

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION / CONTRACT CONTROL FORM

Tracking Number: /.

Date of Request: August 5, 2008

Date Request Received: August 5, 2008

Board Meeting Date Requested: August 18, 2008

Board Meeting Date Assigned: August 18, 2008

Short Title: Update On The Progress And Status Of Highway 17: Marc Finlayson: Highway 17 Association In North Carolina.

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

Background: Mr. Finlayson has requested to be placed on the agenda to give an update on the progress and status of Highway 17.

(Administrative Use Only)

Specific Action Requested: Receive the update.

CONTRACT TYPE

Requested by: Marc Finlayson
Department: Highway 17 Association
Title: Executive Director
Contact Phone: 252-514-2748
Contact Fax:

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

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

Highway 17 Association
Mission Statement and Goals
2007 – 2008

July 24, 2008

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 Program (TIP) or as soon thereafter as possible.

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

Goals, Strategies and Tactics

Government Relations 2007 - 08

- Continue to meet regularly with County and City governing bodies in the Highway 17 corridor to keep elected officials apprised of progress and to address issues or concerns.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson
 - When: Throughout 2007-08 as appropriate.

Progress: Since October 1, 2007 (Beginning of Association's fiscal year) Finlayson has made formal presentations to the Boards of Commissioners in Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Craven, Jones, Martin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pasquotank, Pender and Perquimans Counties. He also formally addressed the town councils in the towns of Edenton and Windsor. In addition to the presentations, Finlayson met separately with new Jones County Manager Franky Howard; Pasquotank Manager Randy Keaton; Pender Manager Lori Brill; Chowan Manager Cliff Copeland; Camden Manager Randell Woodruff; Elizabeth City Manager Rich Olson and Edenton Manager Anne-Marie Knighton.

Progress: Since the last report Finlayson has made presentations to the town councils in Williamston, Pollocksville, Elizabeth City, Washington and New Bern.

Progress: Since the last report Finlayson has made presentations to the Board of Commissioners in Camden County, the City Councils of Wilmington and Jacksonville and addressed the Board of the Albemarle Economic Development Commission, which includes elected officials from Camden and Pasquotank Counties and Elizabeth City. In addition, Finlayson called on administrators for the Town of Windsor and Bertie County while he was traveling in the corridor. While attending a meeting in Pender County Finlayson met briefly with new interim county manager Al Greene.

Progress: Since the last report Finlayson made a presentation to the Martin County Board of Commissioners concerning the Association's budget request. Finlayson also updated the Board of Directors of the NC Eastern Region partnership on the Association's activities. He worked closely with the Jones County administration to address the county's concern with DOT about money for project R-2514 slipping out of the TIP. On Jones County's behalf, Finlayson drafted a letter to the DOT Division 2 Board members and staff respectfully asking them to restore the funding.

Progress: Since the last report Finlayson gave a progress update to the board of North Carolina's Northeast partnership where he was introduced by Windsor Mayor Bob Spivey. At the invitation of the Hampstead Homeowners Association, Finlayson attended a meeting of stakeholders interested in the Hampstead Bypass project, including Pender County Commissioner David Williams. Finlayson met briefly in Raleigh with members of the County Commission delegations of Martin, Craven and Onslow Counties, and met the interim manager of Onslow County. The local leaders were at the Capitol on behalf of the NC Association of County Commissioners. Finlayson stopped by the Chowan County administrative offices to leave a card and word of greeting for new county manager Peter Rascoe.

- Continue to meet regularly with the DOT Board members representing the Highway 17 corridor and with key DOT staff to stay up to date on progress, issues and concerns.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: Finlayson participated in the quarterly meeting of DOT Board members and DOT staff to update Highway 17 project status. Board members Marvin Blount, Louis Sewell, Stan White and Lanny Wilson attended. Finlayson conducted an interview with Stan White that was used as a profile of Mr. White in the October edition of the Association's newsletter. Finlayson and Lanny Wilson both addressed the Pender County Board of Commissioners on November 19 regarding the progress of the Hampstead Bypass project. Finlayson worked with Rob Hanson, DOT's Eastern NC Project Development Engineer, to get a copy of the draft 2009 TIP when it was published at the beginning of November.

