ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Robert Bentley
Governor

John R. Cooper
Transportation Director

November 2, 2012

Probate Judges
County Commission Chairs
Mayors

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (ATRIP) Advisory Committee is working with Governor Robert Bentley and the Alabama Legislature to establish an initiative to further assist cities and counties with their transportation infrastructure needs. The Rural Assistance Match Program (RAMP) will be introduced to operate in conjunction with ATRIP. Within this program, cities and counties may elect to receive state funds to meet matching requirements for federal ATRIP funds.

A copy of the proposed RAMP initiative is enclosed for your early review. When evaluating the information, please note those electing to participate in RAMP must notify ALDOT in writing of their decision no later than January 9, 2013.

If you have any questions or need additional information, contact Mr. Edward Austin, ALDOT Innovative Programs Engineer, at (334) 242-6751.

Sincerely,

John R. Cooper
Transportation Director

JRC/ENA
Enclosure
cc: Governor Robert Bentley
Speaker of the House Mike Hubbard
Senate President Pro Tempore Del Marsh
ATRIP Advisory Committee
Association of County Commissions of Alabama
Alabama League of Municipalities
Alabama Road Builders Association
ALDOT Administration
ALDOT Division Engineers
ALDOT Engineering Bureau Chiefs

A WHITE PAPER ON THE RURAL ASSISTANCE MATCH PROGRAM (RAMP)

The Rural Assistance Match Program ("RAMP") is designed to assist counties and cities to participate actively in the Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program ("ATRIP"). ATRIP was originated by Governor Robert Bentley to assist counties and cities across Alabama as they work to meet the transportation needs of their local areas. It is administered by the Alabama Department of Transportation ("ALDOT") with oversight by a seven member advisory committee ("ATRIP Committee") appointed by Governor Robert Bentley. Over a three year period, ATRIP will enable the distribution of up to $1,000,000,000 of Federal Highway funds to address eligible road and bridge projects submitted by counties and cities. The use of Federal Highway funds requires that twenty percent (20%) of total project cost be funded by local matching funds.

Governor Robert Bentley and the ATRIP Committee are aware that some communities in Alabama may be unable to provide matching funds to complete desirable projects. Accordingly, working with the Association of County Commissions of Alabama and the Alabama League of Municipalities, the ATRIP Committee has developed this proposal to establish RAMP as a means to aid counties and cities with the necessary matching funds to replace eligible bridges posted for school bus traffic as well as other projects meeting ATRIP criteria.

An essential element to the establishment of RAMP will be the enactment of legislation enabling ALDOT to sell bonds utilizing future State Gasoline Tax receipts to provide the local match for participating counties. The legislation will be introduced during the 2013 regular session in the Alabama Senate by Senator Paul Bussman and in the House of Representatives by Representative Mac McCutcheon. The legislation will be actively supported by Governor Robert Bentley, Lieutenant Governor Kay Ivey, Senate President Pro Tempore Del Marsh and Speaker of the House Mike Hubbard.

PARTICIPATION IN RAMP

Participation in RAMP is an optional decision to be made by each county commission. All cities within the county will be required to follow the decision of the county. Those local governments electing to participate will receive up to $1,000,000 in state funds to meet the matching requirements necessary to draw down an additional $4,000,000 in federal funds (creating a total program of $5,000,000 per county). Cities within the participating counties will become partners in the program and will be eligible to submit projects, which meet the RAMP guidelines, for review and consideration. **Each county wishing to participate in RAMP must inform ALDOT in writing of its decision no later than January 9, 2013.** This notification need only state the RAMP participation decision of a county. It does not require a list of projects that are planned to be addressed with RAMP funds.

Counties in which ATRIP awards for Phase I and Phase I Supplemental projects total $5,000,000 or more shall not be eligible to participate in the RAMP program. These counties are: Baldwin, Crenshaw, Jefferson, Lee, Madison, Mobile and Morgan.

