

MINUTES

**New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Freight Roundtable
April 27, 2016 - 8:30 AM
Regional Transportation Management Center
10 Veterans Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70124**

Attendees

Amelia Pellegrin, Port of NO (Speaker)
Bruce Richards, NY and Associates (Speaker)
Jeff Roesel, RPC (Speaker)
Karen Parsons, RPC (Speaker)

Alejandra Guzman, NOLABA
Andree' Fant, Port of New Orleans
Ben Broyles, Cooper/CTLC
Billy App, J.W Allen
Bruce Lambert, ITTS
Courtney Young, Clean Fuel Partnership
Davin Kearney, The Kearney Companies
Dean Goodell, LaDOTD
Ellis Vliet, Turner Industries
Glen Guillot, LMTA
Jeff Louis, TCI
Jim Amdal, UNOTI
Joe Accardo, Ports Association of LA
John Hyatt, The Irwin Brown Company
K.M. Price, NOT
Kristi App, JW Allen
Maggie Woodruff, RPC
Randall Withers, LaDOTD
Rebecca Otte, RPC
Richard Metcalf, LMOGA
Roy Quezaire, Port of South LA
Scott Richoux, NOPB
Sean Duffy, LAMA, BRC
Walter Brooks, RPC

Agenda Item #1- Welcome, Introductions, Call to Order

Karen Parsons welcomed the group. Coffee was provided by HDR, Inc. All previous meeting notes, presentations, and upcoming dates are posted on the RPC's website: www.norpc.org.

Agenda Item #2- January 27, 2016 minutes will be offered for approval

Minutes were approved.

Agenda Item #6 was moved up on the agenda because the speaker had to leave early.

Agenda Item #6 - RPC Freight Project Highlights, US 190 Collins Blvd. North Shore

Jeff Roesel presented information on a highway project, US 190 Collins Blvd. in Covington, in the Claiborne Hill Area where a six lane arterial shrinks to two and causes a bottleneck. It is currently in the Environmental Assessment (EA) phase with a goal of attaining a FONSI. Phase 1 and 2A are funded by a RPC program. Phase 2B and 3 are not funded at this time. Estimated total cost including engineering and right-of-way: \$103 million. The old bridge will continue as is and the new bridge will tie into the old bridge. Ten roundabouts are planned to replace traffic signals along the entire corridor. Part of St. Tammany Trace will be relocated. A tunnel will be replaced at US 190 in Mandeville. Federal Highway is reviewing the EA with an anticipated approval in one month. Once approved, additional funding for Phase 1 will follow. Phase 1 set to be complete by 2021.

Agenda Item #3- Overview of US DOT Freight Economy Roundtable with FHWA Administrator Gregory Nadeau in New Orleans held March 29, 2016

Karen Parsons explained that the US Department of Transportation held approximately 25 sessions in states across the country to roll out the new freight provisions of the FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation), the new 5 year transportation bill, and explain new funding programs including the FASTLANE grant program (Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-Term Achievement of National Efficiencies).

New Orleans RPC was fortunate to be singled out to host Gregory Nadeau, the FHWA Administrator and high level freight staff for this event on March 7, 2016. The NO Chamber of Commerce co-hosted the event and invitees were a cross section of freight stakeholders. Regional freight data was provided to FHWA prior to their visit. FHWA produced several freight brochures summarizing regional freight facilities, activities and the freight economy for distribution at the event. These will be scanned and made available as there were few hard copies. The intent of the session was to also collect information and concerns from freight stakeholders in our region to inform the National Freight Strategic Plan by asking key questions. There was an active discussion and FHWA felt the session was substantial. FHWA questions included:

How does the efficiency of freight movement affect your bottom line?

What are today's biggest freight challenges in the area?

What can be done to enhance private sector participation in freight planning and coordination in the region?

What changes to the region's freight transportation should we consider to help strengthen its economy?

What opportunities should a coordinated regional freight plan target in your area?

What can we do to minimize adverse impacts of freight projects on disadvantaged communities?

Karen noted an audio recording of the US DOT Freight Economy Roundtable was made and is available upon request.

RPC's Freight Roundtable is the only Freight Roundtable in existence among all the MPO groups in Louisiana. The Port of New Orleans submitted a FASTLANE grant application for the expansion of the Napoleon container terminal berth. LaDOTD submitted an application for replacement of interstate 10 pavement between the Atchafalaya Basin and Lafayette, LA. It is a major freight corridor between Louisiana and Texas. Projects had to be over \$100 million. The timeline of funding allocation is available.