Progress: Finlayson participated in the January 2008 quarterly meeting of DOT Board members and staff to update Highway 17 projects. Board members Stan White, Marvin Blount III and Louis Sewell attended. On behalf of the Association, Finlayson addressed the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public hearings of DOT Divisions 2 and 3, in Winterville and Jacksonville respectively. He attended but did not address the Division 1 public hearing in Elizabeth City, but he did meet briefly after the hearing with Division 1 board member Stan White.

Progress: At the invitation of the Hampstead Homeowners Association, Finlayson attended a DOT hearing in Pender County to discuss the proposed Hampstead Bypass. Division 3 Engineer Allen Pope led the briefing, which also included remarks by Division 3 Board member Lanny Wilson.

Progress: Finlayson participated in the April quarterly meeting of DOT Board members and staff to update Highway 17 projects. Board members Stan White, Marvin Blount III, Cam McRae, Louis Sewell and Lanny Wilson participated. Finlayson personally delivered the Jones County letter to Marvin Blount, Cam McRae and Division 2 engineer Neil Lassiter, and in fact spoke with them prior to the delivery to discuss the content, as the news media had become aware of the letter and intended to publish a story about it. Finlayson communicated with Eastern NC project Development Engineer Rob Hanson regarding a request for information about the Jones County project from the activist group the Land Loss Prevention Project.

Progress: Finlayson attended the ribbon cutting and dedication of the Windsor Bypass on June 16. Transportation Secretary Lyndo Tippett and Division 1 Board member Stan White were among the speakers. Finlayson participated in the July quarterly meeting of DOT Board members and staff to update Highway 17 projects. Board members Stan White, Marvin Blount III, Cam McRae, Louis Sewell and Lanny Wilson attended. Finlayson met on separate occasions with DOT project engineers Olivia Farr, Mark Pierce and Wade Kirby to receive detailed updates on the Hampstead Bypass project, the Jones County projects and the Drummer-Kellum Road improvements in Onslow County respectively. Finlayson met with Division 3 Board Member Louis Sewell at his Jacksonville office to conduct an interview with Sewell for an upcoming newsletter profile.

- Continue to nurture relationships with North Carolina's Congressional delegation and key staff and grow in knowledge of federal highway funding and administration.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: To follow up his visit to Washington, DC in September, Finlayson has been in touch with Susan Howard, DOT liaison to Congress, about the two appropriations in the transportation budget specific to Highway 17. As of Thanksgiving, \$250,000 for Craven County and \$375,000 for Beaufort County had been agreed upon in the conference report. The report had passed the House of Representatives and was pending in the Senate.

Progress: The Association received final confirmation that the two federal appropriations specific to Highway 17 had officially been adopted in the 2008 budget conference report and ratified by the President. In final tally, Highway 17 received \$245,000 for Craven County and \$367,500 for Beaufort County – less than we had hoped but still welcomed.

Progress: The Association has inquired of DOT Congressional lobbyist Susan Howard if there are any appropriations requests being made on behalf of Highway 17. The Association has offered to advocate for any such requests and we are awaiting confirmation.

Progress: The Association learned that NC DOT requested Senator Elizabeth Dole to submit an appropriations bill for Highway 17 project U-4007 in Onslow County. The amount of the request is \$2 million. Finlayson shared that information with the Highway 17 Association Board, as well as Onslow State Senator Harry Brown and Mike Alford, Chairman of the Military Growth Task Force, as the appropriation would positively impact the region's infrastructure in anticipation of the influx of new Marines and their families to the Jacksonville area. Finlayson negotiated with Patrick Pearce and Amy Auth in Senator Dole's office to publicize the announcement in the Association's newsletter.

Progress: The Association received notification that the Dole appropriation for Onslow County had passed the Senate Appropriations Committee and would be considered by the full Senate.

- Continue to nurture relationships with the Highway 17 corridor's state legislative delegation, and grow in knowledge of state highway funding and administration.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: Finlayson has monitored the first three meetings of the 21st Century Transportation Study Commission, the blue-ribbon panel appointed by the Governor and legislative leaders to address the transportation funding shortfall and the processes by which roads and other transportation needs are met. Four of the 24 members of the Commission either live in the Highway 17 corridor or represent counties within the corridor. Finlayson has also monitored the regularly scheduled Transportation Oversight Committee and has met privately in Tarboro with Sen. Clark Jenkins who chairs the Senate Transportation Appropriations and Transportation Policy committees. Finlayson and Rep. Carolyn Justice both addressed the Pender County Board of Commissioners on November 19 regarding the progress of the Hampstead Bypass project.

