

# REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION / CONTRACT CONTROL FORM

**Tracking Number:** 3.

**Date of Request:** November 5, 2007

**Date Request Received:** November 5, 2007

**Board Meeting Date Requested:** November 19, 2007

**Board Meeting Date Assigned:** November 19, 2007

**Short Title:** Highway 17 Association Status Report:  
Marc Finlayson, Executive Director.

**Request Status:**

- Request is proceeding to Board of Commissioners
- More information is needed – see attached
- Request on hold – no further information needed
- Other:

**Background:** The Highway 17 Transportation Association in North Carolina was created in 1975 through a collaboration of local government and civic leaders up and down the Highway 17 corridor. It is the mission of the Highway 17 Association to assure, through collective action and constancy of purpose, that the inclusion and funding of all unfunded portions of the US Highway 17 corridor shall be part of the NC Department of Transportation's 2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with the ultimate goal of creating a fully controlled access four-lane facility throughout North Carolina.

*(Administrative Use Only)*

Highway 17 Association Executive Director Marc Finlayson will update the Board regarding the Association's activities.

**CONTRACT TYPE**

- Renewal
- For Service(s)
- Intergovernmental – County as Grantee
  - Federal Grantor
  - State Grantor
  - Grant or
- County as Grantor
  - County Funds
  - Other Funds:
- Revision
- For Equipment

**Specific Action Requested:** Receive the update.

Requested by: Lori Brill  
Department: County Manager  
Title:  
Contact Phone: 910-259-1200  
Contact Fax:

**PURCHASING** Budgeted Item:  Yes  No  
Date Rec'd:  Reviewed and Approved  
 Comments on Reverse

Date Sent:

Signed:

**ATTORNEY**  Reviewed and Approved  
Date Rec'd:  Legal Problem(s)  
 Comments on Reverse

Date Sent:

Signed:

**FINANCE** Sufficient Funds  Available  
Date Rec'd  Not Available  
 Budget Amendment Necessary  
 Budgeted Amendment is Attached  
 Comments on Reverse

Date Sent:

Signed:

**CLERK** Signature(s) Required:  
 Board Chairman/County Manager  
 Other:

Date Rec'd Approved by Board:  Yes  No  
At meeting on



For immediate release  
October 29, 2007

For more information contact:  
Marc Finlayson 252-617-2825

## Highway 17 Association welcomes appointment of Blue Ribbon Panel; Urges substantive recommendations, action by 2008 legislative session

New Bern, N.C. – The Highway 17 Association today applauded the announcement by Governor Mike Easley and legislative leaders that they will convene a blue ribbon committee to analyze the state’s future transportation needs and recommend ways to meet them. The 24-member panel has been given a broad scope of issues to study and has been asked to make a preliminary report to the May 2008 legislative budget session and a final report to the 2009 General Assembly.

“We are pleased with the committee’s mandate,” says Marc Finlayson, Executive Director of the Highway 17 Association. “We trust that because of the gravity of the transportation funding situation in North Carolina and the widening gap between needs and revenues, that the panel will make substantive recommendations to the short session next spring so that we can begin addressing the shortfall sooner rather than later.”

Four members of the committee either live in the Highway 17 corridor or represent one or more of its 13 counties. They are Senator Clark Jenkins (D-Tarboro); Mr. Lanny Wilson, DOT Board Member from Wilmington; and Mr. Billy Sewell, President of Platinum Corral of Jacksonville, each appointed by Senate President *Pro Tempore* Marc Basnight, and Representative William Wainwright (D-Havelock) appointed by Speaker of the House Joe Hackney. “The men and women of the committee bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their work and we believe they will give their task the thoughtfulness and commitment that it deserves,” says Finlayson.

The Highway 17 Association has gone on record asking for a special legislative session to address the state’s growing transportation funding gap. According to the NC DOT, by the year 2025 the state will face some \$122 billion in transportation needs and can expect only about \$67 billion in revenues to pay for them. That equals a gap of \$65 billion that must somehow be filled. “Traditional revenue sources can’t keep up with the needs, and so our policy makers will have to be bold and creative,” says Finlayson. “And because the rising costs of road building products like steel, asphalt and concrete are far outpacing ordinary inflation, we must act now or risk falling even father behind.”

(more)

For a complete list of committee members and the issues they've been asked to address, please see the accompanying news release from the office of the Senate President Pro Tempore.

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# NORTH CAROLINA SENATE

Marc Basnight, President Pro Tempore  
16 West Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808  
919-733-6854

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Gov. Easley, Sen. Basnight, and Speaker Hackney Appoint 21st Century Transportation Committee Members**

Raleigh – Governor Mike Easley, Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight, and House Speaker Joe Hackney today announced the members of a blue-ribbon committee to examine the condition and needs of North Carolina's transportation system and make recommendations to the General Assembly.

