 - Due Date for project funding requests
• March 8 – TIP Subcommittee reviewed the list of projects
• March 23 – TIP Subcommittee meeting finalized the Draft list of projects to be recommended to the MPO
May 23 - Draft TIP & subsequent Air Quality Conformity Report sent to Interagency Consultation (IAC) - 30 day IAC review

June 22 – IAC submitted comments

July 20 – Public Involvement meeting

August 9 – End of 21 day comment period

August 17, 24 & 25 – Public comments and responses presented to the Transportation Committees and determination made to send PI, TIP and AQ Report to MPO for adoption

September 14 - MPO meeting to adopt the documents
Funding Categories

• Table 1 - Surface Transportation Birmingham Attributable
• Table 2 – Other Surface Transportation
• Table 3 - National Highway Systems
• Table 4 - Appalachian Highway System
• Table 5 – Interstate System
• Table 6 – Bridge Projects
• Table 7 – State Funds
Funding Categories (continued)

- Table 8 - Enhancement
- Table 9 – Transit System
- Table 10 – System Maintenance
- Table 11 – Safety Projects
- Table 12 – Other Federal and State Funds
- Table 13 - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)
- Table 14 – High Priority and Congressional Earmark

Chapter 6 of the Birmingham 2035 Regional Transportation Plan contains more information
Total Dollars by Project Type

Birmingham MPO - FY2012-2015 TIP
Total Dollars by Project Type
(in millions)

- Environmental and Air Quality, $5
- Non-Motorized Travel, $70
- Safety, Systems Management, & Operations, $35
- Public Transportation (Transit), $82
- Maintenance, $20
- Freight, $58
- Roads and Bridges, $819
The Clean Air Act and supporting US Code require integrated transportation and air quality planning for nonattainment areas and maintenance areas.

These requirements are known as transportation conformity.

Transportation plans and programs must demonstrate compliance with conformity requirements.
Air Quality – Non-Attainment Areas
### Annual Particulate Matter Projections

#### Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PM2.5</th>
<th>Emissions (Short Tons/Year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>813</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2035</td>
<td>293</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Graph:

**Annual Particulate Matter (PM 2.5)**

**Base year** PM 2.5

*: Particulate Matter with a diameter of up to 2.5 microns for annual PM\(_{2.5}\) Standard

**: Base year is 2008, baseline year test
Ozone Projections

Ground Level Ozone Emissions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Baseline/Budget for VOC</th>
<th>NOx</th>
<th>Baseline/Budget for NOx</th>
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</thead>
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<td>17.73</td>
<td>23.00</td>
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<td>42.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>12.42</td>
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<td>21.33</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

- August 9 – End of 21 day comment period
- August 17, 24 & 25 – Transportation Committees review public comments and determine if the TIP and AQ Report should be sent to the MPO for adoption
- September 14 - MPO meeting to adopt the TIP
Thank You!

We look forward to receiving your comments.

These slides along with an audio version of this presentation can be viewed on our web page: www.rpcgb.org/tip for more information.
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APPENDIX E

(Comments and Questions)
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

August 9, 2011

The Honorable Doug Brewer
Chairman
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
1731 1st Avenue N, Suite 200
Birmingham, AL 35203-2056

RE: Comment Sheet for FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Dear Mayor Brewer:

The construction and completion of the Birmingham Northern Beltline has been a priority since I was first elected to Congress in 1992. In fact, this project has become more urgent than ever in recent years due to gridlock associated with Malfunction Junction and the need to divert heavy truck traffic around the downtown commercial district. The Birmingham Metro Area’s rapid population growth has further highlighted the need for a more complete by-pass. Thousands of jobs will be created during construction and many more through new development along this new modern highway. Traffic congestion, roadway accidents and fatalities will decrease.

We have an opportunity to aggressively fund and complete the Northern Beltline, and we cannot take our eyes off the goal. The completion of the Northern Beltline is essential to future economic growth and jobs in the Birmingham region and it is finally time to close the loop! This project has my full support because I believe it will have a significant positive economic impact on our community while improving air quality and motorist safety at the same time.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Spencer Bachus
Member of Congress

STB/tc
Cissy Edwards

From: Renee Carter <thecartergroup.renee@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 6:54 AM
To: MPO
Subject: TIP Comments

Dear MPO,

I am pleased to see that the recent TIP includes the initial projects associated with the 52.5 miles of the Northern Beltline (Corridor X1). The Northern Beltline will benefit the entire metropolitan region by reducing traffic congestion, improving access and road safety, and contributing significantly to our local economy.

Construction of the NBL will create 70,000 jobs, add $7 billion to our economy, and generate $155 million in much needed tax revenues for our local governments. In the post-build period, the NBL will create nearly 21,000 jobs, add $2 billion to our economy, and generate $54 million in additional tax revenues each year. (Source: Center for Business & Economic Research, University of Alabama)

The northern beltline will become one of the greatest economic development engines ever experienced in the Birmingham area. This one project will create tens of thousands of jobs and provide accessibility to the northern and western parts of the Birmingham region that will permit these areas to attract businesses and people.

Municipalities and counties throughout our region are in critical need of the large inflows of money from the increased tax base that will result from the tremendous growth that will occur around the Northern Beltline.

Thank you for ensuring the Northern Beltline is and continues to be an important part of the transportation plans for the Birmingham region.

Renee Carter
5601 8th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35212
Cissy Edwards

From: BJames8176@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 9:39 AM
To: MPO
Subject: Northern Beltline

We fully support the Northern Beltline Project.

Jim & Sallie Bryant
4008 Acton Circle
Birmingham, AL 35243
Cissy Edwards

From: hspinc@wwisp.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 9:27 AM
To: MPO
Subject: Public Comments re: FY2012-2015 TIP

From:

Michael Muscari
4180 River Oaks Drive
Birmingham, AL 35216
Fax # 205-491-0560
hspinc@wwisp.com

As a 23 year resident of Birmingham whose great grandfather’s home is still standing in southside, it is very important to me that Birmingham grow our infrastructure so our economy can improve. Completion of this project benefits not only Jefferson County, but also the entire region by reducing congestion, improving access and road safety, and boosting our local economy.

According to Center for Business & Economic Research of the University of Alabama, construction of the NBL will create 70,000 jobs, add $7 billion to our economy, and generate $155 million in much needed tax revenues for our local governments. In the post-build period, the NBL will create nearly 21,000 jobs, add $2 billion to our economy, and generate $54 million in additional tax revenues each year.

Since Appalachian Highway funds are available for the northern beltline, funds which represent years of contributions by Alabama taxpayers, funding should not be allowed to go to other states to help fund their projects instead of Alabama’s.

We need the accessibility the northern beltline will provide to the northern and western parts of the Birmingham region that permit these areas to attract businesses and people which will increase the tax base by adding jobs and evolve into one of the greatest economic development engines ever experienced in the Birmingham area.

We need the tens of thousands of jobs that just building the northern beltline will create along with improved traffic flow and reduced traffic congestion caused by limited interstate route options through our area.
MPO,

The Blount County-Oneonta Chamber of Commerce would like to express our support of the Northern Beltline and its construction. The economic impact study numbers speak for themselves. As you know, the majority of our citizens commute outside of Blount County to work. This "loop" would save our residents countless hours in driving time and expense in their commute. It would also enhance our County's ability to recruit industry to an area struggling during this Great Recession.