Progress: Finlayson monitored the 21st Century Transportation Commission meeting in Charlotte in January, and two of its standing subcommittee meetings in both Charlotte and Raleigh. Finlayson, on behalf of the Association and at the request of Commission member Lanny Wilson, has been invited to address the 21st Century Commission when it meets in Wilmington in February. Finlayson worked closely with Rep. William Wainwright as Wainwright prepared his keynote remarks to the Highway 17 Association annual meeting. State Senators Jean Preston and Harry Brown attended the annual meeting, as did State Representatives Alice Underhill and Pat McElraft.

Progress: Finlayson spoke to several members of the General Assembly at the February meeting of the 21st Century Transportation Commission in Wilmington, including Reps. Becky Carney (D-Mecklenburg), Lorene Coates (D-Rowan), Phil Frye (R-Mitchell) and Bill McGee (R-Forsyth) and Sen. Clark Jenkins (D-Edgecombe). He spoke briefly with Sen. John Kerr (D-Wayne) at an NC Golf breakfast briefing in Greenville.

Progress: In addition to sharing the Dole appropriations request with Sen. Harry Brown, Finlayson also consulted with Rep. William Wainwright on some transportation related data in preparation for a media request of Rep. Wainwright. Finlayson monitored two meetings of the 21st Century Transportation Commission and several of its subcommittee meetings, particularly those concerned with long term financing of transportation needs in North Carolina and the relative responsibilities for transportation among federal, state and local governments. Finlayson attended a reception to welcome newly appointed Sen. Don Vaughn (D-Guilford) to the Assembly. Vaughn will fill the unexpired term of Kay Hagan, who resigned from the State Senate to run for US Senate against Elizabeth Dole. Vaughn and Finlayson once worked together in the leadership of the NC Textile Manufacturers Association. Sen. Tony Rand (D-Cumberland) was the host of the Vaughn event.

Progress: The Association held a highly successful breakfast for our legislative delegation at the General Assembly on July 9. It was attended by 16 of the 23 legislators who represent the corridor's 13 counties. Over a dozen board members represented the Highway 17 Association, and other friends and colleagues attended to show their support for our activities. Thanks to those who participated. Finlayson spent considerable time in Raleigh monitoring the activities of the General Assembly during the even-year budget session, including attending meetings of the House and Senate Appropriations, Finance and Transportation Committees. During the session he met at least once with members of the Highway 17 delegations including: Sen. Clark Jenkins, Sen. Jean Preston, Sen. Harry Brown, Sen. Ed Jones, Sen. Julia Boseman, Sen. R.C. Soles, Rep. Arthur Williams, Rep. Alice Underhill, Rep. William Wainwright, Rep. Robert Grady, Rep. Carolyn Justice, Rep. Pat McElraft, Rep. Bonner Stiller, Rep. Russell Tucker, Rep. Tim Spear and Rep. Danny McComas. Additionally, Finlayson also met with other legislators who are in positions of transportation leadership in their chambers, including Sen. Bill Purcell (D-Scotland), Rep. Becky Carney (D-Mecklenburg), Rep. Harold Brubaker (R-Randolph), Rep. Mitch Gillespie (R-McDowell), Rep. Jim Crawford (D-Granville), Rep. Bill Daughtridge (R-Nash) and Rep. Lorene Coates (D-Rowan).