The 21st Century Transportation Committee is a cross-section of 24 elected officials, transportation and engineering experts, business leaders and citizens who will make a preliminary report to the General Assembly by May 1, 2008, and a final report by the end of next year.

"I appreciate the willingness of these North Carolinians to serve on this important committee," said Easley. "Their combined knowledge, talent and commitment to North Carolina will ensure that the transportation system is examined thoroughly and that thoughtful, creative solutions to the challenges our growing state faces are found"

Senator Basnight said: "North Carolina's strong economy has resulted in rapid growth that has strained our transportation system. It is my hope that this committee will thoroughly examine our needs both in rural and urban areas and propose innovative solutions. An objective study with input from many points of view is the best way to build a consensus and address our needs so that our great state continues to prosper."

Speaker Hackney said: "There is no doubt this state has transportation needs, but before we can approach those needs in a comprehensive way we need to better understand what they are. A careful, independent analysis will allow us to make sure we are moving ahead efficiently and spending taxpayer money in the best way possible. This committee will provide that important independent voice and help this state prepare its infrastructure for the years ahead."

The 21st Century Transportation Committee will study:

- Ways to improve the transportation systems of the State in order to promote economic growth and ensure that the State can compete and participate in the global economy.
- Innovative methods to fund the transportation needs of the State, including an examination of traditional and nontraditional methods of financing transportation infrastructure.
- Priorities of the Department of Transportation, including methods to ensure adequate funding for corridors and projects of statewide significance.
- Methods to use new and innovative technology to improve the transportation system.
- Options for local transportation funding.

- Ways to adequately fund road construction to address urban congestion and to improve mobility.
- Methods to spend transportation funds in the most effective and cost efficient manner, including ways to use recycled materials, and reuse and recycle road materials.
- Ways to ensure the continued safety of the current transportation system, including an analysis of the safety and reliability of bridges in the State.
- The appropriate division of responsibility for transportation infrastructure between State and local government and any federal role in providing transportation infrastructure needs.
- The role of ports, airports, mass transit, rail, and pedestrian and cycling access in providing the transportation needs of the State.
- Public transportation needs in urban areas.
- Methods to encourage fuel conservation and energy conservation in North Carolina.

The following individuals were appointed to the Committee:

**Appointees Recommended by the Governor:**

Chair:

Mr. Brad Wilson, Chief Operating Officer of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC and member (past Chair) of UNC Board of Governors, Chair, Wake County

The Honorable Terry Bellamy, Mayor of Asheville, Buncombe County

The Honorable Sam Hunt, former NC Transportation Secretary, Alamance County

The Honorable Allen Joines, Mayor of Winston-Salem, Forsyth County

Mr. Gregory Plemmons, Vice President of Old Dominion Global, Guilford County

Mr. Charles F. Bowman, Principal Compliance Executive for Bank of America, Mecklenburg County

The Honorable Chuck McGrady, County Commissioner, Henderson County

Mr. D. Jordan "Jordy" Whichard, III, Publisher of Cox NC Publications and Chair of NC Economic Development Board, Pitt County

**President Pro Tempore Appointments**

Senator David Hoyle, Gaston County

Senator Clark Jenkins, Edgecombe County

Senator Richard Stevens, Wake County

Dr. Joseph Monroe, Dean of the College of Engineering, NC A&T State University, Guilford County

Mr. Lanny Wilson, North Carolina Board of Transportation Member, New Hanover County

Mr. Billy Sewell, President of Platinum Corral, Onslow County

Mr. Stephen Zelnak, Jr., CEO of Martin Marietta, Wake County

The Honorable Richard Blackburn, County Commissioner, Ashe County

**Speaker of the House Appointments**

Representative Nelson Cole, Rockingham County

Representative Becky Carney, Mecklenburg County

Representative Lorene Coates, Rowan County

Representative Phillip Frye, Mitchell County

Representative William C. "Bill" McGee, Forsyth County

Representative William L. Wainwright, Craven County

The Honorable George W. Miller, Jr., former Representative, Durham County

Ms. Nina Szlosberg, Owner of Napro Communications, North Carolina Board of Transportation Member, Wake County

# Highway 17 Association

## Mission Statement and Goals

September 30, 2007

### Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Highway 17 Association to assure, through collective action and constancy of purpose, that the inclusion and funding of all unfunded portions of the US Highway 17 corridor shall be part of the NC Department of Transportation's 2009 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

The Highway 17 Association will accomplish its mission by:

- Protecting Highway 17 projects now fully funded in the TIP.
- Being regional in vision and scope and not advancing one local project at the expense of another.
- Anticipating and resolving local issues and concerns, and facilitating solutions where local conflicts exist.
- Helping the DOT solve problems in planning, design, right-of-way acquisition and construction, in order to advance Highway 17 projects.
- Being an active partner with federal, state, regional and local stakeholders who share an interest in the completion of a fully controlled access, four-lane Highway 17 from Virginia to South Carolina.