The county's decision regarding RAMP is binding on all local governments in the county and will govern all future ATRIP participation. Counties electing to participate in RAMP agree to limit all other projects from consideration in ATRIP -- focusing its ATRIP efforts primarily on the projects to be funded by RAMP. Counties deciding to forego RAMP participation will continue to submit applications for ATRIP funding but will be required to provide their own matching funds.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

First priority for RAMP funds will be the replacement of both county and city bridges eligible for replacement **and** posted for school bus traffic. Counties and cities will be required to establish an agreeable priority for the school-bus posted bridges.

In the event all these type bridges are replaced within a county, then the remaining RAMP funds may be expended on other ATRIP federally eligible projects. The ATRIP Committee will consider unique requests from local government sponsors who formally submit reasonable justification of why an eligible school bus posted bridge is not to be replaced and why another eligible project is desired to be pursued. The local government sponsor will be responsible for supplying any and all

information required by the ATRIP Committee to evaluate the request. The decision of the ATRIP Committee will be final. A listing of the school bus posted bridges eligible for replacement within each county is attached for your review and consideration.

Projects addressed through RAMP shall meet all federal, state and program requirements as established for ATRIP participation. All RAMP and ATRIP funds are intended for construction associated costs only. Utility relocation required as a result of direct conflict with approved project pay items may be an eligible cost under ATRIP and RAMP. Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way costs are not eligible under ATRIP or RAMP.

LIMITATIONS ON RAMP FUNDING

Counties that elect to receive matching funds under RAMP will be limited in their total participation in ATRIP. The limitations are as follows:

a. All ATRIP projects awarded to this point (Phase I and Phase I Supplemental) will continue as originally established (match will be provided by the respective sponsor that received the award);

b. For projects awarded from this point forward, counties (including cities within those counties) electing to receive RAMP funds will be eligible to receive matching funds of up to $1,000,000 to enable the completion of projects up to a total cost of $5,000,000;

c. Counties (including cities within those counties) that elect to receive RAMP funds that obtained awards of less than $2,000,000 combined in Phase I and Phase I Supplemental, regardless of sponsor, will be eligible to provide their own match and receive additional awards in an effort to bring their total awards up to the initial $2,000,000 level;

d. Counties will be able to combine the amounts set forth in (b) and (c) above to facilitate the completion of desired projects. They also will be able to combine RAMP projects with their regular annual federal aid amounts to complete desired projects;

e. Counties (including cities within those counties) receiving RAMP funds are ineligible for ATRIP Phase II and all future ATRIP Phases where match is required from the local sponsor, except as set forth in (c);

f. Counties electing to participate in RAMP shall follow the RAMP Project Eligibility requirements herein in addition to other published ATRIP guidelines previously transmitted;

g. Cities and counties performing projects under RAMP are expected to let their proposed projects no later than December 5, 2014.

IMPACT ON COUNTIES NOT PARTICIPATING IN RAMP

There will be no limitation, other than the availability of funds, for counties that do not elect to receive RAMP funds. These counties will continue to submit applications to the ATRIP Committee for evaluation as long as ATRIP funds are available. The ATRIP Committee will make all reasonable efforts to ensure these counties (including the cities within the county) receive a minimum $10,000,000 total project cost, if that amount of eligible projects is submitted.

TIMING OF DECISION AND DEADLINE CHANGES

A county's decision to participate in RAMP will limit projects from consideration for Phase II of ATRIP (submissions that were due on October 5, 2012) and future ATRIP Phases as detailed in "Limitations on RAMP Funding" herein. **Because of the significance of each county's decision, the ATRIP Committee has decided to allow each county to deliver its decision regarding RAMP participation in writing to ALDOT no later than January 9, 2013**. As a result, the announcement date for awards relating to Phase II of ATRIP has been extended from November 18, 2012 to January 25, 2013. The Committee believes this extension will provide all counties and cities with sufficient time for deliberation and discussion to reach a decision as to whether the county wishes to elect to receive RAMP funds. Because of these changes, the deadlines associated with subsequent phases of ATRIP will also be extended. The deadline for submitting applications for Phase III of ATRIP will move from March 29, 2013 to May 31, 2013. The announcement date for this phase will move from May 15, 2013 to July 10, 2013. The letting deadline for projects selected during Phase III will move from September 30, 2014 to December 5, 2014.