- Continue to nurture relationships with other stakeholders and organizations concerned with transportation issues in North Carolina, to develop a productive network of allies on issues of interest or concern to the Highway 17 Association.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: Finlayson continues to serve on the Board of Directors of NC Go! the statewide transportation coalition. He attended an informative briefing in Raleigh at which the NC Ports Authority and the NC Railroad made presentations. He subsequently followed up with Stephanie Ayers, Manager of Planning and Development for the Ports about the need for an improved Highway 17 to support the facilities at Wilmington, Morehead City and the proposed International Port at Southport. Finlayson participated in the annual meeting of the NC Professional Lobbyists Association. Finlayson attended the forum in Raleigh sponsored by the NC Association of County Commissioners to discuss the implications of SB 1513 that allows counties to participate financially in the construction and maintenance of state highways within their jurisdictions. Finlayson continues to correspond with RPO's and MPO's that serve the Highway 17 corridor, and briefed the Downeast RPO meeting in November about Highway 17 projects. Finlayson attended the announcement in Jacksonville of the build-up of Marines and their families at Camp Lejeune, MCAS New River and MCAS Cherry Point. Infrastructure, including roads, will be strained by the influx of some 60,000 new residents over the next several years. Subsequently, Finlayson followed up with Will Austin, Executive Director of the NC Military Foundation, whose organization is beginning to study the impact on Transportation of the growth of military in eastern NC.

Progress: Finlayson attended the first of eight regional briefings to Chambers of Commerce sponsored by NC Go! This event, in Winston-Salem, featured 21st Century Transportation Commission Chairman Brad Wilson and Commission member Allen Joines, Mayor of Winston-Salem. Finlayson, on behalf of the Association, will address the Chamber briefing in Greenville in March. The Association continues to correspond with RPOs and MPOs that serve the Highway 17 corridor and Finlayson briefed the Downeast RPO in January on Association activities. Finlayson participated in a workshop to discuss infrastructure planning in anticipation of the Marine Corps growth expected in the central coast region beginning in late 2008.

Progress: Finlayson attended the NC Go! regional transportation briefing to the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce. It featured remarks by 21st Century Transportation Commission Chairman Brad Wilson. Finlayson, on behalf of the Association and NC Go!, addressed the regional breakfast briefing in Greenville where he shared the program with 21st Century Transportation Commission member Jordan Whichard, publisher of *The Daily Reflector* newspaper of Greenville, and Daniel Van Liere and Alex Rickard of the Downeast RPO. Finlayson attended the late February meeting of the Military Growth Task Force at Cherry Point. The task force has placed as one of its top priorities the need to improve transportation infrastructure to help accommodate the expected growth to the area of Marines, their families and other associated people and commercial interests.

Progress: Finlayson attended the NC Go! regional transportation briefing to the Greensboro Area Chamber of Commerce. He also represented the Association at the NC Go! Transportation Forum in Cary, at which five of the six major candidates for Governor spoke about their policy positions on the future of transportation in North Carolina. Finlayson met with NC Go! Vice-chairman Berry Jenkins (of the NC Association of General Contractors) about Finlayson taking on a larger statewide, leadership role in NC Go! on behalf of the Highway 17 Association. No commitment has been made as to that request. Finlayson attended the April meeting of the Military Growth Task Force and met in Kinston with NC Eastern Region staff to outline the Highway 17 Association priorities as part of an overall legislative request for funding on behalf of the Task Force. Finlayson briefed the Downeast RPO on the Association's activities and spoke with both Eddy Davis of the Mideast RPO and Mike Kozlosky of the Wilmington MPO about appearing at an upcoming meeting. Finlayson met in Pender County with Al Freimark, chair of the Hampstead Homeowners Association, about their advocacy on behalf of the Hampstead Bypass project.

Progress: After receiving the endorsement of the Highway 17 Association board, Finlayson accepted the position of Co-Chairman of NC Go!, the statewide transportation advocacy organization. This position will give the highway 17 Association a broader audience with transportation policy makers and the media by virtue of Finlayson becoming a leading voice for transportation across the state. Finlayson met on several occasions with DOT lobbyist Johanna Reese and representatives of the NC Turnpike Authority to understand their positions with regard to transportation policy and budgets. Finlayson updated the Downeast RPO and Highway 17 progress, and met with Mike Kozlosky of the Wilmington MPO about the Hampstead Bypass project. Lionell Midgett and Finlayson met with a group of tourism leaders from ten of the 13 corridor counties to discuss potential ways the Highway 17 Association could partner with them to promote tourism along Highway 17. At the invitation of Washington Mayor Judy Jennette, Finlayson spoke to the Washington Evening Rotary Club

Goals, Strategies and Tactics

Public / Media Outreach and Marketing 2007 - 08

- Continue to expand and improve the Highway 17 Association web site. Add features that will make the site more informative, interactive and interesting to prospective viewers.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: Along with Lionell Midgett, Finlayson met with the Downeast RPO staff to determine how that organization might be able to help the Highway 17 Association with statistical information and to create corridor mapping that might be used on the Association's web site. The Association hired a photographer to take images of the corridor for use on our website, in the East Carolina University Impact Study and in publications and other printed materials produced by the Association.

