FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SHELBY COUNTY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING TO HEAR OPINIONS FROM COMMUNITY REGARDING PROPOSED TOLL BRIDGE  FEB. 18th

Columbiana, Alabama: Shelby County community members and Coosa Riverkeeper are encouraging residents to attend the Public Involvement Meeting concerning the Tim James development of the Coosa River Toll Bridge over Coosa River at Lay Lake at Perkins Landing on Tuesday, February 18th from 5-8 pm at the Shelby County Arts Center in Columbiana, Alabama. The purpose of this meeting is for residents to express their opinions about the proposed bridge to county officials.

Many local residents like Jason Gunnells of Paradise Point are concerned about this proposed toll bridge. “The pollution impact of the lakebed soil disturbance, traffic increases on rural roads, and disruption of residents’ peaceful life on the river is not worth saving 12 minutes. If Tim James traffic numbers are correct, the Volunteer Fire Department and EMTs in the area will have to accommodate an increase of 4800 vehicles (100% increase), with over 500 trucks daily.”

Jenny Davis, a resident of Shelby, Alabama says, “The Coosa River Express is a 12 minute shortcut and an unwarranted burden on Shelby County residents. Shelby County has ascended into the wealthiest county in the state and I feel that this toll bridge is not in the best interest of Shelby County.”

In Foley and Orange Beach, Tim James developed the Foley Beach Express, and it eventually had to be sold to an owner who had to file for Chapter II bankruptcy. Orange Beach was stuck helping to refinance the bridge. The City of Foley and the Federal Highway Administration had to help pay for sections of the Express.

Coosa Riverkeeper, a local river conservation non-profit, is against the proposed toll bridge and has organized an online petition that has resulted in 1,187 emails to county officials and counting. The organization spoke out against the proposed toll bridge at the Talladega County Commission meeting on January 13th.

“This is a wasteful and ill-planned project whose construction will cause sedimentation, litter, traffic, and disruption of the PCBs in the sediment,” Staff Riverkeeper, Steven Dudley said. “Tim James is selling a bill of goods to Shelby County. His traffic projections are unsubstantiated, and we haven’t seen any of his economic development figures.”

Shelby County asks the public to submit comments before February 21, 2020 at 8:00 AM by visiting www.proposedtollbridge.shelbyal.com. If individuals want to review documents provided by the developer they are available on the County Engineer’s website.
“We are incredibly grateful for Shelby County’s thorough and transparent process as they weigh their decision on this proposed toll bridge that will impact so many residents who enjoy the peace and quiet around the Perkins Landing area on Lay Lake,” says Justinn Overton, Executive Director of Coosa Riverkeeper.”

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Coosa Riverkeeper is a 501(3) non-profit organization with a mission to protect, restore, and promote the Coosa River and its tributaries in Alabama. They patrol the waters, educate the public, and advocate for the river. To learn more, visit CoosaRiver.org.