Highway 17 Association  
Mission Statement and Goals  
NCFY 2006-07

Goals, Strategies and Tactics

Government Relations 2006-07

- Meet with each of the DOT Board members in the corridor to share information about the Association's new director and offices, and to understand each member's vision of Highway 17 and its progress.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: By December 2006.

**Progress:** I have met each of the five commissioners representing the Highway 17 corridor and have had substantive follow-up meetings with Stan White and Cam McRae in Nags Head and Kinston respectively. I spoke briefly with Louis Sewell in Jacksonville at a DOT hearing on the Drummer-Kellum Road project and we have agreed to meet for a more lengthy discussion. Marvin Blount III has agreed to meet with me after the first of the year. I have not yet scheduled a substantive meeting with Lanny Wilson, though I was introduced to him at the October luncheon of the Highway 17 commissioners during their quarterly update.

*Progress: I have had substantive follow-up meetings with Louis Sewell and Marvin Blount III at their respective offices. Jeryl Rawls accompanied me to the meeting with Marvin Blount. Jeryl and I also attended the January quarterly luncheon at DOT to review Highway 17 progress. Commissioners White, McRae, Blount and Wilson attended.*

**Progress:** I represented the Association at the April quarterly luncheon at DOT to review Highway 17 progress. All five DOT board members were present.

**Progress:** I had a substantive discussion with Division 3 Board Member Lanny Wilson at the Topsail public meeting for the proposed Hampstead Bypass.

*Progress: Steve Biggs accompanied me to the July quarterly luncheon at DOT to review Highway 17 projects. Commissioners White, Blount and Wilson were present.*

**Progress:** I met with Lanny Wilson at the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which he chairs. We discussed the need for a special Legislative session to address the transportation funding shortfall. I interviewed Stan White for an upcoming profile in the Highway 17 Association newsletter.

- Appear before each County and City governing body for a brief report on progress to date; to engage the local governments in a dialogue about Highway 17; to get buy-in on the strategic planning document; and to invite the members to the Highway 17 Annual Meeting.

- Who: Marc Finlayson
- When: First meetings by mid January 2007.

**Progress:** I have addressed the commissioners of Beaufort County, Jones County, Martin County, Craven County and Bertie County. I have also addressed the municipal leaders of Washington, New Bern and Windsor. I am on the agenda in Onslow County for February 5 and hope to also schedule Chowan, Perquimans and Pasquotank Counties and the cities of Jacksonville, River Bend, Chocowinity, Williamston and Edenton as soon as possible.

*Progress: Since the last report I have also spoken before Onslow County and the town of Edenton. I also addressed the board of directors of North Carolina's Northeast partnership, and was able to thank them personally for their financial and administrative support of our enterprise. Thanks to Bob Spivey for introducing me.*

**Progress:** Since the last report I also addressed the Williamston town board to thank them personally for their support and to answer questions about our activities. Tom Thompson also arranged for me to meet Mayor Mobley of Chocowinity so that I could thank him for his town's support as well. I will be speaking with the River Bend town board on April 12 and the Perquimans County Commissioners on May 7. I still hope to go before the governing boards of Jacksonville and Elizabeth City and Pasquotank, Pender and Brunswick Counties.

**Progress:** Since the last report I have addressed the River Bend Town Board and the Perquimans County Commissioners. I was very well received by both governing bodies. Additionally I have met with Rich Olson, Manager of Elizabeth City, to discuss his municipality participating in our organization. He led me to believe some support was possible, and suggested an amount and a means by which it might be accomplished.

*Progress: We have solicited financial support from the local governing bodies and economic development organizations that contributed in 2006-07, plus several additional units. In support of the solicitation I appeared before work sessions of the Pender, Beaufort and Onslow County Commissions. I also prepared a one-page summary of accomplishments in support of our requests to Onslow and Jones Counties. State Representatives Danny McComas of Wilmington and Bonner Stiller of Southport have provided names of local government leaders to speak with in New Hanover and Brunswick Counties in seeking support. I have met with Wilmington City Council Member Laura Padgett and Jim Leutze, Chancellor Emeritus of UNC-Wilmington to begin the process of seeking support.*

**Progress:** I spoke briefly to Bill Kopp of the New Hanover County Commission and Bill Sue of the Brunswick County Commission and will follow-up with both regarding their counties supporting us financially in the 2008-09 fiscal year. Lionell Midgett has also reached out to the New Hanover County Manager to broker a meeting between the Association and some key policy makers in new Hanover County.

- Develop relationships with North Carolina's Congressional delegation and key staff and gain a basic understanding of federal highway funding and administration.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson
  - When: By mid 2007.