Progress: The photography project was completed and the Association now has excellent images to use on its web site. We expected to design the new site by the end of the first calendar quarter of 2008. Finlayson has had follow up conversations with the Downeast RPO about the corridor mapping project.

Progress: Finlayson had a follow-up meeting with the Downeast RPO to monitor progress on the web site mapping project. The concept is excellent and the implementation is proceeding nicely.

Progress: Work continues at the Downeast RPO on the Highway 17 mapping web site project. By the third calendar quarter the Association will publish the East Carolina University Impact Study to the web site for public availability.

Progress: The ECU Impact Study has been completed and published and should be on-line soon. The Association published a pictorial of the Windsor Bypass opening. Work continues at the Downeast RPO on the interactive mapping project for the corridor.

- Continue to nurture relationships with editors and reporters covering transportation for the newspapers and television stations within the Highway 17 corridor, and respond to inquiries by the news media.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson with appropriate local directors.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: Finlayson and Troy Smith both contributed to an update on Highway 17 progress published in December by *The Sun Journal* of New Bern. Finlayson also contributed to a story

about innovative transportation funding solutions published in December by *The Star – News of Wilmington*. Finlayson has provided background information to *The Williamston Enterprise* prompted by his appearance before the Martin County Board of Commissioners.

Progress: The Association received very favorable coverage of its annual meeting in The Sun Journal of New Bern. Finlayson also spoke on separate occasions with reporters or editors from The Washington Daily News; The Jacksonville Daily News; The Williamston Enterprise; and The Star - News of Wilmington.

Progress: The Association received very favorable coverage of Finlayson's remarks to the 21st Century Transportation Commission in Wilmington. Barry Smith, capital correspondent for the freedom ENC chain of papers wrote a lengthy piece that appeared in *The Sun Journal* of New Bern and *The Jacksonville Daily News*, among other papers. *The Daily Reflector* of Greenville and WNCT-TV, the CBS affiliate for eastern NC both reported on Finlayson's remarks to the NC Go! briefing in Greenville in early March.

Progress: Finlayson spoke with both *The Sun Journal* of New Bern and WCTI-TV about the Association's request on behalf of Jones County to restore TIP money to project R-2514. Finlayson spoke with *The Sun Journal* and *The Jacksonville Daily News* about the appropriations request by Sen. Dole for Highway 17 in Onslow County.

Progress: Finlayson conducted interviews on transportation policy with the following media outlets: State Government Radio; UNC-TV Legislative Week in Review; Viewpoints with Lockwood Phillips on WTKF Talk Radio, Morehead City; WAAV Talk Radio, Wilmington; WPTF Talk Radio, Raleigh; and The Washington Daily News.

- Continue to distribute news releases or other appropriate information to the media at least quarterly and follow up to ensure coverage.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: The Association produced and disseminated newsletters to our stakeholders, including the news media, in both October and December. In addition, the Association sent a news release to the media prior to Thanksgiving announcing the opening of six miles of Highway 17 in Onslow County in time for holiday travel.

Progress: The Association distributed a news release to the general media distribution touting the federal appropriations. We also sent a release announcing the election of Onslow Commission Chairman Lionell Midgett as 2008 President of the Highway 17 Association to The Jacksonville Daily News, The Tideland News, The Richlands News and The Beulahville Advertiser.

Progress: Another newsletter is planned for distribution to the media and our mailing list by the end of March 2008.

Progress: After negotiations with the staff of Senator Elizabeth Dole as to the appropriate amount to detail to be shared, the Association disseminated its latest newsletter on the federal budget request to its stakeholders at the beginning of May. Finlayson spoke with DOT Division 3 Board Member Louis Sewell about scheduling a time for an interview in anticipation of a newsletter profile on Sewell.

Progress: The Association distributed a news release to our media list announcing that the Sen. Dole appropriations request had passed committee and would be considered by the full Senate. The Association also included the media in its newsletter distribution promoting the opening of the Windsor Bypass. Finlayson conducted the profile interview with Louis Sewell.