We encourage you to approve this project for ALL the citizens of the Greater Birmingham Area. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Donny B. Ray
Executive Director

--
Donny B. Ray - Executive Director
Blount County-Oneonta Chamber of Commerce
225 2nd Ave East
Oneonta, AL 35121
205-274-2153
www.blountoneontachamber.org
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Comments may also be faxed to 205.264.8480, or emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org. Comments can also be submitted on line at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Caleb Goodwyn
Mailing Address: 1900 International Park Drive Ste. 107
Fax Number: (205) 969-3958
E-mail: caleb.goodwyn@mail.house.gov

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? Yes [ ] or No [ ]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? Yes [ ] or No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

The Birmingham Northern Beltline should be given the highest priority as a critical infrastructure project for the Birmingham Region. This will act as one of the most

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
tremendous economic development engines in the region's history. It will also create tens of thousands of both short term and long term jobs in the area. The Beltline will also allow growth in the northern and western parts of the county. Appalachian Highway funding is available for this project. If the money is not spent in Alabama on this project, it will go to another state.
Comment Sheet for
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Clay Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: KURT K. LARSEN
Mailing Address: 57 CARMOUSTIE LANE ONEONTA, AL 35121
Fax Number: 
E-mail: joyandkurt@gmail.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [ ] No [X]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [ ] No [X]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments: 08-09-11

PLEASE ACCEPT THIS AS MY SUPPORT FOR THE "TIP" AND "RTP" PROJECT. PROJECT BADLY NEEDED FOR THE INCREASING TRAFFIC AREA.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Comment Sheet for
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cassy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Huan Haqoob
Mailing Address: PO Box 11967
           Birmingham, AL 35202
Fax Number: 205-592-4632
E-mail: hhaqoob@dunnconstruction.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes __  No __

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes __  No __

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

I would certainly support the construction of the northern beltline as the premier project in the region. Job creation should be a central focus of government in these economic

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
times. The northern beltline would create
thousands of jobs as well as opening
up a rural area for further development.
In addition, the federal funds are already
set aside for this project. If we do not
use it, we lose it. When so many are
competing for federal dollars, shouldn't
our community compete? There is no
question the affected areas are beautiful
countryside. However, responsible development
and government can open these areas
up for the general public to enjoy.
Comment Sheet for
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Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Casey Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

---

Your Name: Kevin Ellis
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 995
Oneonta, Al 35121
Fax Number: 205-625-4711
E-mail: kellis@citizensbanktrust.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes X or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes X or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

I support the Northern Buleyway project because
I think it will have a positive impact on Blount County.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Comment Sheet for
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name:  Charles L. Miller
Mailing Address:  9113 Speaks Drive,
Warrior, AL 35180
Fax Number:  

E-mail:  FCM0375@AOL.COM

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? Yes ______ No ______

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? Yes ______ No ______

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

I am 100% for the Northern Beltline For economic development, jobs for now in the construction of the project and for the future.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CJDST

Your Name: Amy Claydus
Mailing Address: 6854 Sunny Dell Drive
Bessemer, AL 35130
Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

I am in support of the Northern Beltline improvement of traffic flow in downtown Birmingham. It will also allow more job opportunities, provide better building the road of new development in the corridor.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page.
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

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Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Comments may also be faxed to 205.264.8480, or emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org. Comments can also be submitted online at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Evans Dunn
Mailing Address: 3905 Airport Hwy
B'ham AL 35222

Fax Number: 205-599-1717

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [ ] or No [x]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [ ] or No [x]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

The Northern Beltline is vital for the growth and development of Birmingham and Jefferson County.
It will also relieve traffic congestion downtown
Improve safety by giving through traffic

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
A route around downtown it will create jobs through construction and new business development.
Comment Sheet for
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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m., CDST

Your Name: ___________ Brooks Harris
Mailing Address: ___________ 4244 Carraw Heights Court, Suite 200
Birmingham, AL 35243
Fax Number: ___________ (205) 980-2730
E-mail: ___________ brooks@harrisaunddoyle.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement Notification List? 
Yes [ ] No [ ]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? 
Yes [ ] No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

THE NORTHERN BILTLINE IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT THAT BIRMINGHAM WILL SEE IN MY LIFETIME. PLEASE DON'T LET THIS OPPORTUNITY PASS US BY!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDT

Your Name: Jerry B. Copeland
Mailing Address: 1459 Kendall Court
Homewood, Al 35209

Fax Number: Phone number provided
E-mail: ddcpe@bellsouth.net

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement Notification list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please include the Northern Beltline on the MPO's TIP. It should be considered the region's #1 priority due to its staggering economic development impact ($17B over 20 years). Also, it is a safety factor for our citizens. We need this important project on our TIP.

Thank you

[Signature] Jerry B. Copeland
Comment Sheet for
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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

---

Your Name: [Handwritten: Dave Rickay]
Mailing Address:
[Handwritten: 2908 Jimmie Lane
Birmingham, AL 35213]
Fax Number: ________________________________
E-mail: ________________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes _____ or No _____

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes _____ or No _____

Thank you for your participation.

---

Your Comments:
[Handwritten: Make sure to add North. Need to the TIP!]

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Comment Sheet for
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Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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submitted online at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Angie Vilchez
Mailing Address:
2217 Ascot Lane
Bham, AL 35216

Fax Number:

E-mail:

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes___ or No __

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes___ or No __

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Tatiana Richards
Mailing Address: 3550 Grandview Pkwy # 1337
                      Birmingham, AL 35243
Fax Number:  
E-mail: trichards@bhamcog.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes_____ or No___

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes_____ or No___

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Your Name: ____________________________
Mailing Address: ________________________
Fax Number: ____________________________
E-mail: _________________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please add Northern Beltline to the T.I.P.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page

E-21
Comment Sheet for
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1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Nanette T. Baldwin
Mailing Address: 1164 Grand Blvd
Birmingham, Al 35214

Fax Number: __________________________
E-mail: ________________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes____ or No○

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes____ or No○

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP.

________________________________________________________________________
Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Alex Truss
Mailing Address: 1120 Beacon Pkwy E Homewood, AL 35209
Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes___ or No X

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes___ or No X

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cassy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m., CDST

Your Name: 
Mailing Address: 1120 Beacon Pkwy 15
Homewood, Al 35209
Fax Number: N/A
E-mail:

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDT.

Your Name: Preston W. Sweat
Mailing Address: 2645 - E Park Lane Court E, Mountain Brook, AL 35223
Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

WE WANT the Northern Beltline added to the TIP!!!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Meredith Davidson
Mailing Address: 158 Old Montgomery Hwy Unit B Birmingham AL 35216
Fax Number: 
E-mail: meredith.m.davidson@gmail.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes ___ or No ___

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes ___ or No ___

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP

Thanks!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Your Name:  Laura Patterson
Mailing Address:  528 Cahaba River Park
Bham, AL  35243

Fax Number: ____________________________
E-mail: _______________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes____ or No X

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes____ or No X

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please add Northern Beltline to T.I.P.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Your Name: ALEX MCCORD
Mailing Address: 2645-E PARK LANE COURT EAST
                          MOUNTAIN BROOK, AL 35223
Fax Number: a.mccord@charter.net

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

LET'S BUILD THE NORTHERN BELTLINE; IT'S THE MISSING LINK. LET'S ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE WITH OUR GROWTH. MANY SOUTHERN TOWNS WERE SWAMPED W/RAPID GROWTH THAT OUT-PACED THEIR PLANS FOR MANAGING IT. AND THEIR PHYSICAL CITY CENTERS ARE FRAGMENTED.
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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST.

Your Name: Maurice Rogers
Mailing Address: 310 Golf Drive, Hoover, AL 35226

Fax Number: ______________________________
E-mail: ______________________________

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please make sure to add the Northern Beltline to the TIP!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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submitted online at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Peggy Rogers
Mailing Address: 3103 Golf Drive
Address: Hoover, AL 35226

Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

It is very important to add the Northern Beltline to the TIP.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page

E-30
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Your Name: Marshahyynn Rogers
Mailing Address: 2500 Birkshire Circle
Heoer, AL 35244

Fax Number:
E-mail:

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please be sure to add the Northern Beltline to the TIP!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
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1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Ashley Howell
Mailing Address: 528 Birmrhm Plsce
Hoover, AL 35244
Fax Number: ————
E-mail: ————

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes ______ or No ______

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes ______ or No ______

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Bunnell to the TIP.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Your Name: Alison Howell
Mailing Address: 1017 Ashwood Drive, Birmingham, AL 35216

Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes  or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes  or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP!

