



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, December 7th, 2018

Volume 28, Number 9

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Kevin Harrison, PTP

The SARPC Annual meeting is underway at Point Clear today; see below. Next month is the deadline for the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program; please see *Funding Opportunities*. In *Legislative Updates*, ideas for funding infrastructure needs are being discussed, again. The Tariffs are beginning to have an impact on public works projects *In the News*.

Have a great weekend and stay dry! Check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!

www.mobilempo.org  Check us out on FACEBOOK

SARPC Transportation Video, this is what we do [HERE](#)

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

[Planning and Community Development](#)

[Area Agency on Aging](#)

[Employment and Economic Development](#)

Anthony Johnson, Monica Williamson, Tom Piper, and Kevin Harrison, PTP

SARPC Annual Meeting Underway Today at Point Clear



The SARPC Annual meeting is currently underway. Vince Calametti spoke on a variety of ALDOT funded projects within the Region, including the I-10 Mobile River Bridge, SR 180, a new bridge on the Causeway over the Tensaw River, US 31 resurfacing trial grant, and US 98 and SR 158 Extension.

Also on the agenda was a regional Economic Development panel, an Alabama legislative update, the Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council and an update from the Port.

Mobile MPO Updates

FREIGHT DATA

APM Terminals has provided us with their second quarterly survey report. Just as last quarter, for one day APM Terminals had on-board tablets for drivers to answer a series of questions in terms of where they came from and where they are going. APM Terminals will continue to gather this information quarterly for our benefit of validating truck data for the travel demand forecasting model. This second survey report had a significant increase in truckers answering the survey, which helps refine our understanding of container truck trip patterns in the area.