- If research studies have been conducted, publish the information in appropriate journals, magazines, newspapers, etc. and determine other ways to use the information to advance the cause of highway 17.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08 as appropriate.

Progress: Finlayson has met regularly with Dr. Mulatu Wubneh, of the East Carolina University Regional Development Office, to finish the Highway 17 Impact Study. The Highway 17 Board has reviewed the draft document and recommended ways to use the information with the public and other stakeholders. The Association is in the process of getting publication cost quotes.

Progress: The Association has received quotes for printing the ECU research study and will make a decision as to quantity and timing by the end of February 2008.

Progress: The Association has discussed publishing options with East Carolina University and is exploring possible ways of raising grant money to pay for the printing costs.

Progress: Finlayson has met several times with East Carolina University Press and has been reviewing a printer's proof in anticipation of publication of the study by June. In addition to the hard copies, the impact study will also be published to the Association's web site for wider public availability. Finlayson has written letters of thanks to Chancellor Steve Ballard and other East Carolina University leaders thanking them for their participation and support.

Progress: The ECU Impact Study has been completed and published. The Association has begun distributing copies to our stakeholders, including to our legislative delegation at the breakfast at the general Assembly on July 9. Finlayson has begun discussions with Dr. Jim Kleckley at ECU about conducting a second, more detailed study predicting the economic impact of a fully improved Highway 17 on eastern North Carolina. Finlayson has met several times with the Association's grant writing consultant about seeking grants to pay for such a study.

- Research alternative ways to tell the Highway 17 story, including cable access television, documentary film, periodical publication, etc. Understand cost, reach and value. Continue to update and publish appropriate collateral materials about Highway 17 to support the outreach effort.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson.
 - When: Recommendation to the board by end of 2008.

Progress: Beginning to scope the project.

Progress: The Association has completed work on two PowerPoint presentations designed to better explain the organization's goals and progress during public speaking opportunities. The first presentation was made at the 2008 annual meeting and the second will be made at the 21st Century Transportation Commission meeting in Wilmington.

Progress: Finlayson has used the PowerPoint presentation at both the 21st Century Transportation Commission meeting in Wilmington as well as the Albemarle Economic Development Commission meeting in Elizabeth City. It has proven to be a good tool that we can adapt and build on.

Progress: Finlayson used the PowerPoint presentation with the Board of Directors of the NC Eastern Region partnership.

Progress: Finlayson has had preliminary discussion with documentary filmmaker Clay Johnson who is associated with UNC-TV. Johnson may be interested in producing a feature on highway 17. Lionell Midgett and Finlayson met with tourism representatives from within the corridor.

One of the projects they have expressed interest in our partnership is a map of tourist attractions in the 13 Highway 17 counties.

Goals, Strategies and Tactics

Administrative / Financial 2007 - 08

- Refine the monthly bookkeeping for the Association and determine the best method by which to disseminate it to the board.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: By end of last calendar quarter 2007.

Progress: Mickie Wilson has developed a reliable and accurate system for reporting the Association's monthly financial data. Ms. Wilson and Marc Finlayson continue to enjoy a good working relationship with financial staff at NC Northeast partnership. At its December meeting the Highway 17 Board named a Finance Committee to receive and review the monthly financial statements.

Progress: We now have a reliable process in place by which the Finance Committee reviews the monthly budget report and expense reimbursement statement. The treasurer, former Jones County Manager Larry Meadows, will personally audit expense statements and receipts once per quarter and report to the Board.

Progress: Our Finance Committee has now reviewed and approved expense statements for the first fiscal quarter of 2007-08 and has endorsed the process. In early March Association Treasurer Larry Meadows conducted his quarterly audit of expenses in order to make his report to the Board on March 11.

Progress: Association treasurer Larry Meadows has conducted his quarterly audit of expenses in order to make his report to the Board in May. The monthly expense reimbursement process continues to work effectively. Mickie Wilson has been working with Sarah Jackson at North Carolina's Northeast partnership to begin the process of transferring the Highway 17 assets from NC Northeast to the Association's own account. This element of financial control was strongly recommended in the recently completed audit and was approved by the Board at its March meeting. NC Northeast is supportive of the change and the Association greatly appreciates their service to our organization. The transfer should take place on June 30 at the end of the state's (and the NC Northeast) fiscal year.