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Your Name: Lisa Swanger
Mailing Address: 200 2nd Street Thomas
                Birmingham AL 35214

Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes____ or No X

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes____ or No X

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP

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Your Name: Michael Shattuck
Mailing Address: 5650 Ashton Way
Mccalla, AL 35111
Fax Number:
E-mail: Michael.Shattuck@hotmail.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [X] or No [ ]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please add the Northern Beltline to the TIP.

____________________________________

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), in cooperation with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB), is conducting a public involvement meeting to obtain public comments concerning the FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). All documents are located at www.rpcgb.org/tip

Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Casey Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Comments may also be faxed to 205.264.8480, or emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org. Comments can also be submitted online at www.rpcgb.org/tip

All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Victor M. Brown
Mailing Address: 154 Clairmont Road
Sterrett, AL 35147
Fax Number: (205) 618-9363
E-mail: victbrown@gmail.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes or No

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes or No

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Please add the northern belt line to the Transportation Improvement Plan.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
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C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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Your Name: Myla Calhoun Choy
Mailing Address: 5025 8th Avenue S
Birmingham, AL 35212
Fax Number:
E-mail:

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes ___ or No ___

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes ___ or No ___

Thank you for your participation.

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Your Comments:
Please be sure to include the Northern Beltline Project in the TIP.

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Please continue your comments on the back of this page.
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Your Name: Caroline Chap
Mailing Address: 5605 9th Ave. S.
Birmingham, AL 35212

Fax Number: 
E-mail: 

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes [ ] or No [X]

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:
Please support inclusion of the Northam Beltline in the TIP

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
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Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name: Joe E. Fuller
Mailing Address: 9904 Crescent Ave
Homewood, Ala 35209
Fax Number: 205 414 6076
E-mail: jo fuller @ bellsouth.net

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes____ or No__

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes____ or No__

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

Bham is probably the only major city on Earth that does not have a beltline completely around the city.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Such a road would take pressure away from where I-65, I-59, I-20 and now I-22 meet.

We should have had this road 30 years ago.

Look at Montgomery, Huntsville, and other Alabama cities.

Look at Atlanta, Nashville, and other Southern cities.
1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: - Jackie Summers
Address: - 3933 Northstar Ct
City/Town: - Rapid City
State: - SD
ZIP: - 57703
Email Address: - rapidtrail@msn.com
Phone Number: - 605.390.7278

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

No

4. Your Comments:

As a land owner that will be impacted by the Northern Beltline, I am encouraging support for this project. My property is currently undeveloped farmland on the Bob Glenn Rd in Morris, Al and the construction of the Beltline would positively impact my land value and accessibility. I also support this project because it will create jobs, enhance economic growth and tremendously improve the lives of all living in the area of North Jefferson County. During construction of the NBL, 70,000 jobs will be created and add $7 billion to the economy. Post construction will create nearly 21,000 jobs and add $2 billion to the economy and generate $54 million in additional tax revenue. This area has been stunted due to the lack of accessibility and by building the NBL there will be an explosion of new home and business construction in this area. I urge you to vigorously support this project and thank you for your consideration.
1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: R. Craig Fleming
Company: Dunn Construction Company, Inc.
Address: 3905 Airport Highway
City/Town: Birmingham
State: AL
ZIP: 35222
Email Address: cfleming@dunnconstruction.com
Phone Number: (205) 592-3866

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

4. Your Comments:

As a businessman and citizen of Jefferson County, I am strongly in support of moving forward with construction of the Northern Beltline. There are so many positives for beginning and completing this important infrastructure project: it will improve safety through downtown by providing a route around the perimeter of the city and reducing truck traffic, it will help to relieve congestion on our highways, it will create jobs through construction and future new businesses, it will open up the northern areas of our community for growth and development, and will be a vital too for economic development of our region in attracting new businesses. Maybe most importantly, a majority of the necessary funding is available through the federal ADP program and our Senator Shelby has been fighting to keep that funding available for that project. Please move forward with this critical project for my business, family, and community!
1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: - Brian Hibbard
Company: - Dunn Construction Co., Inc.
Address: - 3905 Messer Airport Highway
City/Town: - Birmingham
State: - AL
ZIP: - 35222
Email Address: - B Hibbard2@dunnconstruction.com
Phone Number: - (205) 592-3866

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

4. Your Comments:

The beltline will relieve traffic congestion moving through our city, will improve safety by giving through-traffic a route around downtown, will open up the northern areas of our community for growth and development, will create jobs through construction activity and new business development after completion, and will be a vital tool for economic development of our region in attracting new businesses. We are the only city of our size in the southeast which does not have a beltline completed around the city.
Displaying 4 of 7 respondents

**Response Type:** Normal Response

**Custom Value:** empty

**Response Started:** Tuesday, August 9, 2011 7:15:48 AM

**Collector:**
New Link
(Web Link)

**IP Address:**
205.152.44.244

**Response Modified:** Tuesday, August 9, 2011 7:26:14 AM

1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: Harry Thomas

Company: Dunn Construction Company, Inc.

Address: 3605 Messer Airport Hwy

City/Town: Birmingham

State: AL

ZIP: 35202

Email Address: hthomas@dunnconstruction.com

Phone Number: (205) 510-0260

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

4. Your Comments:

The Northern Beltline Project needs to begin immediately. The project will relieve traffic congestion downtown while opening more areas for growth and development which translates into more job opportunities for our community.
1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: - Jody Saia
Company: - Saia Construction Company
Address: - 324 Commons Drive
City/Town: - Birmingham
State: - AL
ZIP: - 35209
Email Address: - jsaila@saia.com
Phone Number: - 205-916-2023

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.
Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.
Yes

4. Your Comments:

- The northern beltline will become one of the greatest economic development engines ever experienced in the Birmingham area. * We need the terne of thousands of jobs that just building the northern beltline will create. * We need the accessibility the northern beltline will provide to the northern and western parts of the Birmingham region that permit these areas to attract businesses and people. * We need the large inflows of money from the increased tax base that will result from the tremendous growth that will occur around the northern beltline. * The northern beltline will provide improved traffic flow and reduce traffic congestion caused by limited interstate route options through our area. * Appalachian Highway fund are available for the northern beltline. These funds represent years of contributions by Alabama taxpayers and should not be allowed to go to other states to help fund their projects instead of Alabama's.
1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: - Glyn Agnew
Address: - 600 19th Street North
Address 2: - 28B1
City/Town: - Birmingham
State: - AL
ZIP: - 35203
Email Address: - ga5721@attl.com
Phone Number: - 205-714-9722

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

No Response

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

No Response

4. Your Comments:

As we struggle through this prolonged downturn in the global economy opportunities for job creation and economic development are becoming even scarcer. To not move forward with the NBL project at this will be a lost opportunity that will take years maybe decades to overcome. Businesses look for cities that have the infrastructure that can accommodate their present, but more importantly their future needs. The NBL project will level the playing field and move us ahead of some of our competitors when it comes to transportation infrastructure. If job creation and economic development is not enough to tip the scales in favor of the NBL project, the improved traffic flow and reduction in traffic congestion will improve air quality and reduce our consumption of fossil fuels, saving our citizens money and preventing health related issues.
Displaying 7 of 7 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response
Collector: New Link
Custom Value: empty
(Web Link)
IP Address: 205.235.112.51
Response Started: Tuesday, August 9, 2011 4:27:17 PM
Response Modified: Tuesday, August 9, 2011 4:31:06 PM

1. Please provide your contact information.

Name: - Joe Howle
Company: - Vulcan Materials Company
Address: - 1200 Urban Center Drive
City/Town: - Birmingham
State: - AL
ZIP: - 35242
Email Address: - howlej@vmcmail.com
Phone Number: - 205-298-3000

2. Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

3. Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? If so, please complete the Contact Information above.

