

East Alabama Rural Planning Organization
District Policy Committee/Technical Advisory Committee – Northern District
Regular Meeting
January 9, 2014, 1:30 p.m.
City of Centre, City Hall
401 East Main Street
Centre, AL 35960

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order
- B. Old Business
 - 1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - 2. Other Old Business
- C. New Business
 - 1. Report of Officers, Staff, and/or Committees
 - a. Staff report
 - b. Other reports
 - 2. ALDOT Update on Road Projects
 - a. ALDOT - Montgomery
 - b. ALDOT - Division 1
 - c. ALDOT - District Staff
 - 3. Update on County Road Projects from County Engineers
 - 4. Other New Business
- D. Livability Resource Team
 - 1. CLEAR Plan 2030 update
- E. Open Discussion and Announcements
 - 1. Next Meeting Date: May 8, 2014
Location: TBD
- F. Adjourn

East Alabama Rural Planning Organization
District Policy Committee/Technical Advisory Committee – North District
Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting
January 9, 2014 – 1:30 p.m.
Centre City Hall
401 East Main Street, Centre, AL 35960

Members in Attendance:

Les Hopson, ALDoT 1st Division
Johnny L. Harris, ALDoT 1st Division
Robert Nail, Etowah County
Corey Chambers, Cherokee County
Mayor Edward Mackey, Town of Leesburg
Mayor Tony Wilkie, City of Centre
Kirk Day, Cherokee County

Other Attendees:

Robin Caler
Ryan Kallem

Mayor Wilkie called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., and asked Mr. Chambers to lead the group in a word of prayer. Mr. Chambers did so.

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and no changes were noted. The minutes were approved by a motion from Mayor Mackey and seconded by Mr. Nail.

Mayor Wilkie then asked if there were any items that needed to be brought up under "old business" at this time. There being none, the meeting progressed to "new business". Mayor Wilkie asked if there were any reports to be discussed. Ms. Caler stated that there was no staff report for this meeting, and then stated that Ryan Kallem serving the Rural Planning Organization as co-coordinator.

The next item on the agenda was an update from ALDoT on current road projects, which was provided by Mr. Hopson. He provided those in attendance with the attached handout and discussed the projects listed. Mr. Day asked if the ALDoT had studied about leaving enough access to include a trail regarding project STPAA-HSIP-0068(507): Widening and Resurfacing of SR-68. Mr. Hopson stated that the access had been included in the project. Mr. Day thanked him and let ALDoT know that the consideration of the county's ideas and request was appreciated. Mr. Hopson concluded his report. Mayor Mackie asked about a project in Leesburg, the he and Mr. Thackerson spoke about. Mr. Hopson said he felt that the project was still in the works, under maintenance.

Mayor Wilkie asked about the possibility of "four-laneing" Highway 411 to the State line. He stated there has been much discussion in the past regarding this and was wondering if it would come to fruition. He also asked about State Route 9, if there would be any possibility to "four-lane" that one. Mr. Harris responded, stating that currently there is much difficulty adding capacity to any route in the foreseeable future. The State ALDoT Director has stated that there is a great need for additional funding to move forward with any capacity projects. As of now, the ALDoT believes \$150 million a year in projects can be completed... statewide. Funds are just not there. He continued by stating that he felt all capacity building projects were going to be very limited until the State can get some additional funding. Mayor Mackey asked about a delay in the Turkeytown to Slackland project and Mr. Harris concurred that project may be delayed as well. Mr. Harris stated for informational purposes, the City of Huntsville had 3 or 4 projects in their 5 year plan and those projects had to be postponed – placed in a ten-year plan. The City decided to become pro-active and pass a 1 cent sales tax to generate revenue to use as match to complete the much needed projects. Discussion then turned briefly to sales tax, existing rates and the pros and cons of sales tax for these types of projects such as the revenue generating potential and the burden of overtaxing residents.

Mayor Mackey posed the question, "what do you think it would cost to pave a State road, just about a mile. Just a rough estimate". Mr. Hopson confirmed he was asking about a two-lane road, which Mayor Mackey was. Mr. Harris asked how much pavement he wanted to put down – an inch, inch and one half... Mayor Mackey asked what the standard was when repaving was done. Mr. Nail asked if the road was in bad shape, or if it just needed "blackened-up". He stated there would be a large cost difference if the road was in rough shape and required binder to be placed on it, or if you were just going in where a road is starting to age and doesn't need a lot done to it. Mr. Nail stated for two lane County roads, that do not need a lot done to them, their estimates were 80 to 120 thousand dollars a mile. When you start adding in a binder layer on that, it jumps up quick. Mr. Hopson stated that typically their (ALDoT) estimates are approaching half million, because they typically involve a binder layer. Discussion continued about the cost of plant mix, milling and reintroducing the milled product into the mix, and the rising cost of material and how it is related to oil and the relationship and how it is 3-fold, product, transportation and labor.