**Progress:** I have met with Daniel Mallison, Betty Jo Shephard and Janet Bradbury, the local representatives of Congressman G.K Butterfield and Senators Richard Burr and Elizabeth Dole respectively, and have spoken to Millie Lilley, local representative of Congressman Walter Jones. In each case I was given contact information and a referral to the legislative aides in their Washington, DC offices who work on transportation issues. I have not yet spoken to anyone in Congressman Mike McIntyre's office, though I did get a referral to his legislative director from her counterpart in Butterfield's office. I plan a trip to DC in January, where I also intend to meet with North Carolina's transportation lobbyist to Congress.

*Progress: I have now spoken with key staff of each of the members of our Highway 17 Congressional delegation and have set up appointments to meet personally with each during a trip to Washington on March 5 and 6. I have also spoken with and will meet Caitlin Hughes Rayman, North Carolina's congressional lobbyist.*

**Progress:** In Washington I was cordially received by key staff in the offices of our entire Highway 17 federal delegation: Sens. Burr and Dole; and Reps. Butterfield, Jones and McIntyre. In fact, Congressman Jones was kind enough to spend about 20 minutes visiting with me personally.

Caitlin Hughes Rayman, the state's DOT liaison to Congress, said my visit was timely, in that she had just submitted two appropriations requests over the weekend specific to Highway 17. The first, on behalf of Rep. Jones and Sen. Dole, would appropriate \$2 million toward the R-3403 project (widening 17 from Vanceboro to Bridgeton). The second, on behalf of Rep. Butterfield and Sen. Burr would appropriate \$2 million toward R-2510 (the Washington By-pass project). It's important to note that these appropriations are in addition to the regular Trust Fund dollars that automatically flow to NC and are subject to the equity formula. Because they are extra dollars, there should be no hard feelings on the part of DOT or the Highway Commissioners locally (though each does require a state match of \$500,000). I have followed up with those whom I met and have asked to be included in regular distributions of information from their offices -- and more importantly, to be apprised of transportation issues of importance generally and specifically about anything that concerns Highway 17. Please see our March newsletter for more detail about the Washington, DC visit.

**Progress:** I have followed up with Caitlin Rayman to get a status report on the two appropriations requests. Nothing new to report.

*Progress: I prepared a fact sheet and suggested talking points for Josh Bowlen, Legislative Director for Congressman Walter Jones, in order to support their news release announcing a \$250,000 appropriation for Highway 17 (Craven County) that passed the House of Representatives. A \$500,000 appropriation for Highway 17 (Beaufort County) has passed the Senate. Both appropriations must still be considered*

*and approved by the conference committee before the final budget is authorized sometime between October and December 2007.*

**Progress:** I spent several days in Washington, DC following up with our delegation on the pending budget requests specific to highway 17. I met personally with Reps. Walter Jones and Mike McIntyre, as well as staff for Rep. G.K. Butterfield and Senators Elizabeth Dole and Richard Burr. I also met the new Congressional liaison for NC DOT, Susan Howard, who moved into the role after having served on the Congressional staff of Rep. David Price (D-Chapel Hill). In addition to the meetings within the Highway 17 delegation, I also met personally with Rep. Brad Miller (D-Raleigh) and Rep. Howard Coble (R-Greensboro) to create awareness about our goals and activities and broaden our network. Rep. Coble serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

- Develop relationships with the Highway 17 corridor's state legislative delegation and gain a basic understanding of state highway funding and administration.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson
  - When: By mid 2007.

**Progress:** I had a very substantive meeting with Senator Clark Jenkins who is chairman of the Senate Transportation Appropriations Committee and the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Commission. Additionally, Jenkins is a former Highway Commissioner, so he knows transportation funding from both sides of the ledger. I have also met with Senator Harry Brown, Senator-elect Jean Preston and the staff of Senator Marc Basnight. On the House side, Zoph, Tom and I had a very productive meeting with Rep. Arthur Williams. I have also met or spoken with Reps. Dewey Hill, Carolyn Justice, Edith Warren, Alice Underhill and William Wainwright. I have sent each member of the Highway 17 delegation correspondence of introduction and will see them all in Raleigh in January, if not sooner.

*Progress: I have been to Raleigh about a half-dozen times to either attend legislative study commission meetings, to network with lobbyists, or to make goodwill calls on members of our Highway 17 legislative delegation. I am duly registered to lobby on our behalf with the NC Secretary of state's office. The Highway 17 Association has also joined NC Citizens for Business and Industry, NC Go! and the NC Professional Lobbyists Association, and I will be participating in steering committees of those organizations as appropriate.*

**Progress:** I accepted on behalf of the Association a seat on the Board of Directors of NC Go!, the coalition of transportation oriented organizations. I am happy to report that nowhere in its official legislative agenda does NC Go! advocate for a change in the DOT equity formula that would put our three Highway Divisions at a disadvantage. I have been closely following the deliberations of the Infrastructure Responsibilities and Needs sub committee of the State and Local Fiscal Modernization Study Commission. The Infrastructure panel made its formal recommendations to the full commission this past Monday. They will be included in an interim report to the general assembly expected to be published in May.