Yes

4. Your Comments:

In response to your request for comments, I would like to state that I am strongly in support of the Northern Beltline. Construction of this project benefits not only Jefferson County, but also the entire region by reducing congestion, improving access and road safety, and boosting our local economy. Construction of the Northern Beltline will create 70,000 jobs, add $7 billion to our economy, and generate $155 million in much needed tax revenues for our local governments. In the post-build period, the Northern Beltline will create nearly 21,000 jobs, add $2 billion to our economy, and generate $54 million in additional tax revenues each year. (Source: Center for Business & Economic Research, University of Alabama). The Northern Beltline will become one of the greatest economic development engines ever experienced in the Birmingham area. We need the tens of thousands of jobs that just building the Northern Beltline will create. We need the accessibility the Northern Beltline will provide to the northern and western parts of the Birmingham region that permit these areas to attract businesses and people. We need the large inflows of money from the increased tax base that will result from the tremendous growth that will occur around the Northern Beltline. The Northern Beltline will provide improved traffic flow and reduce traffic congestion caused by limited interstate route options through our area. Appalachian Highway fund are available for the Northern Beltline. These funds represent years of contributions by Alabama taxpayers and should not be allowed to go to other states to help fund their projects instead of Alabama's.
Cissy Edwards

From: Charles Ball
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 4:04 PM
To: r_e_rutkowski
Cc: Cissy Edwards; Cynthia Barton; Mike Kaczorowski
Subject: RE: Drop Northern Beltline From Local Transportation Plan


From: r_e_rutkowski [mailto:r_e_rutkowski@att.net]
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 1:50 PM
To: Charles Ball
Subject: Drop Northern Beltline From Local Transportation Plan

Charles Ball, Executive Director
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
1731 First Avenue North, Suite 200
Birmingham, AL 35203
Phone: (205) 251-8139
E: cball@rpcgb.org

Re: Drop Northern Beltline From Local Transportation Plan

Dear Executive Director Ball:

Two local groups have asked the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to remove the Northern Beltline from the proposed four-year funding plan because of the project's ballooning price tag, questionable economic benefits and harmful effects on the environment.

The MPO should instead invest in transportation projects that will bring sustainable economic growth to the region in the most cost-effective manner possible.

At about $4.7 billion-or $90 million per mile-the Northern Beltline would rank as one of the most expensive highways ever built in the U.S. State taxpayers would pay nearly $1 billion of the cost, almost equal to Alabama Department of Transportation's statewide construction and maintenance budget for an entire year.

Birmingham has just been ranked the number two gas guzzling city in the country. Local officials should be pushing the federal and state governments to fund public transit or fix 'Malfunction Junction' not build a 52-mile highway far from the city center that will just mean more driving for Birmingham.

According to the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program, ALDOT will spend $81,691,940 on the Northern Beltline during fiscal years 2012 through 2015-almost half of its budget for the entire Birmingham area, severely limiting funding for other, higher priority projects in the six-county region. The state has allocated just 5.3% of funding for bridge projects, 1.5% to maintenance, 0.6% for air quality and traffic mitigation, and a mere 0.03% to safety projects. Transit projects would receive nothing from the state. The funding plan also leaves most localities to foot the bill for sidewalks, pedestrian overpasses and greenways.

In comments, http://www.southernenvironment.org/uploads/fck/file/northern_beltline/2011-08-09_SELCCWRK_comments_on_MPO_TIP(1).pdf, filed today, the groups identified several thriving Southeastern cities that do not have a completed loop, including Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charleston, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Tampa, and Orlando. The groups point to Greenville, South Carolina and Fort Wayne, Indiana as instructive examples where costly beltlines were built to spur economic growth that never materialized.

Not only is the cost to build the Northern Beltline astronomical, the groups say, the additional costs to localities for new sewer, water, other utilities, school, public safety and road improvements must be considered. Due to the full costs
associated with projects like this, many cities - including a number in the Southeast such as Charleston and Nashville - have abandoned or held off on plans for beltways.

By law, the MPO is required to consider projects and strategies that will "protect and enhance the environment" and "promote energy conservation." Instead, the two environmental groups say, the Northern Beltline will do the exact opposite, promoting urban sprawl and exacerbating air pollution in the region. Further, the Beltline would be built over critical areas of the Black Warrior and Cahaba watersheds, which furnish the region's drinking water, provide recreation opportunities and supply valuable wildlife habitat for rare and endangered species.

ALDOT needs to focus its energy on fixing outdated and crumbling infrastructure, and on more modern methods of transportation that will reduce congestion and pollution as well as promote more efficient commutes. ALDOT's inadequate study of this road's cumulative economic and environmental impacts led to decisions being made in a vacuum without proper planning or public input.

Earlier this year, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, represented by SELC, filed a lawsuit against ALDOT and the Federal Highway Administration under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) for failing to undertake a full analysis of the indirect and cumulative impacts of the Northern Beltline. The groups claim that since the full comprehensive study has not been completed, the MPO is prematurely allocating significant money to this project for right-of-way acquisition and construction before all the facts are known.

Hoping that the concerns expressed in their letter will receive the attention they deserve, I remain,

Yours sincerely,
Robert E. Rutkowski

cc: House Minority Leadership

2527 Faxon Court
Topeka, Kansas 66605-2086
P/F: 1 785 379-9671
E-mail: r_e_rutkowski@att.net
August 9, 2011

Via Facsimile, Electronic Mail, and U.S. Mail

Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

RE: FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Members of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization:

The Southern Environmental Law Center ("SELC") submits the following comments concerning the proposed FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program ("TIP") on behalf of Black Warrior Riverkeeper Inc. Our comments primarily concern the inappropriate inclusion of various parts of the proposed Birmingham Northern Beltline in the draft TIP. In addition to its high cost and substantial environmental impact, the Northern Beltline has no place in the TIP because the Alabama Department of Transportation ("ALDOT") has yet to complete the required studies of this project’s impacts and alternatives, and has not applied for nor been issued any permits. Thus, many uncertainties remain as to whether this project will move forward to construction, and if it does, on what timeframe, alignment and design. Many of the comments below were also raised in an earlier letter submitted on August 21, 2007 (attached as Exhibit 1).

In the current draft 2012-2015 TIP, the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization ("MPO") has allocated $419,848,262 to the Northern Beltline, approximately three times the amount of funds for the Beltline as in the past June 2010 TIP. Of this, $337,641,561 is designated to construction, $62,855,668 to right-of-way acquisition, $14,405,334 to preliminary engineering, and $4,945,699 to utilities. The MPO is prematurely allocating significant resources to this project before all the details of the project are known.

Because of the ballooning price tag of the Northern Beltline and the fact that its costs and benefits have not been adequately studied, the MPO should remove all construction, right-of-way and utility adjustments for the Northern Beltline from this TIP and focus instead on transportation projects that will bring sustainable economic growth to the region in the most cost-effective manner.

I. The Northern Beltline is not a cost-effective way of spending limited funds.

The Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") has currently estimated that the Northern Beltline will cost $4.734 billion, or roughly $90 million per mile.1 This project would

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rank as one of the most expensive highways ever built in the United States; by comparison, six-lane interstates in rural areas average just $7 million per mile, according to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association.\(^2\) Alabama taxpayers will be responsible for nearly $1 billion of the Beltline’s cost, which is close to ALDOT’s entire construction and maintenance annual budget for the state of Alabama ($1.2 billion).\(^3\) Not only is the projected cost of building the Beltline astronomical, but the significant additional costs that local governments will have to pay for new sewer, water, other utilities, school, public safety and secondary road improvements must also be considered.\(^4\) Because of all of the costs associated with projects like this, many cities – including a number in the Southeast – have abandoned or held off on plans for beltways.\(^5\)

Even the MPO has given the Northern Beltline a middle to low priority ranking. Appendix 5D of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (“RTP”) gives a numeric score based on how the MPO prioritizes a project. This number is a combined score based on 1) how well the project maintains the existing system, 2) how well it improves the ability to travel 3) how well the project reflects the community’s vision and values and 4) how well it fairs in the “congestion management process”.\(^6\) The Northern Beltline was given a score of 28.1, where the highest was 63.6. This score placed the Northern Beltline in the middle priority, two-tenths of a point away from scoring in the low priority range. However, the total amount (both federal and state funding) allotted for the Northern Beltline in the 2012-2015 TIP is $419,848,262. This is approximately 40% of all federal and state funds allotted for all projects in the 2012-2015 TIP, demonstrating that the draft TIP is completely out of synch with the priorities in the RTP and should be revised to be consistent with those priorities.