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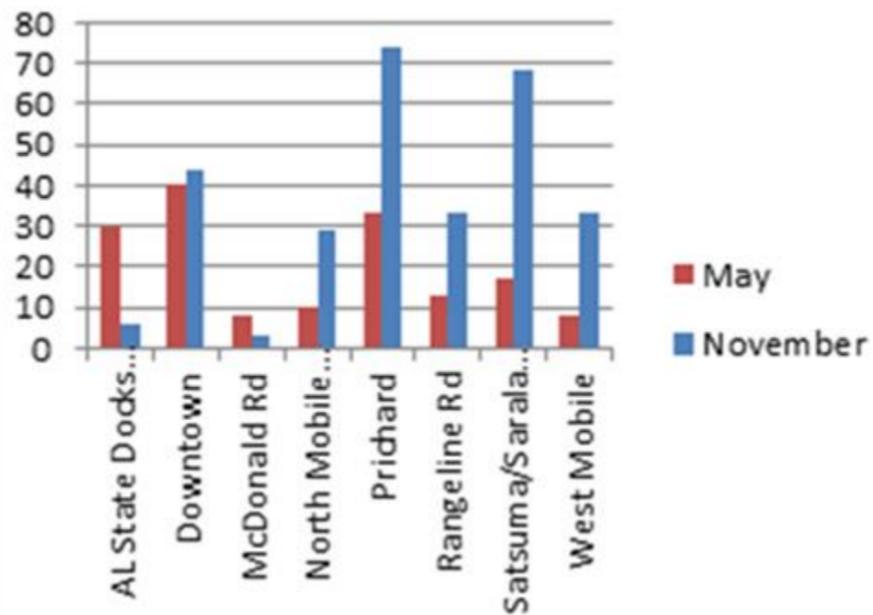
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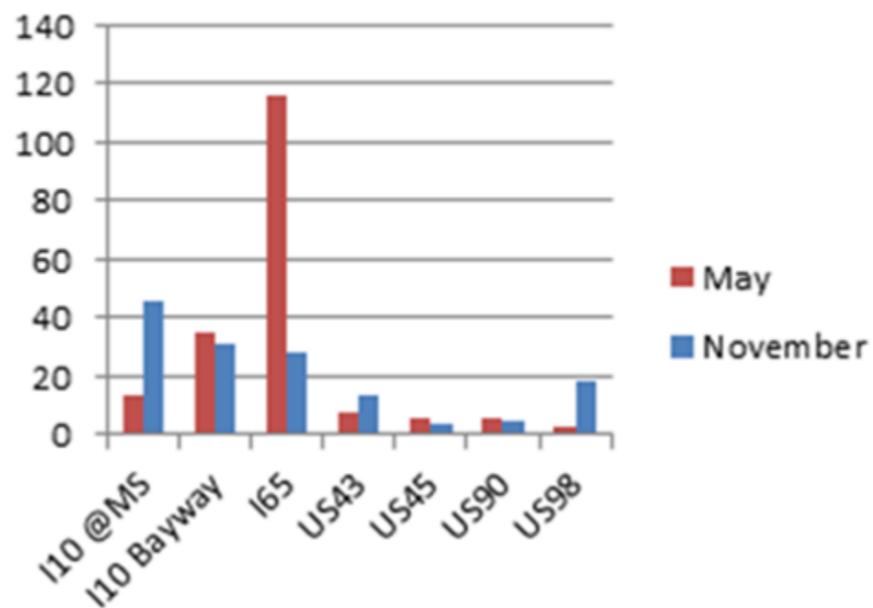
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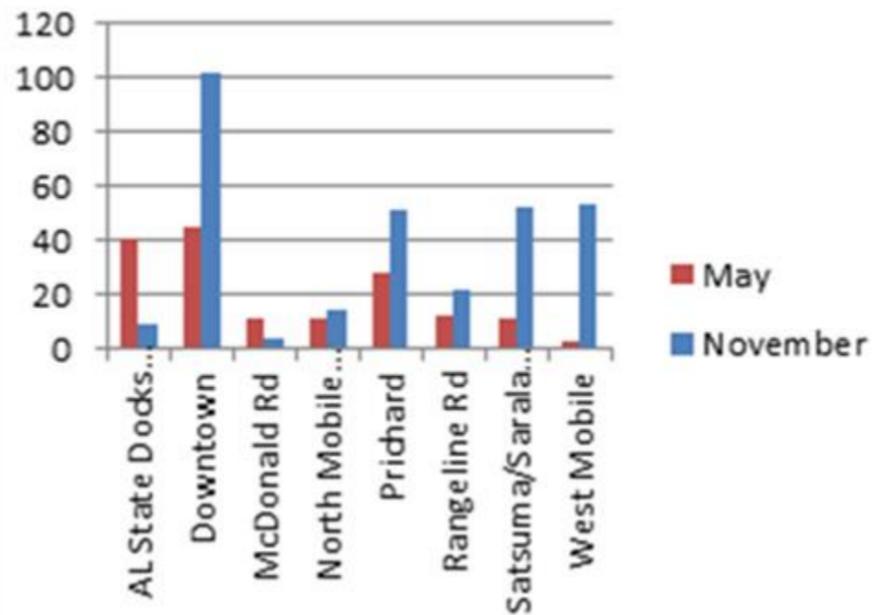
Trips Originating within Mobile County



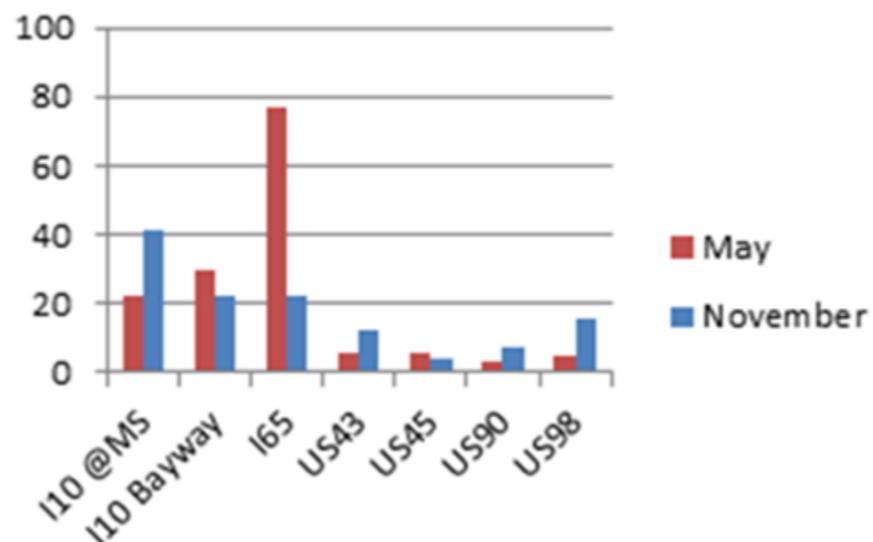
Where Trips Originating outside of Mobile County Are Entering