**Progress:** I continue to monitor the progress of the transportation budget and other policy matters at the North Carolina General Assembly. The House of Representatives has passed its version of the budget, which made significant cuts in the Governor's DOT budget. That budget package now goes to the NC Senate. I participated in the Statewide Transportation Forum sponsored by NC Spin. Four present and former DOT Secretaries attended the event, which included remarks by former Secretary Jim Harrington, the author of the original Highway Trust Fund in 1989.

*Progress: I spent much time in Raleigh at the General Assembly monitoring the status of a transportation appropriations package. Ultimately the Assembly failed to enact a funding package before they adjourned. Steve Biggs and I participated in the NC Go! Legislative Day at the end of May, and I represented the Association at a coalition of infrastructure advocates known as the Partnership for North Carolina's Future. I had substantive meetings with several key legislators in the corridor during the past two months, including Sens. Clark Jenkins, R.C. Soles, Jean Preston, Harry Brown and Reps. Arthur Williams, Tim Spear, Bonner Stiller, Alice Underhill and Danny McComas. Additionally, I was invited to have lunch with key members of the Senate leadership to discuss Highway 17 and other transportation matters. Attending were Clark Jenkins, David Hoyle, John Kerr, Bill Purcell, R.C. Soles and Joe Sam Queen.*

**Progress:** I attended the Special Legislative session to override the Governor's veto of the Goodyear Incentives. At that time I was able to engage several members of our Highway 17 delegation about the need for transportation funding, including Sens. Jean Preston and Harry Brown and Reps. William Wainwright, Arthur Williams, Danny McComas and Bill Owens. Additionally, I wrote to Senate President Pro Tem requesting that he appoint Sens. Brown and Clark Jenkins to a special task force envisioned by the General Assembly and the Governor to find solutions to the transportation funding crisis.

- Develop relationships with the NC Department of Transportation staff with responsibility for Highway 17 and gain a basic understanding of the processes by which highway projects are funded, planned, designed and built.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson
  - When: By mid 2007.

**Progress:** I have had substantive meetings with Rob Hanson, Eastern Project Development Engineer; Dan DeVane, Chief Deputy Secretary; Johanna Reese, Legislative Lobbyist; Neil Lassiter, Division 2 Chief Engineer; and various Highway 17 project engineers Brian Yamamoto, Mark Pierce, Vince Rhea and Jay McInnis. I have met Anthony Roper, Division 1 Chief Engineer and several other folks variously associated with highway 17 projects. I also had dinner with Secretary Lyndo Tippett at the NC Go! annual meeting. I attended public meetings on the TIP held by Divisions 1 and 2 in Edenton and Snow Hill respectively.

*Progress: I have had substantive follow-up meetings in Raleigh with Mark Pierce and Brian Yamamoto to discuss details of the Pollocksville by-pass project, and in Greenville with Neil Lassiter and Ed Eatmon to discuss strategies for local initiative in planning for and acquiring right-of-way. This meeting was set up at the request of*

*Cam McRae. I had a brief introductory meeting in Raleigh with Susan Coward, DOT's Deputy Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs and Budget Coordination.*

**Progress:** I have participated in two meetings at which Division 2 Engineer Neil Lassiter gave reports on highway 17. I have spoken with Division 3 Engineer Allen Pope and have agreement to meet with him soon in Wilmington to go over his Highway 17 projects. Joanna Poston is in the process of arranging meetings for me with the project engineers for the Washington By-pass project so that we can provide a status report for the newsletter.

**Progress:** I attended the public meeting in Topsail for the proposed Hampstead Bypass project at which time I was able to interact with Division 3 Engineer Allen Pope, as well as other DOT staff members. We have been engaged in conversations with the design engineers for the Washington Bypass project, working toward getting on the ground in Beaufort County for an up-close progress assessment and photographs. I have also had more detailed budget discussions with Johanna Reese, DOT's legislative lobbyist, as to the changes between the department's original budget request and changes made by the House of Representatives.

*Progress: I spent the day in Bertie County with Scott Emory, engineer for the Windsor Bypass, who facilitated our newsletter update of that project. I met in Raleigh with Teresa Bruton and Ed Eatmon, two of the engineers on the Washington Bypass project, in preparation for getting on the ground with Paul Newman and the team from Flatiron United.*

**Progress:** In addition to meeting Susan Howard, DOT's new liaison to Congress, I have spent time working with Johanna Reese, state government affairs director, on questions of allocation to primary and secondary road projects. The request was made of me by Sen. Jean Preston and Rep. Alice Underhill.