ALDOT intends to spend a total of $81,691,940 on the Northern Beltline in the next three years. This represents 47% – almost half – of the spending for all projects in the entire Birmingham area during this time period. If the state spends this massive amount on the Northern Beltline, it will be forced to limit how much it can pay for other much higher-priority projects, leaving only $93,490,374 to spread over all other projects in the six-county region. This includes projects such as Safety Projects, which currently are only allocated 0.03% of funding; Maintenance Projects, which will receive only 1.5% of funds; Bridge Projects, which would get 5.3%; and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Projects, which are allotted a mere 0.6% of funds. Furthermore, the state does not assist most local municipalities with the bill of providing sidewalks, pedestrian overpasses and greenways.\(^7\)


\(^4\) "Along the Northern Beltline...the one big question mark is how do you get infrastructure, mainly sewer, to those areas. You just cannot have a lot of development on septic tanks and expect to see the sort of things you've seen on I-459 repeated on the Northern Beltline..."\(^4\) Tom Howard, head of southeast development of USS Real Estate property, On the Record: Tom Howard of USS Real Estate Talks About the Largest Landowner in County, BIRMINGHAM NEWS, March 20, 2011.


In reviewing the draft TIP, the state portion of money projected to be expended on the Northern Beltline could be better spent on projects that the state truly needs, such as system maintenance, resurfacing, safety projects and bridge repair. It could also help fund some of the visionary projects (projects that are not in the TIP because of funding limitations but are in the RTP). One such project is de-elevating I-20/59. The City of Birmingham, through its City Center Master Plan, has proposed that an elevated 1.5-mile segment of I-20/59, which passes through downtown Birmingham beginning at 31st Street and terminating at I-65, be removed and the rebuilt roadway lowered. This section of I-20/I-59 currently has a crash rate more than 2½ times the statewide Alabama average rate, and includes two of the top four highest statewide crash locations. It is a project that the Community Foundation and Operation New Birmingham both support, and is estimated to cost between $600 million and $800 million, a fraction of the $4.7 billion price tag of the Northern Beltline. Unlike the Northern Beltline, whose need and economic benefit compared to other projects have yet to be demonstrated despite its escalating costs, a project like upgrading I-20/59 in downtown Birmingham would bring obvious economic, safety, and quality of life benefits that will boost the entire metropolitan area.

The Northern Beltline is also out of step with the general goal of bringing balanced transportation options to cities, including transit, especially given that Birmingham recently ranked as the number two gas-guzzling city in the country. The federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users ("SAFETEA-LU") provides broad goals in the development of transportation plans, including the goal of "minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution." 23 U.S.C. § 134(a)(1). The statute specifically states that the "MPO should develop long range plans and transportation improvement programs to accomplish these objectives." 23 U.S.C. § 134(c)(1). The transportation plans should also consider projects and strategies that will "protect and enhance the environment" and "promote energy conservation." 23 U.S.C. § 134(h)(1)(E); 23 C.F.R. 450.306(a)(5).

Of the $879 million in federal funds planned for all transportation projects in the region over the next four years, 38% will be Northern Beltline spending, compared to only 12% for all transit spending. With limited federal resources, ALDOT and local public officials could refocus energy to support and promote regional public transit investment that can meet growth and economic needs at a lower cost to our water resources and air quality, with potentially a more cost-effective economic growth return on regional investment. Tellingly, the proponents of the Beltline are much quieter on the promotion of transit improvements for Birmingham, either in the city itself or in the area where the Beltline would be located. The MPO must undertake a more serious analysis of potential transit investments in order to satisfy SAFETEA-LU's requirements and to be more economically competitive. (Virtually all of the 50 largest metro areas in the country are planning transit expansions.)

The Northern Beltline's primary purposes as identified in the project's 1997 Final Environmental Impact Statement ("FEIS") are "to increase cross-region accessibility and for its

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potential to stimulate economic development.” FEIS at I-1.10 As a starting point, building a six-lane interstate is not the only option for increasing cross-region accessibility. Improving existing roads, increasing the connectivity of the existing network, or constructing a smaller newly located parkway could just as easily meet this purpose. More importantly, there is no data or study that demonstrates that the Beltline will stimulate any economic development at all, particularly when compared to other transportation investments. Indeed, there have been similar beltline-type projects in the Southeast that were also touted to stimulate economic development but never did.

For example, the Southern Connector around Greenville, South Carolina was intended primarily to generate economic growth. The road is now considered an abject failure at delivering the promised economic growth; the U.S. Strategic Highway Research Programs' Transportation Project Impact Case Study states that “no major economic development can be attributable to the Southern Connector.”11 The report also states that while there are a few minor firms that have developed facilities in the surrounding industrial areas, the employment levels are a tiny fraction of those predicted by the project's cheerleaders and may not even be attributed to the road because they are also so close to I-85.12 Area employment has risen by a mere 2.9% after the construction of the road.13 The Wall Street Journal’s Smart Money Magazine called it "too much road for the actual pace of development."14 Because the purpose of the Northern Beltline is similarly limited to economic development and it is also located in a rural setting, the Northern Beltline carries a high risk of suffering a similar fate to the Southern Connector.

The I-469 bypass of Fort Wayne, Indiana, is another example of a failed bypass. Completed in 1995, the road still remains lightly traveled, and has not delivered much economic growth, even around its interchanges. A study on the economic impacts of highway bypasses by the Economic Development Research Group states that I-469 has led to little economic growth in some places and almost none in others.15 The study attributes this lack of development to the road's rural setting and the corresponding lack of infrastructure like sewer, tertiary roads, and utilities needed for development along interchanges.16,17 Like Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Northern

10 Traffic congestion reduction was identified as only a secondary purpose of the road but will likely not happen at all because of the Beltline’s spiral shape around Birmingham.
12 Id.
13 Id.
16 Id.
17 Studies conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation suggest that the cost of developing this necessary infrastructure at bypass interchanges could be greater than the economic benefit brought by the businesses. Collins, Margaret and Weisbrod, Glen. Wisconsin Department of Transportation, The Economic Impacts of Highway Bypasses on Communities. 1998.
Beltline will also be built in a rural area with little available infrastructure; economic development is therefore far from a certainty.

Further, even if the Northern Beltline does result in some economic development in northern Jefferson County, this growth is unlikely to be “new” growth. Rather, projects such as these more often merely redistribute existing businesses or growth to new places, to the detriment of other parts of the metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{18} Beltways generally pull growth opportunities out of central cities and inner-core suburbs and do not bring any net economic benefit. The MPO can ensure that this result does not happen by making investments in transportation options that benefit the metro area as a whole and result in economic growth and prosperity. The MPO should therefore be taking a much harder look at its project list with an eye towards enhancing the quality of life for all Birmingham residents and visitors, which includes both maintaining existing infrastructure and adding new transportation options that are not all automobile-dependent. Beltlines are not linchpins of economic prosperity. In fact, numerous southern cities such as Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charleston, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Tampa, and Orlando are thriving without a complete beltline loop, and several have no beltline at all. Further, unlike Atlanta and Charlotte, which do have complete loops, the Northern Beltline would not even be a complete loop since it will not connect with I-459.

