



# ***RIVER OF TRADE CORRIDOR COALITION***

**ROTCC NATIONAL MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 29-30, 2007  
HOSTED BY THE PORT OF HOUSTON**

**Thursday, November 29, 2007 General Session, InterContinental Hotel, Houston, Texas**

**Welcome – ROTCC Chair and Dallas Councilmember Ron Natinsky**

**Introduction of Luncheon Keynote Speaker – Wade Battles, Managing Director, Port of Houston**

**Mr. Battles** spoke to the significance of the Port of Houston, both the volume of its freight traffic and its economic impact. As international trade increases, Port expansion projects are underway so that it can continue providing an efficient flow of trade through the United States.

**Keynote Speaker – Harris County Judge Ed Emmett**

**Judge Ed Emmett** began his address by sharing a bit of his family history and well established transportation background. Concerning Harris County, Judge Emmett underscored several major factors impacting trade and transportation, one being the expansion of the Panama Canal. This project, set to be completed by 2014 to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canal, will have a great impact on trade patterns and volumes of trade moving through Harris County, a gateway of trade. A second factor affecting trade and transportation is the availability of funding for highway projects. Waning investment in transportation infrastructure is a national concern and a hindrance to trade, and the economy of the United States could be adversely impacted if solutions are not addressed.

**Administrative Update – Chairman Natinsky**

**A. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 2, 2007 ROTCC International Meeting hosted by Windsor, Ontario**

Motion: Pat Hays, Mayor, City of North Little Rock, Arkansas  
Second: Greg Hirsch, Councilmember, Town of Addison, Texas  
Unanimous approval

**B. ROTCC Overview**

**C. New Member Update**

City of Alice, Texas  
Town of Addison, Texas  
Francine Cross, Business Development, Mohr Partners  
Bill Beichler, Business Development Manager, Mohr Partners  
Elizabeth Cook, President, Sales-Mark  
Holland Harper, We Pack Logistics

**D. Legislative Caucus and Congressional Caucus Update**

A Congressional High Priority Corridor Designation for the entire River of Trade Corridor is a top goal of the Congressional Caucus. Also at the federal level, ROTCC continues dialogue with the EPA's regional administrators to further the Coalition's goal to be recognized as a "clean and green" corridor.

## CONCURRENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**Congestion Mitigation Committee:** How do we move the products of an ever-expanding market efficiently, safely, and securely via rail and highway?

*Committee Chair - Mayor Pat Hays, North Little Rock, Arkansas*

**David Schrank, Ph.D., Associate Research Scientist, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)** gave an overview of the 2007 Urban Mobility Report. The Urban Mobility Study quantifies traffic congestion levels in 75 urban areas in the United States and annually releases a report on those findings. Areas of all population sizes are experiencing passenger and freight congestion that is costing billions of gallons of fuel, billions of hours of time, and billions of dollars in economic waste. Implementation of multiple solutions will be necessary to manage a looming mobility crisis, including adding capacity, expanding transit use, and use of adjustable commuter schedule programs.

**Steve Milligan, Assistant Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS)** expressed how KCS is planning to move forward with projects to meet domestic and transborder growth demands. The Houston/Rosenberg - Lázaro Cárdenas Corridor is a major development underway and will include a new rail line connecting Rosenberg and Victoria, rather than using Union Pacific trackage rights. The Rosenberg project will promote Pacific coast Mexican ports, such as the Port of Lázaro Cárdenas, as options for East Asian trade goods movement.

**Joe Adams, CEO, Union Pacific Railroad** and **Hugh McCulley, Counsel, BNSF** were available to answer questions from attendees and gave brief overviews of their respective railroads.

This committee was to review the following federal legislation:

H.R. 3916 - A bill to provide for the next generation of border and maritime security technologies.

S.1594 - A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to improve port safety and security for especially hazardous cargos, and other purposes.

**Environmental Compliance Committee:** How do we secure funding to relieve pollution and create a "clean and green" corridor using rail and highways?

*Committee Chair, Councilmember Greg Hirsch, Town of Addison, Texas*

**Dr. Aston Hinds, Manager of Environmental Affairs, Port of Houston Authority** discussed the Port's "Commitment to Environmental Stewardship" and addressed the strategy for sustainability. He stated that economic, environmental, and social development forms a three-legged stool or triple bottom line of the strategy. Port programs designed to reach these goals for sustainability include programs to reduce emissions, control/minimize its "footprint," and increase the quality of life. Other programs include management and disposal of dredge materials and compliance with law and regulations relating to environmental responsibility.

**Lori Pampell, Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)** discussed NCTCOG's pilot program with the Smartway Transportation Partnership. Smartway is an Environmental Protection Agency program designed to align the goals of government and industry. NCTCOG joined Smartway as an affiliate to reduce environmental impact and increase efficiency. Several key issues drive the trucking industry's willingness to participate in the program including fuel costs, demand for improved operations, congestion and capacity constraints, changing regulations and the pressure to reduce environmental impact.

NCTCOG receives grants from Smartway to upgrade trucks with emissions reducing kits, and one of its industry partners anticipates a \$75,000 fuel savings.