Discussion then turned to maintenance of roads and a pavement preservation technique called "micro-surfacing", mainly used for extending the life of roads that are already in fairly good shape. Mr. Nail stated the process does not work on roads that are cracked and pot-holed, it is used to get a few more years out of asphalt that is getting near the end of its projected useful life.

Mayor Wilkie then asked the County Engineers for their updates. Mr. Nail provided an update on Etowah County projects and ATRIP projects, followed by Mr. Chambers with a report on Cherokee County road projects.

Mayor Wilkie then asked if there was any additional new business, there being none, the meeting progressed on to the next agenda item, CLEAR Plan 2030 update. Robin Caler gave an update, stating that preliminary work was complete, and that some components of the project were also done. Currently, there is a consultant working on an Implementation Plan. She also stated that there would be two types of products produced for the CLEAR Plan 2030 – the regular technical planning documents, and a user friendly, easily readable, magazine that would be available to residents throughout the region. The magazine would be 28 pages, with graphics, visually attractive. There will initially be 5,000 of these printed.

The next meeting date was then discussed, May 8, 2014. The meeting will be held in Gadsden, after the Gadsden/Etowah County MPO meeting at the Chamber of Commerce.

All items on the agenda being addressed and no further business to discuss, Mayor Wilkie motioned for adjournment, which was seconded by Mayor Mackey.

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Sign-In Sheet

Name	Representing	Phone Number	Email Address
TURELL NAYL	ETOWAH CO.		
Ed Mackey	Leesburg AL		
Tony Wilkie	Centre		
Corey Chambers	Cherokee Co.		
Anthony L. Harris	ALDOT 15 th Div		
Les Hopson	ALDOT 15 th Div.		
Kirk Day	Cherokee Co.		
Ryan Kullern	EARPDC		
Robin Colyer	EARPDC		

ALDOT First Division Projects Update

East Alabama RPO 01/09/2014

STPAA-HSIP-0068(507) Cherokee County 100057508
Widening and Resurfacing SR-68 from the DeKalb/Cherokee County line to SR-25 (US-411)
Project was scheduled for March 2013 letting. This project will be let this month.

BR-0068 Cherokee County 100049707
Bridge Removal on SR-68 over TAG Railroad 0.5 miles north of SR-273. ALDOT has a design consultant working on plan development and Right-of-Way acquisition has started. Scheduled for FY 2014.

STPAA-0025(518) Etowah County 100008733
Base and Pave on US-411 from the Four lanes in Gadsden to Turkeytown. Project was awarded to Good Hope contracting in the amount of \$18,463,000. Work is about 55% complete and should be completed by the end of this year.

BR-0179(500) & BR-0179(501) Etowah County 100050053, 100050009
Bridge Replacement and approaches over Wade and Cove Creeks. Project was awarded to Whitaker Contracting in the amount of \$2,398,391.00. Work is 40% complete and should be finished by this summer.

STPAA-HSIP-0132(502) Etowah County 100058848
Widening and Resurfacing SR-132 from Blount/Etowah County line to US-278. Project will let in February 2014.

STPAA-0025(538) Cherokee County 100058853
Resurfacing US-411 from CR-161 (MP 249.0 to the Alabama/Georgia State line. Project will let this spring.

↓ Johnice Chapman (right) and Ruth Ann Culkner ride the Silver Rider



Providing Successful Transportation Options for Seniors in Rural Communities

The Southern Nevada Transit Coalition's Silver Rider Program has taken on the task of mitigating transportation challenges for seniors in rural Nevada

by Debbie Dauenhauser

Residents of rural communities experience more and different transportation challenges than those in urban areas. These challenges can be especially pronounced for seniors in rural areas including a lack of affordable transportation options, inability to operate a vehicle, and distances the seniors must travel to reach vital services. The Southern Nevada Transit Coalition, operating under its branding name "Silver Rider," is a nonprofit organization which has, as one of its core missions, taken on the task of mitigating these transportation challenges in the southern Nevada area. Since its inception in June 2002, Silver Rider has provided public transportation to both seniors and the general population in three rural southern Nevada communities. Since that time, transportation service to other rural communities has been added. Silver Rider now provides community-based transportation in 11 communities covering Clark County, Nevada outside of the urban Las Vegas valley. The organization provides more than 400,000 rural rides annually, making it the largest provider of rural transportation in the state. Silver Rider provides fixed route, paratransit, and demand response services.