II. \textbf{The Northern Beltline will harm Birmingham’s air and water quality.}

As stated earlier, TIPs must consider projects and strategies that will “protect and enhance the environment” and “promote energy conservation” pursuant to federal law. 23 U.S.C. § 134(h)(1)(E); 23 C.F.R. 450.306(a)(5). In addition to its high cost and dubious economic benefits, the Northern Beltline will have substantial environmental impacts. The interstate will worsen air pollution in the region by increasing the number of miles driven by the cars and trucks on the road. These mobile sources of air pollution will emit more ozone precursors, fine particulate matter pollution (PM), and greenhouse gases. The Birmingham area has long battled problems with smog and other air pollution; the American Lung Association’s 2010 State of the Air Report ranked Birmingham metropolitan area in the top 10 for annual and daily PM pollution and in the top 20 for ozone pollution. Although air quality in the area has improved somewhat due to a number of factors, the Birmingham metropolitan area has not yet been re-designated by the EPA as in attainment for PM pollution under the Clean Air Act. In addition, the Birmingham metropolitan area is teetering on the threshold of violating EPA’s current ozone standard; if EPA sets a lower, more protective ozone standard, which has been announced to happen within the next several weeks, the Birmingham area will certainly be in non-attainment for ozone. With the recent science on the public health effects of PM pollution likely compelling EPA to tighten the PM air quality standard as well, Birmingham’s attainment problems for both ozone and PM are far from over. Projects like the Beltline will only hinder Birmingham’s ultimate ability to meet these standards, and failure to meet them carries high costs in terms of negative public health impacts and being unable to attract new businesses and industries.

Equally important, the Northern Beltline will damage Birmingham’s water resources. According to the 1997 FEIS, the road will cross approximately 25 streams in the Black Warrior

and Cahaba River watersheds. In fact, the six-lane interstate is currently routed directly through the sensitive headwaters of the Black Warrior River and the Upper Cahaba River watersheds, which feed the major drinking water source for much of Jefferson and Shelby Counties. The Cahaba and Black Warrior River basins also serve as valuable freshwater habitats of global significance and are sources of recreation and beauty that add great value to the quality of life of the region’s residents. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) has independently noted that ALDOT has chosen of the alignment for the Beltline that will have the most impacts to natural resources and wildlife of all potential routes.

The area of the Beltline between I-65 and I-59 is home to several endangered species, including the vermillion darter and the watercress darter (both in the Turkey Creek watershed, a tributary of the Black Warrior River) and the threatened Alabama snowwreath. In fact, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (“FWS”), the agency charged with the protection of these species, has expressed concerns about the Beltline in letters dated July 16, 2009 and February 1, 2010. In its letter of July 16, 2009, FWS stated, “[T]he Service is concerned that the listed species in the area could experience substantial adverse impacts as a result of the direct and indirect effects of the project caused by secondary development, habitat fragmentation, population isolation, road kills, increased predation and road right-of-way maintenance activities... such development would disrupt the normal behavioral patterns such as feeding, mating, nesting, and sheltering of resident wildlife.”

On March 9, 2011, the FWS sent another letter to FHWA expressing concerns over the inadequate environmental reviews being conducted for the Northern Beltline. Stating that “the landscape around Birmingham has changed both economically and environmentally” in the 14 years since the original EIS, the FWS called on FHWA to conduct a full supplemental EIS for the project. In its letter, the FWS noted its recent designation of 13 miles of streams within Turkey Creek’s watershed as critical habitat for the endangered vermillion darter, pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act. This critical habitat is located around Pinson, AL, in the vicinity of and downstream from the footprint of the Northern Beltline, and it will likely be impacted by construction sediment, stormwater runoff, grease, fuel, and other pollution coming off of the Beltline. The FWS also referenced the number of endangered and threatened species in the Cahaba River watershed and expressed concerns about the direct and indirect impacts of the Northern Beltline on this river system in addition to the Black Warrior River.

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20 The Cahaba River was named by the Nature Conservancy as one of eight “hotspots of aquatic biodiversity” in the U.S. that must be saved, and by the National Geographic College Atlas of the World (2007), as one of six global examples of biological diversity. According to Eastern Fly Fishing Magazine (Fall 2005), the National Park Service rated the Black Warrior’s three forks in the top 2% of U.S. streams for “outstandingly remarkable values.” Boating magazine (Sept. 2005) called the Black Warrior River one of America’s best kept secrets for recreational boating. The Sipsey Fork and the headwaters of Smith Lake (BWR watershed) is Alabama’s only federally designated Wild & Scenic River. http://www.rivers.gov/wsr-black-warrior.html Accessed Aug. 8, 2011.

21 See September 8, 1997 letter from Heinz Mueller to Jimmy Butts (attached as Exhibit 2). Notably, this letter was written when the Beltline was proposed as only a four-lane interstate, not a six-lane interstate. The environmental impacts of this larger project will be even greater.

21 See 75 FR 75913 (Dec. 7, 2010).
The inadequate environmental reviews of the Beltline’s impacts have resulted in a lawsuit against ALDOT and the FHWA that is ongoing. Whole categories of environmental effects have never been studied for this project, in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), the long-standing bedrock of federal environmental law. These studies are an important chance for the agencies and the public to make informed decisions about how to invest wisely in economic growth while minimizing impacts to air, water, and other resources. Since the primary purpose of the Northern Beltline is to spur economic development, the agencies ought to ask objectively whether this $4.7 billion project is really the best way to do that, particularly given the serious environmental impacts of a new 52-mile-long, 6-lane interstate. Instead of conducting the comprehensive study that the law requires, the agencies are improperly continuing forward with this project in violation of the law. The MPO should not include projects on the proposed TIP that are not in compliance with the law, including all Northern Beltline projects. Indeed, further land acquisitions in the Beltline footprint as proposed in this TIP will prematurely lock the project into a route before a complete study of the impacts of and alternatives to the entire project is completed, which violates both the letter and the purpose of NEPA.  

Conclusion

In summary, there are numerous unresolved concerns about the Northern Beltline’s high cost, its impact on the overall regional economy and on the economic health of communities, and its environmental impacts, many of which have not been studied. Therefore, it would be premature to devote a significant portion of the TIP to funding for any segments of the Northern Beltline. We request that all funding for right-of-way, utilities and construction be removed until these issues are resolved. Beltline segments proposed in this TIP should be removed as a priority for funding until these concerns are addressed.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sarah Stokes
Associate Attorney

Cc:  John Cooper, Director, ALDOT
     Mark Bartlett, Division Administrator, FHWA
     Heinz Mueller, EPA Region 4
     William Pearson, Field Supervisor, FWS
     Mayor William Bell, Birmingham

Mayor Scott McBrayer, Homewood
Mayor Terry Oden, Mountain Brook
Mayor Alberto Zaragoza, Vestavia Hills
Mayor Tony Petelos, Hoover
EXHIBIT 1
August 21, 2007

Via Facsimile, Electronic Mail, and U. S. Mail

Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
Attn: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

RE: FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Members of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization:

The Southern Environmental Law Center submits the following comments concerning the proposed FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on behalf of the Alabama Rivers Alliance, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Cahaba River Society, Conservation Alabama Foundation, and Friends of the Locust Fork. Specifically, these comments concern the inclusion of a substantial number of projects related to the Northern Beltline in the draft TIP.

This alliance of conservation organizations has been studying the potential environmental and economic impacts of the proposed Northern Beltline for the past several years. We recognize that the communities of our region want economic growth, and we have therefore tried to work with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) with an aim to influence the Northern Beltline to enhance the conservation of our watersheds and benefit the region as a whole.

However, for the reasons below, our organizations ask the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to remove the segments of the beltline from the TIP until federal transportation and environmental laws are adequately addressed, ALDOT agrees to design the Beltline in ways that will protect our water resources, and crucial questions are answered about the best investment of funds for economic growth that will benefit the entire region. Our organizations support economic growth in the region that is equitable, cost efficient and environmentally sound. Unfortunately, ALDOT has not presented information to either the MPO or the public demonstrating that the proposed high-priority sections of the Beltline in the draft TIP meet these criteria.
Introduction

The TIP’s prioritization of the Northern Beltline runs afoul of language contained in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU provides broad goals in the development of transportation plans, including the goal of “minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution.” 23 U.S.C. § 134(a)(1). The statute specifically states that the “MPO should develop long range plans and transportation improvement programs to accomplish these objectives.” 23 U.S.C. § 134(c)(1). The transportation plans should also consider projects and strategies that will “protect and enhance the environment” and “promote energy conservation.” 23 U.S.C. § 134(h)(1)(E); 23 C.F.R. 450.306(a)(5).