Where Trips are Dropping Off within Mobile County



Where Trips Dropping Off outside of Mobile County are Exiting



Mobile MPO meetings

There was a Mobile MPO meeting recently. The *Destination 2040* Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was modified to account for the tolling of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. When the LRTP was adopted in 2015, tolling was not a financial commitment. To assist in the planning process, the [LRTP](#) was modified to account for the tolling along with changes to the Bike/Ped Element, the Environmental Justice Element, and the Future Traffic Volumes. Also, the Mobile MPO adopted the PM2 performance measures for bridge and pavement condition, and there were various changes to be made to the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program. Please see our web page for further details www.mobilempo.org

US 45 Feasibility Study

The final stakeholder meeting was held for the *US 45 Feasibility Study*; the presentation and maps can be found [HERE](#)

In FY 2018, we had two public meetings, one in Mobile and one in Prichard with over one hundred citizens participating. In addition to the public meetings, we had four stakeholder meetings. The stakeholder meetings started out strong with over 30 people involved. On August 1st there was a public input meeting at the Prichard City Hall, with an introduction from the City of Prichard Mayor, Mayor Jimmie Gardner. Despite the weather, we had a pretty good turnout. Several comments were made pertaining to the study, and we gained some good input. June 28th was the first public meeting for the US 45 Feasibility Study, and was held at Leflore High School. The meeting was well attended by nearly 70 people. Mobile City Councilman Levon Manzie was on hand to guide the meeting and answer questions. Nick Amberger, the City of Mobile Engineer was also present and assisted in answering questions posed by the public. Mr. Drew Davis with Volkert and Mr. Clifton Lambert with CERM presented the attendees with preliminary ideas developed in previous Advisory Committee meetings. These included road diets, sidewalk improvements, bike lanes, and roundabouts at key intersections. The final document is complete and may be found [HERE](#).

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

The TIP represents a four year program (2016-2019) for improvements in the various transportation systems located within the Mobile study area as identified in the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the twenty-five year plan for the Mobile Urban area [Destination 2040](#). The LRTP establishes the transportation programs that are needed to meet travel demand by the study year and study area. LRTP projects that become funded are moved into the TIP and submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), where they are programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For MPO projects, TIP project selection is based on priorities established by MPO member governments and the availability of funds through the Surface Transportation Attributable program. For other projects, ALDOT has discretion of project funding based on availability of funds from various types of funding categories. Most often, projects in the TIP are derived from the LRTP. The TIP guides ALDOT in its annual allocation of funds for transportation improvements and becomes a part of the STIP.

ArcGIS Online is now being utilized by MPO staff to map all federally funded surface transportation projects within our area. Check it out.

2016-2019 E-TIP [HERE](#)

Stay Up To Date on the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project: <http://mobileriverbridge.com/>



Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

The target start date or project engineers estimated amount has changed for the following:

Project : 100061588 (CN)
Federal aid number : BR 0013 (601)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CULVERT REPLACEMENT, BIN 5715, SR-13 (US-43) OVER STEELE CREEK
Old Target start date : February 22, 2019
New Target start date : March 29, 2019

Project : 100046895 (CN)
Federal aid number : STPMB 7550 (601)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD)
Old Target start date : January 25, 2019
New Target start date : February 22, 2019

Project : 100046894 (UT)
Federal aid number : STPMB 7550 (601)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD)
Old Delete Indicator :
New Delete Indicator : D

RPO Updates

RPO The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) held a meeting of the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) in September at the Baldwin County Central Annex in Robertsdale.

