

**I-85 Corridor Alliance**  
**Planning Session Minutes**  
National Center for Asphalt Technology  
Auburn, Alabama  
January 27, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 am.

Present were:

1. Joe Sumners, AU/EDI (Executive Director)
2. Deroald Hopkins, First Tuskegee Bank (President)
3. Scott Slocum, Westin Solutions (Treasurer)
4. Sandra S. Nichols, WildLaw (for Ray Vaughan, Secretary)
5. Larry Fillmer, Auburn Development Office
6. Mary White, Southern Union (for Dr. Jordan)
7. Margaret Bentley, Alabama Power
8. Kate Jarvis, City of Auburn
9. Ralph Foster, AU Outreach Information
10. Mike Easterwood, AU/EDI

**1. I-85 Corridor Alliance Mission Statement.**

Participants worked on creating a mission statement for the Alliance. Following is the final version. The first sentence describes the mission, or purpose, of the Alliance. The second sentence identifies the makeup of the partnership.

Mission Statement:

*"The I-85 Corridor Alliance promotes innovation, prosperity, collaboration, and competitiveness along Interstate 85 in Alabama. The Alliance is a partnership of local governments, private sector organizations, universities, and technical institutions."*

**2. Geographic focus of the Alliance.**

Settled on keeping participation open to the eight counties on the official documentation (Chambers, Lee, Russell, Tallapoosa, Macon, Bullock, Elmore, and Montgomery counties), but with an initial focus on involving the active partners in the core counties of Chambers, Lee and Macon.

**3. Focus on Promotion of Regional Assets.**

There was discussion about what exactly the Alliance is and what we do. It was concluded that promotion of the assets of the region should be the primary focus, especially assets related to tourism, advanced manufacturing, innovation, and technology. The development

of the clusters will remain a long-term goal, but it was decided that in order to maintain the support of partners, we need to focus on concrete, specific objectives.

#### **4. 2006 Planned Activities:**

##### **1) The Second Annual Innovation Forum**

The Innovation Forum will be centered on the new Research Park, though a date will be set for the event regardless of the progress on the Research Park. The event will be similar to last year's forum, which was based around a football game weekend. We will attempt to showcase the corridor's assets in a large exhibit area.

Larry is also working with two venture capitalists on how to increase Intellectual Property opportunities along the corridor and attract other venture capitalists.

##### **2) Regional Networking Workshop**

The group decided to support a regional networking workshop. This workshop will focus on specific topics and will showcase corridor assets. One focus will be regional tourism opportunities. Governor Riley will be invited to speak. It was suggested that the regional workshop should be held at the Lodge at Grand National in Opelika in approximately May or June. Kate suggested that the regional workshop would be a good opportunity to prepare and present a power point presentation to "tell the I-85 story" and highlight regional assets. This presentation can be used at the Innovation Forum and for future marketing purposes.

##### **3) Create a Funding Committee and Strategy.**

The funding strategy was discussed. The group decided that we should pursue funding through ADECA and create a committee to move forward through the activities presented in the concept paper that Scott provided last year. The Funding Committee will seek funding through grants, foundations, and private sources.

Joe reported that the WIRED funding application to the Department of Labor was not chosen by ADECA. However, there is still a possibility of funding through other sources at ADECA. The group identified/set a goal of getting a grant from some state entity this year.

##### **4) Create/Update Promotional Materials**

Decided to:

- ♦ Update the printed brochure
- ♦ Update the website; develop web-based interactive map for Asset Inventory
- ♦ Create a Power Point describing I-85 assets

- ♦ Create a more user-friendly print version of the Asset Inventory; make CDs for distribution throughout the region and at I-85 Corridor events

### **5) Contact and Involve Key Stakeholders.**

A discussion was held on potential/prospective candidates for active participation in the Alliance. The following stakeholders were identified as targets for outreach:

- ♦ Elected officials
  - Legislators
    - The concept of developing an ad hoc I-85 legislators committee was floated. One idea presented involved the creation of a series of breakfasts for different categories of elected officials, starting with having Ted Little and Mike Hubbard host a breakfast for legislators.
  - Mayors and County Commissioners
- ♦ ALDOT
- ♦ ADECA
- ♦ Regional Planning Commissions
- ♦ Representatives from the new manufacturers in the region (i.e., Gambro, Leggit & Pratt)
- ♦ Representative from East Alabama Medical Center
- ♦ Chambers of Commerce
- ♦ People who were previously involved through now-inactive clusters

### **6) Develop a Public Relations Strategy**

- ♦ Promote Alliance activities in Central Alabama Business Journal, Business Alabama and other media outlets

### **7) Strengthen partnership with Research Park**

- ♦ Larry and Joe to participate on committee for Research Park marketing.

## **5. Organizational Issues.**

- ♦ Larry reminded the group that there must be an annual official Board meeting to revise Board structure and elect officers (February or March).
- ♦ The group decided that there will be monthly work sessions with special meetings of the Board, as necessary. The monthly meetings will be held at the same place each month, unless special circumstances require other arrangements. Monthly work sessions are scheduled for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month from 8:00 AM until 10:00 AM.
- ♦ Tasks to begin working on before the next meeting:
  - Scott and Ray to work on filing taxes.
  - Larry to begin working on the Innovation Forum and developing a relationship between the Alliance and the Research Park
  - Recoup and update the list of all of those who have been involved in the Alliance, including through the clusters, and begin to assess who to contact about getting involved now

- Margaret and Scott to meet with Senator Little and Representative Hubbard to begin working towards forming a legislators group
- Joe will follow-up with ADECA and will meet with Sid McAnnally to introduce the Alliance to him and ask him to attend a work session.
- Ralph and Joe to work on updating the brochure

**6. Miscellaneous.**

- ◆ The City of Tuskegee website is up and running at [www.tuskegeealabama.org](http://www.tuskegeealabama.org)

7. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

8. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 23, 2006 at the National Center for Asphalt Technology in Auburn from 8:00-10:00 AM.