The Northern Beltline, if it is constructed, will undoubtedly increase air pollution in the region by increasing the number of mobile sources of ozone precursors, particulate pollution, and greenhouse gases. The Birmingham area is currently not attaining the particulate matter standard under the Clean Air Act and is only barely attaining the ozone standard. The MPO should therefore be taking a much harder look at its project list with an eye towards enhancing the quality of life for all Birmingham residents and visitors, which includes both maintaining existing infrastructure and adding new transportation options that are not automobile-dependent.

Furthermore, even if funding for the Beltline stays in the TIP, the proposed projects are inappropriately focused on segments of the Northern Beltline in the most environmentally-sensitive areas of the planned route: the upper Cahaba watershed, which encompasses the region’s drinking water source, and biologically valuable streams of the Black Warrior watershed.

In fact, ALDOT has not completed federally-required environmental studies for the Northern Beltline, yet the agency is making substantive decisions to move forward with road design and land acquisition as if the outcome of the studies is irrelevant. ALDOT is ignoring substantial public concerns raised about the proposed design and location of these sections of the Beltline. The agency has made no serious commitment to design the highway in ways to avoid damage to our water resources.

Fundamentally, crucial questions have not been answered about the best uses of limited funds for the region’s transportation needs and for economic growth that would equitably benefit the region as a whole. We therefore ask the MPO to revisit the project list and remove segments of the Beltline until the proper environmental studies have been completed and until the MPO takes a more holistic look at transportation alternatives that will provide more long-term benefits to the Birmingham area.

I. Environmental Impacts of the Beltline

The segments of the Northern Beltline included in the TIP east of I-65, and the development those segments will generate, could substantially and unnecessarily degrade
now planned. These river basins serve as valuable freshwater habitats of global significance, are sources of recreation and beauty that add great value to the quality of life of the region’s residents, and are the primary drinking water supply for the people of Birmingham and the metro area – about one fourth of the people of Alabama.

The area of the Beltline between I-65 and I-59 is home to several endangered species, including the vermillion darter and the watercress darter (both in the Turkey Creek watershed) and the threatened Alabama snowwreath.

Incomplete Environmental Review and Premature Land Acquisition

ALDOT is already beginning to acquire land and finalize design and route aspects of the Beltline before re-evaluating studies that are both outdated and inadequate. The original environmental impact statement (EIS) for the project is a decade old and gave short shrift to drinking water issues and overall environmental and watershed degradation. Conditions in our rivers have deteriorated since then due to unintended development impacts such as mud runoff and increased storm flows and flooding. Furthermore, the original EIS was legally deficient under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which calls for a complete study of a project’s direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. The latter two categories of impacts are missing entirely from the original EIS, and ALDOT does not intend to allow public review of and comment on these impacts before submitting its study to FHWA for approval.

Worse still, even though ALDOT has not finalized the federally-required updated environmental review of these potential impacts, it is prematurely moving ahead with land acquisition and preliminary design of the most environmentally-sensitive sections of the interstate. The endangered species survey from the 1997 EIS is out-of-date. ALDOT’s piecemeal environmental review of the Highway 79-Highway 75 segment has ignored cumulative impacts of the entire Beltline and other projects in the area such as the completion of Corridor X. This segment has also never been studied for archeological artifacts. Further acquisitions in the Beltline segments proposed in the TIP will prematurely lock the project into a route alternative that will be particularly damaging for Birmingham’s drinking water supplies, especially construction in the upper Cahaba watershed.

Extension to I-20 and Further Impacts to Cahaba System and Drinking Water Supply

The route chosen by ALDOT and proposed to be fast-tracked in the TIP ends at I-59 well above I-20. To complete the loop as currently designed will require a further extension that would spread these impacts through the Little Cahaba watershed above Lake Purdy, one of our region’s significant dry weather back-up supplies for drinking water. In winter 2007, ALDOT suspended the initial environmental study of potential routes for the extension due to substantial public and political opposition. However, this extension is shown currently in the 2008 – 2011 State Transportation Improvement Plan.
Program (STIP) map of the Northern Beltline. We ask that the extension be removed from the STIP so that it will conform to the TIP map.

Unresolved Public Opposition in the Fast-Tracked Sections of the Beltline

The eastern section of the beltline through Clay and the Cahaba watershed is the only stretch with significant public opposition from the communities the interstate will impact. Clay and Trussville citizens in the group SOURCE have informed people in the area about the Beltline and have gathered numerous petition signatures urging ALDOT to move the route out of the upper Cahaba watershed. ALDOT held a design hearing for this stretch of the Beltline in October 2006 and received 405 written public comments after the hearing, 82% of which disapproved of the design and only 12% of which approved. ALDOT then discounted all comments received from people who were not able to actually attend the hearing, something they have never done before. Even so, the majority of comments were against this design. By proposing that this section of Beltline should be fast-tracked in the MPO TIP, ALDOT is ignoring substantial public concern. The MPO should not prioritize this segment of the Beltline until the controversy over location and design of the road has been resolved.

Design Features of the Beltline

Our organizations have met with representatives of ALDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and their consultants on multiple occasions over the past two years to discuss low impact design solutions to reduce impacts to these rivers and our drinking water, which we have asked ALDOT to incorporate into the design of the Beltline. In spite of those discussions, ALDOT’s proposed design of the first section that will impact the Cahaba River, which was revealed in October 2006, proposed to culvert the Cahaba River and 7 tributaries near the top of the watershed and would locate a major interchange at the point where these come together. Despite our cooperative efforts, ALDOT’s design showed none of the low impact design innovations that are essential to reduce water quality impacts. For this reason our organizations had no choice but to collectively disapprove the proposed design of this section of the Beltline, and we hope that ALDOT will reconsider this destructive design alternative.

ALDOT is required by federal law under the storm water program of the Clean Water Act to improve its construction best management practices and to institute post-construction stormwater management techniques to better protect water quality, as are the local governments in Jefferson County. EPA and ADEM are currently discussing the upcoming storm water permit requirements that will apply to ALDOT and the local governments in the 5-year National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit revisions. It appears sure that the above will be instituted and that the permittees, including ALDOT, will also have legal responsibility to do their part towards implementing the Cahaba Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for reduction of sediment and nutrients. The Beltline as currently designed will increase sediment and nutrient impacts to water quality, in opposition to stormwater permit and TMDL requirements.
It should be noted that proper implementation of adequate construction and post-construction controls could affect the precise location and the width of the construction zone, and thus the right-of-way, of the Beltline. Right-of-way purchase should not proceed until ALDOT adequately addresses these design issues that are crucial to the future health of our water resources.

We do appreciate ALDOT's willingness to propose bridging much of Self Creek of the Black Warrior River, due to requirements imposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We hope that ALDOT will bridge all water bodies in the Beltline footprint. While bridging is an important step, that alone does not preserve water quality without other design features and management practices. In addition to bridging the creek, we recommend that ALDOT undertake greater control of construction mud runoff and long-term minimization and filtering of pavement runoff to conserve the rivers and properties downstream, as discussed more fully below.

ALDOT needs to reduce both the velocity and volume of construction and post-construction stormwater runoff to prevent increased sediment pollution and ongoing erosion of streams below the Beltline's footprint. The typical runoff structure created by ALDOT is a concrete or rip-rap lined swale. These are not effective at reducing runoff velocities or volumes, or sediments, petroleum products, nutrients and other pollutants. Riprap and concrete are resource-intensive and unnatural when used to shore up disturbed land near streams. We have asked ALDOT to consider more natural means of soil stabilization and erosion control including use of grades with less intense angles and mulch, erosion control matting, use of non-toxic polymers where appropriate, fortified hydroseeding without chemical fertilizers, planting of native grasses and plants, etc. These and many new and progressive techniques are available and being used by transportation departments in other states, yet ALDOT has been unwilling to commit to any of them for the Beltline. For sediment control, we have recommended the use of vegetated swales, retention ponds, and constructed wetlands in addition to very basic BMPs used by ALDOT such as silt fences, hay bales, and riprap.