- Through work with federal and state policy makers and stakeholder groups, gain a basic understanding of alternative funding options for highway construction, including toll roads.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson
  - When: By mid 2007.

**Progress:** Among the topics of discussions in my meetings with DOT staff, Highway Commissioners and some policy makers have been alternative funding sources. That will continue to be a focus going forward.

*Progress: I have attended several meetings of the Infrastructure Responsibilities and Funding Subcommittee of the State and Local Fiscal Modernization Study Commission. That panel has been tasked with considering innovative ways to fund infrastructure needs and will make recommendations to this session of the Assembly.*

**Progress:** During the course of my visits with staff in the Congressional offices, we talked at length about creative ways to find revenues to meet our needs outside of traditional DOT sources, such as: DOD dollars for moving troops and materials (and especially to mitigate the impact of closing NC 172 across Camp Lejeune to civilian, traffic therefore

increasing the burden on Highway 17); Dept. of Commerce dollars to facilitate the transportation of goods to mid-Atlantic and northeast markets through the new port at Southport; Homeland Security dollars to facilitate the safe flow of evacuees from the coast in the event of a major hurricane; and heritage or tourism grants to NGO's working to promote and facilitate tourism via 17 in northeastern NC.

**Progress:** Through NC Go! and a coalition of organizations interested in infrastructure funding, The Highway 17 Association is advocating a broad range of funding options to help meet the cost of future highway construction. The organization calls itself The Partnership for North Carolina's Future, and is urging the General Assembly to consider state and local funding options including: an adjustment to the highway use tax on automobile purchases; the levy of a real estate transfer tax; and county options for sales taxes in addition to or in lieu of a waiver of the county obligation for Medicaid.

*Progress: In the waning days of the NC General Assembly I met several times with Reid Simons, government affairs manager for the NC Turnpike Authority. The Authority is seeking state appropriations to complete one of the four turnpike projects now on the drawing board. Thus far the Assembly has failed to appropriate the gap funding necessary to get any of the projects started. I have also discussed with the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) their plan to fund the Cape Fear Skyway project with tolls on the Highway 17 Wilmington Bypass.*

**Progress:** We are continuing to urge the general Assembly to meet to address the funding shortfall, including looking at alternative funding sources for construction and maintenance. I continue to be actively engaged with NC Go!, working with transportation advocates from across the state to find funding solutions to the transportation budget shortfall.

#### Public / Media Outreach and Marketing 2006-07

- Prepare a presentation about Highway 17 to convey the Association's concerns in a passionate but factual way. Prepare appropriate collateral materials about Highway 17 to support the presentation.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP, but no later than mid 2007.

**Progress:** Using the existing PowerPoint presentation as a starting point, I will prepare a multi-media presentation suitable for meetings, trade shows and public access broadcast. In order to make the presentation substantive, factual and compelling, we will need appropriate research which we are working on. I will cover research in a later bullet.

*Progress: I have identified a vendor who is interested in adapting our existing PowerPoint into a multi-media presentation, but I do not as yet have a quote from them.*

**Progress:** We still do not have a quote from a vendor to produce outreach media, however Joanna Poston is spending some of her time researching appropriate facts and data to include in our materials. We have also engaged East Carolina University to produce an impact study for highway 17 which will support much of what we share with the public going forward.

**Progress:** We have been prudent enough with our budget that we should have some resources left at the end of our fiscal year to allocate toward a marketing program. This would include copy writing, photography, production and a media plan.

*Progress: The Impact Study being prepared by East Carolina University will provide us with the messages to prepare and implement a comprehensive outreach program. Among the several vehicles under consideration for "marketing" the study to the public will be news releases; a PowerPoint presentation; posters and maps; and possibly a mini-documentary film.*

**Progress:** We are continuing to consider ways to market the ECU impact study to the public and our stakeholders. I have commissioned photography of the corridor which will help illustrate the impact study and will serve our photography needs for our web site and any printed materials we might publish.

- Commission the design and production of a Highway 17 Association logo and get board approval.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP but no later than December 2006.

**Progress:** The board approved a logo design in November which we are already using.

*Progress: The logo is in use on business cards, signage, invitations, baronial note cards and other applications. Letterhead and envelopes are in development.*

**Progress:** We now have letterhead, envelopes and baronial cards that use the Highway 17 Association logo. Furthermore we are using an alternative logo design as the masthead for our newsletter.

- Commission the design and production of the Highway 17 Association web site. Initially include the mission and vision of the association; Highway 17 project updates; a calendar of events pertinent to the Highway; news items about Highway 17 and the association; contact information for the association, DOT policy makers, federal and state legislators; and links to other pertinent web sites.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP but no later than second quarter 2007.

