

Date: June 25, 2004
To: I-85 Corridor Initiative Executive Council
From: Larry Fillmer
I-85 Corridor Initiative Program Manager
Subject: June 24, 2004 Executive Council Meeting Minutes

The I-85 Corridor Initiative Executive Council convened at 8:00 a.m. CDT on Thursday, June 24th at the National Center for Asphalt Technology (NCAT) Auburn, Alabama. We thank Al Giffin and the NCAT Staff for their hospitality and for hosting the meeting.

The attendees at the meeting were:

1. Margaret Bentley – Alabama Power
2. Jerry Clement – Batson-Cook (Educational Services Cluster)
3. Cary Cox – Auburn Training Connection – City of Auburn
4. Ralph Foster – Office of Outreach – Auburn University
5. Al Giffin – Center of Transportation Research – Auburn University
6. Margaret Gunter – Alabama Commission on Higher Education
7. Deroald Hopkins – First Tuskegee Bank
8. Dean Matheson – Interport/SDS
9. Christie Sellers – Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce
10. Scott Slocum – Weston Solutions
11. John Veres – AUM
12. David Wilson – Auburn University
13. Larry Fillmer – I85 Corridor Initiative

Larry Fillmer and David Wilson briefly described their experience attending the 2004 National Economic Development Conference: *The Innovation Imperative – Translating Ideas into Regional Prosperity*, which was held in Washington, D.C., June 8-10th. Also attending the conference from the I-85 Corridor were Al Cook and Barbara Patton, Mayor of Opelika. The focus of the Conference was regionalization and featured addresses by the Honorable Donald L. Evans, Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce and the Honorable David A. Sampson, Assistant Secretary for Economic Development, U.S. Department of Commerce. Both spoke on the need for regional efforts in economic development and numerous examples of successful regional initiatives were highlighted throughout the conference.

Cluster updates were provided by the Cluster Leaders. Jerry Clement reported that the Educational Services Cluster met after the May Executive Council Meeting. Efforts are

being made to re-vitalize the focus of this Cluster; however, due to summer break it has been difficult to achieve. David Wilson conveyed his experience recently representing Auburn University at the 5 year anniversary celebration for the University in Zhengdong New District, Zhengzhou, China. The campus was designed by local architect, Peter Weiss. David suggested that the Educational Services Cluster examine the opportunity to export this type of capability as one of its initiatives.

Dean Matheson reported that the Infrastructure Services Cluster would meet on June 30th to consider: Cluster direction, leadership and possible initiatives. The Infrastructure Services Cluster will be established as an integrated network of private companies encouraging and enhancing business expansion for the I-85 Corridor by providing extended service and distribution capabilities in the Region.

Larry Fillmer reported that Transportation Technology Cluster has been focused on developing the Innovation Partnership Center concept. Meetings have been held with various constituencies, including the Lee-Russell Council of Governments to begin the process of developing a grant application to be presented to the Regional Economic Development Authority. At this time, the concept requires more detailed input from various proponents, specifying the exact functions to be accomplished in the Center. This will include a five-year pro forma return on investment. Once more of this detail is incorporated into the concept document, then meetings will also be convened with various technology companies in the Region to seek their input on the concept. Since this is an Opelika based initiative, Al Cook is leading the effort to develop the concept more fully.

Deroald Hopkins reported that the Tourism and Community Development Cluster continues to examine various opportunities for joint events that foster cooperation among the Convention and Visitor Bureaus and the various Chambers of Commerce along the Corridor. The next major event for the Cluster will likely be planned for the September-November timeframe. Jerry Clement, Margaret Gunter and Larry Fillmer also reported that they had taken a tour of the E.V. Smith Research Center at Exit 26 as part of the consideration for the development of the Center for Sustainable Rural Living. The tour included visiting the Fort Decatur site, which dates back to the War of 1812, and looking at possible locations for a Visitor Center as well. Planning grants are now being written by two professors from Auburn University to conduct the site planning and community input meetings (Charettes) that will be held in Tuskegee, Shorter and Tallasee as part of the concept development for the Center for Sustainable Rural Living.

At its May Meeting, the Executive Council discussed the possibility of creating a permanent program office structure for the I-85 Corridor Initiative and requested that Larry Fillmer prepare a draft "Articles of Incorporation" and a preliminary budget for the first year of operation. Ray Vaughan volunteered to create the draft "Articles of Incorporation. Thanks to Ray's efforts, Larry shared with the Executive Council three documents: (1) Draft Articles of Incorporation; (2) Consideration for Bylaws; and (3) the Preliminary Annual Budget. All three documents are attached to these minutes, and all in attendance were advised that these are preliminary documents for discussion purposes

only. After consideration of the documents, the Executive Council unanimously approved the creation of a non-profit corporate structure for continuation and permanency of the I-85 Corridor Initiative and recommended that an endowment be created for the purpose of funding the operation. As part of the creation of the non-profit structure, the Executive Council also approved that the corporation be formally named the *I-85 Corridor Alliance*; however, until the Articles of Incorporation are filed the program will continue to be referred to as the I-85 Corridor Initiative. It was also agreed that a temporary corporate address be established at one of the local express mail outlets in Auburn. Larry will take care of the administration of the temporary corporate address.

Larry Fillmer also requested that a subcommittee of the Executive Council be formed and convened to finalize the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws. This subcommittee will be composed of David Wilson, Les Porter, Deroald Hopkins, Jerry Clement, Margaret Bentley, Al Cook, Dean Matheson, Jill Bonneau, Ray Vaughan and Ralph Foster. The working session to complete this work was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, August 3rd from 8:00 a.m. – noon. Larry will confirm attendance and a meeting location with all members of the subcommittee. The goal for this subcommittee will be to have the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws finalized for review and approval by the Executive Council at its regularly scheduled August meeting on Thursday, August 26th.

The agenda for the I-85 Network Meeting on July 8th was reviewed and finalized. It is also attached to these meeting minutes.

Because of the July 8th I-85 Network Meeting and upcoming vacation schedules, there will not be an Executive Council Meeting on Thursday, July 22nd. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Council is Thursday, August 26th from 8:00-10:00 a.m. CDT at a location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m. CDT and a number of members of the Executive Council were given a tour of the NCAT. Again, we thank Al Giffin and his staff for their efforts.