Silver Rider's senior transportation program is one of the organization's most rewarding and important programs. While some communities served by Silver Rider have access to local services and shopping, many do not, nor do they have access to necessary medical services. These communities have a unique set of transportation challenges for residents because of the great distances from vital services.

Seniors require affordable access to medical facilities more than any other demographic segment of America. This includes access to doctors, hospitals and chemotherapy or dialysis treatments, as well as access to



↑ Riders pose with driver David Hooks (second from left)



Transportation and affordable housing are both vital, life-sustaining elements for seniors.

pharmacies, dental, and eye-care professionals. Seniors who are no longer able to drive themselves also require transportation to grocery stores and local food banks. Silver Rider is able to provide transportation to all of these important destinations.

Silver Rider provides residents with rides to a variety of nearby cities that have needed services. Many times, these trips are to Las Vegas for medical services. Silver Rider also provides transportation to other states for needed services that may be closer to a resident's home, especially for those who live near the Utah or Arizona border area. For smaller communities, seniors are offered a monthly trip to attend fresh produce distributions at the Laughlin food bank. The shared-ride concept that Silver Rider uses for these programs makes all of these trips possible on a limited operating budget.

Transportation and affordable housing are both vital, life-sustaining elements for seniors. The most successful senior programs that Silver Rider operates typically originate from larger group housing complexes. Group shopping outings, group trips to designated senior commodity distributions at local food banks, and shared-ride trips for many seniors all visiting an urban area on the same day for medical and other appointments are examples of the types of services offered by Silver Rider that have the highest ridership and impact on the seniors.

Seniors in rural communities who no longer have the ability to regularly take transportation to access life's daily necessities face significant challenges. Silver Rider, under its non-profit status, is able to take on the responsibilities of the Meals on Wheels programs for home-bound seniors in rural Nevada. In these areas where the number of social service organizations is very limited, providing this service under the transit operation means the difference between those communities having or not having the Meals on Wheels services at all. Proper collaboration for these programs with the residential complexes of the areas is essential for the success of the program.

Without affordable housing opportunities, seniors have limited options with respect to choosing where to live. The lack of housing options and availability can sometimes require seniors to relocate

to other communities that have affordable housing alternatives. This necessary relocation entails seniors being uprooted to a community or urban area that they would otherwise not choose. This forced relocation can also frequently require seniors to live with their adult children. Both of these factors promote isolation at a rapid pace as the relocation often means that seniors leave behind their lifelong friends and familiar surroundings.

While much of the funding that Silver Rider receives for its programs comes from federal, state, or local government coffers, the funding for the senior transit and demand response programs must be supplemented with local community support. For example, if the senior program in Laughlin, NV, were to use only the funds provided by government agencies for the program, only 20 service hours per week would be available for the senior residents. To address this issues, Silver Rider conducts two annual fund raisers each year with the support of the entire community. One fund raiser, a wine and cheese tasting event that includes live and silent auction items donated from area and out-of-area businesses, generates more than \$30,000 in revenue each year. The funds derived from these events are matched with federal dollars, and thus have twice as much impact. With these events, Silver Rider is able to provide more than 100 service hours per week instead of the 20 hours that would be provided without the local matching funds. This ensures all the residents of the area that rely on the transit system for medical, shopping, and other activities are able to do so every day instead of on a part-time basis. This consistent service level is especially important to the chemotherapy and dialysis patients who use the program.

Another important facet of a successful rural transit operation is its relationship with the local media. The media can be critical in making certain residents know of the programs that are available and aware of the fund raisers. The good news is that Silver Rider has found that the media in its local rural markets is very accessible and usually quite receptive to printing and airing as much information as a local agency provides to them. Also, any advertising that is needed may be purchased at a much lower cost than in urban areas, and that advertising does not get lost in a sea of messages.

Overall, Silver Rider is proud of the service levels it is able to offer to the rural residents of southern Nevada. These service levels are only able to be offered with the support of the community, the affordable housing options to residents of those communities, and a non-profit transit operation that is dedicated to its core mission of providing consistent, reliable, and affordable transportation instead of a mission of making a profit. The advertising logo used by Silver Rider says it all: "We take you where you want to go."

Debbie Dauenhauer is the Executive Director of the Southern Nevada Transit Coalition. For more information, visit www.sntc.net.