**Progress:** The web domain name [www.highway17nc.org](http://www.highway17nc.org) has been acquired (as has the .com version) and a billboard has been put on line. The site is under construction and we intend to begin adding information after the first of the year.

*Progress: I have had a substantive follow-up meeting with the designer and we are working on content for the site. The DOT has provided us a useful map which we intend to adapt for the site as an interactive tool for visitors to the site to receive information.*

**Progress:** Work continues to develop and improve the web site. We are putting contact information for policy leaders at all levels of government for each part of the highway: federal, state, county and municipal. We are also providing quarterly status reports for Highway 17 projects, as well as making our newsletter available on line.

**Progress:** The vendor and I have discussed the need for photography to make the site more visually appealing. I hope to be up and available very soon.

*Progress: The web site is on-line. We are continuing to work with the designer to get the right messages and images on the site. We will certainly have a functional, rudimentary site up by the end of September with the intention of having a much more interactive site available to the public during FY 2007-08.*

**Progress:** We have made tremendous strides on our web site. It now contains basic information about the Association and our goals and progress. I have commissioned photography of the corridor which will make the web site more visually appealing. It is still our intent to make the site more interactive and engaging as we go throughout our second year of operation.

- Schedule editorial board briefings with newspapers in the Highway 17 corridor. Attempt to schedule similar briefings with regional and statewide newspapers as appropriate. Follow up to ensure that the Highway 17 Association receives editorial support.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson with appropriate local directors.
  - When: First meetings by second quarter 2007.

**Progress:** No meetings have yet been scheduled, but we have received positive coverage about our efforts from *The Washington Daily News*, *The Sun Journal* of New Bern, *The News & Observer* of Raleigh and WCTI-TV among others. Additionally, I have met with editors or reporters from several other papers including *The Chowan Herald* and *The Enterprise* of Williamston.

*Progress: We received very positive coverage of our annual meeting from several local and regional newspapers, WCTI-TV and regional talk radio. I will be setting up meetings with editorial boards beginning shortly and will ask directors to accompany me to their appropriate paper.*

**Progress:** Joanna Poston is scheduling editorial board meetings to begin in May. We expect to partner on media relations with DOT when formal announcements are made about the completion of funding for R-2510 C, the remaining section of the Washington By-pass project.

**Progress:** I have attended two editorial briefings thus far. Russ Overman and Don Christopher accompanied me to *The Enterprise* in Williamston, where we spent about 45 minutes with the editor. Thanks to those gentlemen for making the time. I spent about an hour in Elizabeth City with the city editor of *The Daily Advance* and his reporter who covers transportation-related news. They were appreciative that the Association was making an effort to reach out to the extreme northeast corner of the state. In the next several weeks we have meetings scheduled with *The Washington Daily News*, *The Wilmington Star-News* and *The Roanoke-Chowan Herald*.

**Progress:** *Since the last report I visited The Washington Daily News with Zoph Potts, Robert Cayton and Jeryl Rawls and The Roanoke-Chowan Herald with Bob Spivey and had a very productive interview in Wilmington with the transportation beat reporter for The Wilmington Star-News that resulted in a very positive news story for the Association.*

- Prepare an editorial calendar to pitch information about Highway 17 to print and broadcast media throughout the year. Distribute news releases or other appropriate information to the media at least quarterly and follow up to ensure coverage.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: Calendar by December 2006, distribution by first quarter 2007.

**Progress:** This has not yet been done. I hope to have a first cut drafted by the end of December.

**Progress:** *I am working on a first draft.*

**Progress:** An editorial calendar will be ready when editorial meetings commence in May.

**Progress:** The Association released our assessment of the state's GARVEE bond package of highway projects, in conjunction with the state DOT's own release. Our angle was the funding with these bonds of the remaining right-of-way for the Washington Bypass project. We received favorable coverage of our story in *The Washington Daily News*. We have also added news media to the distribution list for our periodic newsletters.

**Progress:** *The news media now receives our monthly newsletters and they have expressed appreciation for being copied. Following a recent Downeast Rural Planning Organization (RPO) meeting I gave an interview to The Sun Journal of New Bern that resulted in a very positive piece on the Association in that paper.*

**Progress:** As a result of our September newsletter calling for a special Legislative session to address the transportation funding shortfall, we received favorable coverage in several local media. Our newsletter was published as an op/ed piece in *The Washington Daily News*; I was interviewed for stories in *The Sun Journal* of New Bern and on WCTI-TV; and I appeared as an on-air guest of Lockwood Phillips on the Viewpoints radio program.

- Research the possibility of commissioning an economic impact study pertinent to Highway 17 and seek appropriate funding or in-kind donation through partnerships with institutions of higher learning, NGO's or private enterprises.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: Scope the project by year end 2006.

