

New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Freight Roundtable
March 14, 2014; 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Regional Transportation Management Center
10 Veteran Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70124

Attendees

Karen Parsons, RPC
John King, RPC
Walter Brooks, RPC
Ellis Vliet, Turner Industries
Sean Duffy, Big River Coalition
Jim Murphy, MARAD
Matt Johns, LaDOTD-Planning
Phil Jones, LaDOTD-Deputy Assistant Secretary Intermodal
Dean Goodell, LaDOTD-Rail
Randall Withers, LaDOTD-Maritime
Roy Quezaire, Port of South Louisiana
Robert Scafidel, Port of St. Bernard
Josh Duplantis, LaDOTD-Aviation
Jim Amdal, UNOTI
Glen Guillot, Southeastern Motor Freight
Billy App, J.W. Allen
Drew Heaphy, Port of St. Bernard
Michael Connelly, CSX Intermodal Transportation
Jim Henderson, New Orleans Cold Storage
Chris LaBorde, RPC
Scott Richoux, New Orleans Public Belt Railroad
Bruce Lambert, Institute of Trade and Transportation
Brandon Buckner, FHWA
Chandra Bondzie, FHWA
Richard Metcalf, LA Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association
John T. Hyatt, The Irwin Brown Co.
Sandy Sanders, Port of Plaquemines
Emilie Bahr, RPC
Tricia Keffer, RPC
Jeff Roesel, RPC
Amber Seely, RPC

Walter Brooks, RPC's Executive Director, kicked off the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Freight Roundtable by welcoming all attendees to the first meeting of the group. He explained that the RPC commission is made up of elected officials and citizen members

representing 6 parishes (Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Parishes) and the Transportation Policy Board additionally includes representatives from St. Charles and St. John Parishes as well as all modes of transportation (motor carrier, aviation, rail, transit and maritime). He highlighted the role of the RPC to facilitate discussion and fund meaningful projects around the region.

Karen Parsons, Principal Planner at the RPC, welcomed the group and introduced RPC staff that work on different aspects of Freight Planning. Each participant then gave a self-introduction. She encouraged review of the handouts provided in the packet of information which included a Draft Freight Profile of the region, Economic Development programs that can assist freight related industries, Clean Fuel Partnership information for reducing pollutants, and new RPC and DOTD Driver Alert Program information. Karen made a power point presentation that covered the agenda for the morning and gave an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the RPC as an agency and to plan for freight. She explained that federal funds accruing to the region largely target highway related freight projects and that the budget is fiscally constrained. The power point provided background, maps, and data explaining on-going tasks and programs at the RPC to foster the movement of people and goods over the National Highway System to connect to intermodal terminals and business and industry. Potential funding for freight projects were presented. The RPC requested feedback to improve the Draft Regional Freight Profile.

Walter Brooks then provided detail about some highlighted freight related projects on the south shore and Jeff Roesel, Deputy Director at the RPC, provided similar highlights for freight related projects on the north shore. This was followed by a group discussion of how to proceed.

Discussion and comments after the main meeting included modifying the freight profile by:

- Correcting aviation statistics
- Updating photos of the Port of St. Bernard
- Distinguishing between maritime vessel calls and vessel movements on the river

Several participants offered their expertise and information in these areas (Sean Duffy, Drew Heaphy and Josh Duplantis).

There was interest in continuing to meet and to potentially discuss the State Freight Plan, a new initiative required by the federal law to be undertaken at the State level and which LaDOTD is about to kick off. There was interest in the extension of rail to Plaquemines Parish along LA 23.

Overall, the group seemed to find value in learning about programs and projects at the RPC that might be highlighted at future meetings and to network with persons and agencies they were unfamiliar with. A long-term strategy was not discussed for freight input but it was generally agreed upon that another meeting would be called to engage in freight issues of concern.