Agenda Item #4- Port of New Orleans Master Plan, Amelia Pelligren, Project Manager -PowerPoint presentation attached

The Port is focusing on gathering input from stakeholder engagement strategies to develop the Master Plan. The hired consultant is Moffatt & Nichol. Phase 1 should be complete by September or October 2016. Phase 2 will begin promptly after completion of Phase 1 and should be completed by December or January 2017. The Port's last Master Plan was finalized in 2008 but didn't key in on stakeholder engagement and input. The plan is also focusing on realistic CIP funding requirements and optimizing existing infrastructure. Stakeholder engagement goals include active discussions between the Port Board and Staff, industry stakeholders (focus groups and individual interviews) and the public (open house format within each parish).

Amelia presented a Q&A, *Key Questions and Challenges for Future of Port NOLA*. Attendee responses are listed below.

1. What are our region's top opportunities and challenges that could impact the Port?
 - a. Export growth of chemical sector out of Baton Rouge
 - b. Maintaining a river draft and dredging
 - c. Larger cargo coming into the Port, height and width restrictions, having to rebarge cargo
 - d. Tourism dollars being prioritized
2. What top 2 or 3 opportunities within their CONTROL should the Port focus on?
 - a. Being a landlord Port, there is less control (gate hours)
 - b. As volumes increase, the Port will need to change for optimal efficiency
3. Where should the Port be in 5 years? In 10 years?
 - a. Start looking at inland rail ports, identifying hubs away from the coast to take it into the Port on rail rather than truck
 - b. Need state money for private sector to adjust to market
 - c. If focus is on cruise, stay a landlord port; if focus is on cargo, focus on innovation
 - d. The Master Plan can help prioritize the Port through its education efforts.
 - e. The Port should first focus on rail shuttle, barge shuttle, and solving labor limits to port hours of operation to help resolve roadway capacity limitations. Work with the Federal government and other ports for innovative funding to pay for extended labor hours. It

has the capacity. Taxpayers have paid for the roadway which is underutilized for 16 hours a day. Discussions with warehouses should take place to get gates open before 8 a.m. a complete, comprehensive approach to optimize opportunities.

Agenda Item #5- Reserve, Port of South Louisiana/ Airline to I-10 Connector Roadway, Bruce Richards, NY and Associates -PowerPoint presentation attached

This project's 2004 draft did not receive a *Finding a No Significant Impact (FONSI)* due to wetland concerns. After revisions and resubmitting, they received a FONSI and moved forward. This project is for both the Port and the public and will lessen truck traffic on local roads. Based on the 2004 draft and stakeholder input, 12 Build Alternatives were announced and narrowed down to nine along with the No Build Alternative. [The nine build alternatives can be found in the PowerPoint]. The nine build alternatives were then narrowed down to two: AP-6B and P-1. AP-6B is a direct route that lines with W. 10th St (the improved route from the Port of South Louisiana) and costs about \$95 million. P-1 ties into E. 22nd St. looping around the area and would have cost around \$92 million. AP-6B was chosen as the preferred alternative build. It is a new I-10 interchange with 12 ft. lanes and a shoulder to pass elevated over the wetlands. It crosses over pipeline which is being used for the levee system. No mitigation required and mitigation required components were stated. The draft EIS was completed in March 2015. The next task is working on the Interchange Justification Report (IJR) which is currently not funded and may be more expensive than the EIS. Once the IJR is completed, they will still need to complete the EIS. The IJR funding match may be done in increments. They are working with the RPC, FHWA, and LaDOTD.

Agenda Item #7- Round Robin One Minute Activity Reports (by members)

1. New Orleans Terminal is implementing a new Terminal Operating (computer) System for the whole terminal to improve efficiency.
2. Port NO is working on the Truck Replacement Incentive Program (TRIP) which funds \$35,000 toward truck upgrades.
3. The International Freight Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association of New Orleans (IFFCBANO) Conference will be held May 19-22, 2016 in Point Clear, Alabama. Beginning July 1, 2016, every export container leaving the United States will need a Verified Gross Mass (VGM).
4. Mississippi Modal Terminal
5. \$16.7 million TIGER Grant toward Port of New Orleans \$75 million rail project.
6. The new roundabouts in Hammond are successful from a truck perspective.
7. Gov. John Bel Edwards pledging \$34.4 million to Port Priority projects.
8. LMTA would support raising fuel taxes if it applied to both diesel and gasoline and the money went strictly to highway/concrete projects.
9. DOTD projects that all three parts of I-10 Connector Roadway project will be complete by November 2016, weather permitting.
10. Eight states have raised their taxes on gasoline and diesel. Louisiana's is \$0.20. The supply of crude oil is at an 80-year historic high. LNG imports and exports in Louisiana are skyrocketing because of its low cost.

11. Results of the valuation of NOPB are expected next week. There was discussion on the potential for the privatization of the NOPB Railroad.

Agenda Item #8- Open Discussion/Issues of Concern

None

The next Freight Roundtable meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27, 2016 at the Regional Transportation Management Center, 10 Veterans Blvd. at 8:30 a.m.

Minutes by Courtney Young

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