**Progress:** Thanks to the impetus of Rep. Arthur Williams, a delegation from the Association met with Chancellor Steve Ballard and his team at East Carolina University to discuss the university's partnership in a definitive study of the impacts of a fully four-laned Highway 17. The reaction of Dr. Ballard was very positive and his staff will follow up with me in the coming weeks to define the project. In addition, I had a productive meeting with Dr. Jim Kleckley of the ECU Business School to talk about the economic impact component of the research. I have also been in touch with the Kenan-Flagler School of Business at UNC and may have an opportunity to partner with them at a future time.

*Progress: I have initiated follow-up correspondence to Chief of Staff Austin Bunch, Policy Director Robin Johnson and their designated contact person, Dr. Mulatu Wubneh, asking them about next steps in the process. These include, the scope of the study itself, the resources the University will commit to the project, the timing of the study and the additional resources required. As yet, ECU has not responded to my request.*

**Progress:** I will meet with East Carolina representatives on April 12 to begin scoping out the impact study, determining what resources will be required to do it well, and assigning tasks, timing and responsibilities. Through an internet search, Joanna Poston has discovered an excellent economic impact study conducted for highway 29 in Wisconsin, which we have shared with ECU.

**Progress:** I had a lengthy meeting with Dr. Mulatu Wubneh at ECU. He is the Interim Associate Vice-chancellor of Regional Development Services for the university. He expressed the University's willingness to participate in a comprehensive impact study on highway 17. He will coordinate the participation of the appropriate departments and disciplines at ECU and has promised to get back in touch before the end of May with an idea as to scope, subject matter and cost.

*Progress: I have had a follow-up meeting in Greenville with Dr. Wubneh and we now have a scope of work for the Impact Study, as well as a tentative timetable for completion of the work and the roll-out of the study. ECU is continuing to work on a proposed budget for the project. We are hopeful that the University will bear the cost of producing the work and the Association will pay for marketing it to the public.*

**Progress:** I met again with Dr. Wubneh at ECU. We have agreed upon a scope of work and a final delivery date prior to the end of 2007. We intend to present the study formally at the 2008 annual meeting on January 29, 2008. It appears that ECU will contribute its research

and organization and the highway 17 Association will be responsible for publication and marketing.

Administrative 2006-07

- Open the Highway 17 Executive Offices, including acquiring dedicated communication tools such as phone, fax and e-mail. Set up appropriate financial tools such as a bank account and accounting system.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP, but no later than November 2006.

**Progress: The office is open. We have a bank account and accounting software system in place. North Carolina's Northeast partnership is receiving the money from local governments and disbursing it to the Highway 17 Association on a monthly basis. They will also provide auditing and other financial oversight. The Association has a dedicated telephone land line, cell number and e-mail address from my business, Impact Communications. Impact is providing discounted office space, utilities, a post office box and a fax line.**

- Publish letterhead, envelopes and business cards for the Highway 17 Association offices and Executive Director, incorporating the Association's logo.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP, but no later than November 2006.

**Progress: The business cards are in use. A design for letterhead and envelopes has been completed but I have not yet been to the printer to review and approve it. I hope to have that done within the week.**

*Progress: I have been using the business cards and baronial note cards for personal correspondence. The letterhead and envelopes are in development.*

**Progress: Done.**

- Interview and hire qualified administrative support for the Highway 17 Association offices.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: By first quarter 2007.

**Progress: I have interviewed a highly qualified administrative assistant who would be ideal to support the organization, and who would be interested in doing the work. However, she is not available until after January 1 and we are in the process of negotiating a package.**

*Progress: I have secured additional space to accommodate an office administrator. I have interviewed several people for the administrative position in the Highway 17 office and made an offer to my candidate of choice but she declined. I have contacted other candidates and it is my hope to have someone in place by March 1.*

**Progress: Joanna Poston joined the organization in March. She has gotten off to a tremendous start.**

**Progress: Joanna has demonstrated great skill as the Association's office manager, bookkeeper and scheduling secretary. She also is adept at desk top publishing and has created the template for our Highway 17 Association newsletter.**

*Progress: Joanna Poston took a full-time job with a local industry. She did a great job for our organization and she will be missed. Fortunately however, Ms. Mickie Wilson accepted the position of office manager and administrative assistant and began work with the Association at the first of July. Ms. Wilson was my original choice for the role but circumstances kept her from accepting the position last fall. She has gotten off to a great start and has brought expertise on accounting systems that will be very beneficial to the organization.*

- Acquire domain name and hosting services for the Highway 17 web site.
  - Who: Marc Finlayson.
  - When: ASAP, but no later than November 2006.

**Progress: The web domain name [www.highway17nc.org](http://www.highway17nc.org) has been acquired (as has the .com version) and a billboard has been put on line. The site is under construction and we intend to begin adding information after the first of the year.**