**Tom Badgett, Chief Information Officer, IdleAire Technologies Corporation** gave an overview of IdleAire's purpose and operations. The service provided by IdleAire helps reduce emissions caused by idling. The company has locations in every major city along the River of Trade Corridor and other locations throughout the nation. The corporation currently has over 300,000 members mostly comprised of truckers who use their service. The retrofit for the IdleAire Advanced Truck Stop Electrification system is only a \$10 cost to the driver. Once retrofitted, drivers can make a card swipe payment for electricity, central heat and air, Internet, satellite TV, phone connection and many other conveniences.

**Josias Zietsman, Ph.D., Associate Research Engineer, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)** spoke concerning a recent study entitled the National Deployment Strategy of Truck Stop Electrification. The study addresses the criteria used in deciding the best locations across the nation for implementing truck stop electrification that best achieves the goal of significantly reducing idling. Among the criteria evaluated are the length of the corridor, nearby major activity centers and average daily truck volume.

This committee reviewed the following federal legislation:

HR 670 - A bill to promote the national security and stability of the United States economy by reducing the dependence of the United States on foreign oil through the use of alternative fuels and new vehicle technologies, and for other purposes.

HR 2950 – A bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

## **GENERAL SESSION:**

### ***TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS***

**Chris Sultemeier, Vice President, Corporate Traffic, Wal-Mart** spoke concerning the sustainability efforts being implemented by Wal-Mart. He discussed Wal-Mart's relationship with its customers and how its participation in the Katrina effort prompted the company to look at other ways it could have an even greater impact. Wal-Mart reviewed some of its policies concerning procurement, distribution centers, ports, and stores compared with issues such as driver shortage, fuel and commodity costs, highway congestion, and regulatory changes. Efficiency requires addressing energy savings and reducing costs, which in turn drives productivity. Going forward, sustainability leads to increased employee retention and involvement. The goal of the company is to have a minimum of 20% of their products influenced by sustainability by 2009.

**Maurine Dickey, Vice-Chair, Texas High Speed Rail & Transportation Corporation (THSRTC) and Dallas County Commissioner** introduced the Texas T-Bone high speed rail corridor and addressed the importance role the Texas High Speed Rail & Transportation Corporation in promoting grass-roots, multimodal solutions to transportation issues in the most populated, congested areas of the State. The Texas T-Bone Corridor connects Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio, with an extension issuing from Fort Hood/Temple through College Station and on to Houston. She expressed the importance of the THSRTC as it would connect airports and seaports, impact trade and the economy, facilitate access to major educational institutes along its path, connect Fort Hood and other military bases, and give access to major hospitals throughout the corridor.

### ***ENVIRONMENT***

**Lori Pampell, Transportation Planner II, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)** began by giving an overview of the impact that the freight industry has on the

environment including energy use, fuel consumption, and air quality. She then addressed the Smartway Transportation Partnership as a means to optimize energy efficiency, advance technology, promote best operation and management strategies, and reduce environmental impact. Since 2004, the use of the truck replacements and retrofits promoted by Smartway has resulted in reducing almost 7 million metric tons of Co2. This partnership gives several incentives including EPA financing through loans and grants and the EPA National Diesel Clean-up Plan. Council of Governments grants are also available to help implement the Smartway initiatives, particularly in non-attainment areas.

### ***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

**Melissa Trustman, Senior Director of Government Relations, Detroit Regional Chamber** recognized the importance of keeping the flow of goods through the Detroit region and benefits of being involved with the River of Trade. Priorities for the Detroit region include maintaining safe and economically sound borders, considering the evolution of the automotive industry, evaluating the required action to create an international community, and advancing transportation resource planning.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

ROTCC Spring 2008 meeting (Phoenix, Arizona)

### **Old Business**

### **New Business**

Resolutions for consideration:

1. Resolution of Commendation for Meeting Host, Port of Houston  
Motion: Valerie Bradley, Senior Management Analyst, City of Mesquite  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Tennell Atkins, Councilmember, City of Dallas  
Unanimous approval
2. Resolution to increase support of the ROTCC Congressional / Legislative Caucus  
Motion: George Elking, Vice President of Marketing and Sales, Slay Industries  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Pat Hays, Mayor, City of North Little Rock  
Unanimous approval
3. Resolution to support ROTCC as the first "green and clean" surface transportation corridor  
Motion: Bob Grab, Vice President of Business Development, The Rowland Group  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Greg Hirsch, Councilmember, Town of Addison  
Unanimous approval

### **Adjourn**

### **Friday, November 30, 2007**

Port of Houston VIP tour and briefing

Lunch - Houston Yacht Club

### **Introduction of Keynote Speaker by Tom Kornegay, Executive Director, Port of Houston Authority**

### **Keynote Speaker: Ned Holmes, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission**

**Commissioner Holmes** addressed the mobility challenges facing the State of Texas and how the booming population, increasing maintenance and construction costs, and declining availability of funding are affecting how the State conducts business. Some of the funding options being considered are the motor fuels tax and fees, local participation, loans, bonds, tolls, private funds, Transportation Reinvestment Zone, and sales taxes. Commissioner Holmes also relayed recent developments relating to Senate Bill 792 passed by the most recent Texas Legislature and the Trans Texas Corridor I-69 project.