Another major issue during construction is land clearing. ALDOT clears massive areas of land at a time, exposing large amounts of earth to erosion. We have requested phasing during project construction, which will minimize the potential for offsite sedimentation.

Regarding post-construction, we have asked ALDOT to greatly reduce the erosion impacts that storm runoff from completed roads is having on local streams. We have asked ALDOT to use low impact development design to reduce the volume, velocity and pollutants caused by storm runoff and install stormwater treatment devices on their outfalls to treat pollutants coming from the road's impervious surfaces.

We urge ALDOT to adopt the management practices outlined above for the Northern Beltline and other transportation projects. While agency representatives have heard these recommendations, we have not seen any commitment from ALDOT to adopt.
even a portion of them. We ask that the MPO and citizens in Birmingham and statewide require these practices – many of which would require little if any additional cost or time – from ALDOT. Apart from ALDOT’s own efforts, the communities planning to grow around the Beltline also need to incorporate these same low impact design innovations and improved storm water control into their local planning, zoning and development review in order to maintain the river systems that we rely on for drinking water, recreation, and other uses.

II. Unanswered questions about whether the Northern Beltline is the most cost-effective use of limited regional funds for economic growth that will benefit the region as a whole

ALDOT’s stated reason for the Beltline is to spur economic growth in the western and northern Jefferson County cities it would pass through. However, there are important regional economic questions that should be considered and answered before this project goes forward:

- The cost estimate of the Northern Beltline is currently $2.45 billion. What will be the full cost of the highway, and sewer, water, other utilities, school, public safety and road expansions necessary to develop these areas? Will increased revenues from growth give an adequate return on the full range of actual costs for the region as a whole?

- Will those who pay many of these costs – the region’s residents – receive adequate economic benefit from those revenues? Or instead, will public subsidies for growth in the Beltline area drain more economic vitality and revenues from older communities, working against public and private investment in revitalization of established communities? Who pays and who benefits?

- Have environmental costs been factored in? Since Birmingham fails air quality standards, therefore limiting economic opportunities for the metropolitan area, how might adding more pollution from automobiles through the Northern Beltline limit economic opportunities for the region? What about increased costs to treat our drinking water and to offset reduced water supply due to development effects on water quality and quantity?

- Projects such as the Beltline often direct growth outward, not inward, and sometimes do not succeed in spurring growth at all (e.g. much of Interstate 16 in Georgia). Has the MPO fully analyzed the economic consequences of the Beltline, including the cities who will win and lose with regard to growth?

III. Funding for the Northern Beltline, compared to transit funding, shows misplaced priorities and will result in missed opportunities for our region

The TIP’s project list is improperly skewed towards road projects in general and the Northern Beltline in particular. Of the $1 billion in federal funds planned for all transportation projects in the region over the next four years, fully 34% - $344,720,000 - will be Northern Beltline spending, compared to only 8.4% for all transit spending. With
limited federal resources, why aren’t ALDOT and local public officials promoting the Beltline also fully engaged in supporting regional public transit investment that can meet growth and economic needs at a lower cost to our water resources and air quality, with potentially a more cost-effective economic growth return on regional investment? The MPO must undertake a more serious analysis of transit investments in order to satisfy SAFETEA-LU’s requirements.

Conclusion

In summary, our organizations are concerned that the segments of the Northern Beltline included in the TIP, as currently planned, and the development the interstate will generate, under current inadequate water quality protection standards, will substantially and unnecessarily degrade many sensitive areas of the Black Warrior and Cahaba watersheds, including important headwaters in both basins that ultimately supply drinking water to most of the residents of the Birmingham metro area. Coupled with the environmental impacts, we also are concerned about the project’s impact on the overall regional economy and the economic health of communities, not only those this road will serve, but also others it will bypass. Therefore, we ask that those Beltline segments proposed in the TIP should not be included as a priority for funding until these critical regional issues are addressed.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Gilbert B. Rogers
Staff Attorney
EXHIBIT 2
Jimmy Butts, Director
Alabama Department of Transportation
1409 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-3050

SUBJECT: Birmingham Northern Beltline
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Butts:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the
above referenced document in accordance with its responsibilities
under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102(2)(C) of
the National Environmental Policy Act. The document presents
alternatives and impacts associated with the construction and
operation of a 34- to 50-mile long limited access, four-lane
highway. The highway would connect I-59/20 west of the City of
Birmingham to I-59 northeast of the City. Future traffic growth
in the corridor would be accommodated by the roadway. Promoting
development in the northern region of Birmingham is also stated
as a project goal.

As stated in our letter on the draft document, all
alternatives have major impacts on the natural environment.
However, we had recommended that Alternative D, the shortest
alignment at 34 miles, be selected. Not only would this
alignment have a smaller “footprint” on natural resources but
would probably generate fewer secondary impacts from future
development. This alignment has subsequently been dropped because
of Section 4(f) historic preservation impacts that apparently
cannot be avoided.

Alternative A, the outermost alignment through the corridor,
was selected as the preferred alternative. Alternative A is the
longest route at 50 miles and, overall, has the most impacts to
natural resources. Alternative A will disrupt streams at 14
crossings, will impact over 4050 acres forested lands within the
ROW, and will destroy up to 68 acres of wetlands at 114 different
sites. It also will have the greatest impact on wildlife of all
the alignments discussed. Alternative A will likely generate a
high level of secondary development and associated impacts to the
environment.
We still believe that Alternative D is the environmentally best route. Consideration should be given to relocating its western terminus to the west of the historic district. This would avoid the Section 4(f) properties and the CERCLA site to east of the historic district.

The wetland mitigation proposal outlined in the document has merit. The two sites preferred by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service appear to be the best candidate sites presented. Jose Negron of our Wetlands Protection Section (404/562-9422) should be contacted to discuss details of the proposal.

All final design and construction activities for this project should be examined with the purpose of avoiding as much disruption to the natural environment as possible. Where high quality resources are in jeopardy, consideration should be given to moving the alignment. All best management practices listed in the document should be employed where needed, and should be monitored and strictly enforced.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this document. Any questions should be addressed to Allen Lucas at 404/562-9624.

Sincerely,

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment
Environmental Accountability Division
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), in cooperation with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB), is conducting a public involvement meeting to obtain public comments concerning the FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). All documents are located at www.rpcgb.org/tip

Please provide comments on this sheet or send written comments to:
Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization
C/O Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
ATTN: Cissy Edwards Crowe
1731 First Avenue North-Suite 200
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Comments may also be faxed to 205.264.8480, or emailed to mpo@rpcgb.org. Comments can also be submitted on line at www.rpcgb.org/tip
All comments must be received no later than August 9, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CDST

Your Name:  Sarah Johnson
Mailing Address:  1895 Chardonnay Lane
                       Bessemer, AL 35022
Fax Number:  
E-mail:  

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list?
Yes____ or No____

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list?
Yes____ or No____

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

I am in support on the Northern Beltline for the following reasons: improvement of traffic flow in Downtown Birmingham & on I65, and for the job opportunities it will provide—both building the road & new development on the corridor.

Please continue your comments on the back of this page
Comment Sheet for
FY2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Air Quality Conformity Determination and Amended 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

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Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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Your Name: Brooks Harris
Mailing Address: 4244 Cahaba Heights Court, Suite 200
Birmingham, AL 35243
Fax Number: (205) 980-2720
E-mail: brooks@harrisanddoyle.com

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement notification list? Yes ☐ No ☐

Would you like to be added to the Transportation Citizens Committee mailing list? Yes ☐ No ☐

Thank you for your participation.

Your Comments:

THE NORTHERN BELTLINE IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT THAT BIRMINGHAM WILL SEE IN MY LIFETIME. PLEASE DON'T LET THIS OPPORTUNITY PASS US BY!

Please continue your comments on the back of this page.