Progress: Mickie Wilson and Finlayson met with Sarah Jackson at NC Northeast partnership in Edenton to thank her personally for her accounting and bookkeeping work on our behalf. We received the Highway 17 account balance from Sarah and deposited it into an interest bearing account in the Association's name. Highway 17 Association funds being held in Jones County will mature in September and be transferred to the master account at that time.

- Secure the proper tax exempt status for the Association with the Internal Revenue Service and the NC Department of Revenue. As part of the application process, draft bylaws for the Association that will provide the framework for the organization going forward.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: By end of first calendar quarter 2008.

Progress: The Association has engaged the services of an accounting firm to draft bylaws and file the appropriate paperwork with the IRS seeking 501(c)(6) status. The Highway 17 Board has reviewed the draft bylaws and recommended changes to accurately reflect the mission and structure of the organization.

Progress: At its annual meeting, the Association adopted the bylaws and elected its board and officers for 2008. Subsequently the paperwork was filed with the IRS formally requesting the 501(c)(6) tax reporting status.

Progress: The paperwork has been received and acknowledged by the IRS and we are awaiting the letter.

Progress: The Association has received its letter from the IRS certifying that it is a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit organization.

- Along with securing the appropriate tax exempt status for the Association, see that tax returns are properly filed with the IRS and the NC Department of Revenue.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: By end of first calendar quarter 2008.

Progress: The Association has engaged the services of an accounting firm to file tax returns for the Association's first full year of operation, beginning October 1, 2006 and concluding September 30, 2007. An extension has been filed with the IRS and NC Department of Revenue pending the approval of our application for tax exempt status.

Progress: When we receive the formal paperwork from the IRS regarding the Association's tax reporting status, we will submit our 2006-07 fiscal year tax report.

Progress: Status is the same as above.

Progress: Now that the Association has received its not-for-profit certification from the IRS, our tax accountant is finishing the tax returns. We should be prepared to sign and submit them shortly.

Progress: The tax returns were reviewed, approved, signed and submitted.

- Secure an independent audit of the first year financial information of the Association.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: By end of first calendar quarter 2008.

Progress: The Association has begun the process of identifying an independent auditor who can review the organization's financial records for our first year of operation and certify that it is in order. Several funding jurisdictions have requested such an audit to ensure the highest level of financial accountability when using public money.

Progress: The Association has engaged the services of a Certified Public Accountant to audit our financial records for our initial fiscal year, October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007. The audit draft has been completed and is being reviewed.

Progress: The Association has received the final audit report, which finds that we are in compliance and managing our finances in a way typical of a not-for-profit organization of our size. Full copies are available for the Board, our funding partners and the public upon request.

Progress: Completed.

- Explore innovative ways to generate more income for the Association and its mission, including soliciting private donations for special events and seeking grant money for special projects.
 - Who: Marc Finlayson and Mickie Wilson.
 - When: Throughout 2007-08.

Progress: The Association has begun soliciting donations from private companies to host the January 29, 2008 annual meeting. In 2007, six companies underwrote the cost of the annual meeting meal. The Association hopes to secure eight to ten donations this coming year. Finlayson has begun preliminary discussions with a professional grant writer to research prospective grants that might benefit the Highway 17 Association or Highway 17 projects or communities directly.

Progress: The Association received commitments from nine private companies to underwrite the cost of the 2008 annual meeting. The \$4,500 raised enabled the Association to feed state and local elected officials without using public money, and allows us to use our special event's budget line item for other activities throughout the year. Finlayson has received a proposal for grant writing and research which is now under review.

Progress: The Association has reached agreement on a contract with a grant writing professional. We expect to sign the papers and get started during the second week in March 2008. We will research and pursue appropriate grants in both the public sector and from private foundations.

Progress: Finlayson has met on several occasions with our grant writing professional to discuss options, including several federal government grants as well as North Carolina's Golden Leaf Foundation. Finlayson met with Golden Leaf board member Kel Landis to discuss options for Highway 17 Association either making request directly or through a 501(c)(3) partner, and to solicit Landis' support for our prospective request.

Progress: The Association will pursue a Golden Leaf Foundation grant in partnership with ECU when details and responsibilities can be worked out with Dr. Jim Kleckley at the University.