The meeting was well attended and there was a lengthy discussion of current and future transportation projects in the rural areas of our region let by the ALDOT Southwest Regional Office. Other items on the agenda include:

- Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting
- Review and adoption of the Fiscal Year 2019 Work Program (available for review online at <http://www.mobilempo.org/RPODocuments.html>)
- Updating the RPO Transportation Plan with Project List (available for review online at <http://www.mobilempo.org/RPODocuments.html>)

The Work Program for Fiscal Year 2019 includes a new task. This task involves assisting the Alabama Department of Transportation with hosting public meetings regarding the upcoming 2020-2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Further information about this endeavor will be forthcoming. Please watch our newsletter for more information.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the items mentioned above, please contact us.

Projects in Region Let December 7th, 2018

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Bridge Rail Retrofit, and Traffic Stripe on SR-113 from the junction of SR-3 (US-31) in Flomaton to the I-65 Interchange. Length 13.683 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$5,206,181 to \$6,363,110 .

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-163 from a point north of the I-10 Overpass (MP 8.680) to the junction of SR-16 (US-90) and the Illinois Central Railroad Crossing (MP 11.104). Length 2.424 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$769,994 to \$941,104
- For constructing the Interior Lighting on SR-42 (US-98) in the Bankhead Tunnel in Mobile. Length 0.641 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,144,817 to \$1,399,220 .
- For constructing the Seawall Replacement on SR-188 located at MP 10.220 to include the Relocation of Movable Barriers and Gate Arms at the J. A. Wintzell Memorial Bridge in Bayou La Batre. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,949,859 to \$2,383,161 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Intersection Modifications to include Turn Lane Improvements on SR-3 (US-31) at the junction of SR-225 in Spanish Fort. Length 0.121 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$159,588 to \$195,052.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

Legislative Updates

Alabama must address gas tax, Senate pro tem says

Posted by [John Mullen](#) | Dec 5, 2018

There's a word no politician or voter ever likes to hear. But when the 2019 Alabama Legislature convenes in March, Sen. Pro Tem Del Marsh says it's likely to come up. A lot.

"I think you can see legislation dealing with — and I'll say the dreaded word — a gas tax," Marsh told the Leadership Series Luncheon at the Foley Civic Center on Nov. 28. The meeting was part of an ongoing South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce series.

Marsh, who represents District 12 in east Alabama including the cities of Anniston and Jacksonville, said two major issues are on his mind as the 2019 session looms: boosting expectations for education and infrastructure.

Even as he's heard from colleagues supporting his return as pro tem, he also challenged those same senators to come back ready to work.

"Think hard about it because when January comes around and it's time to vote pro tem and my name is on there," Marsh said. "If you're not willing to step up and do some of the bolder things the state needs in education and infrastructure, I'm not your guy. I want to see something done."

He says the gas tax is vital to bolstering infrastructure in the state and believes the Port of Mobile is a key component.

"If we can deepen that port then we can double the amount of commerce coming and going and that's important to the state of Alabama," Marsh said. "We are talking about taking a percentage of any tax increase to go to the port authority. We believe there's going to be federal money that can be matched to deepen the harbor to make these improvements we need to continue to make at the port."

Marsh said several talks during the latter part of 2018 have been about infrastructure, including the port, and that Gov. Kay Ivey is on board to help.

"I spoke with the governor three weeks ago and any infrastructure bill the governor is going to be connected with will have an element for the port in it," Marsh said.

Raising the gas tax has proven problematic since it was last raised to 18 cents per gallon in 1992. Marsh said cars get more miles to the gallon than in 1992 and the wear and tear on the roads has increased while the tax has not.

“It’s not like sales tax where you pay a certain percentage,” Marsh said. “It’s a flat number and that number has stayed flat for 26 years. I want an index model and what we’re looking at is the Consumer Price Index. The fuel tax would be increased based on the Consumer Price Index, but have floors and ceilings where it can’t go more than a certain amount per year.”

On education, Marsh said the state needs to develop a comprehensive plan involving all levels of education instead of separate plans for Pre-K, K-12 and higher education.

“We’re working on these things with the goal to bump up the expectation of education and reward educators throughout this state,” he said.

Legislation Proposed To Revise Renewable Fuel Standards

Recently, Rep. John Shimkus, R-Ill., and Rep. Bill Flores, R-Texas, released what they dubbed a “discussion draft” of legislation aimed at revising the renewable fuel standard or RFS established more than a decade ago: a bill called the [21st Century Transportation Fuels Act](#).

“I’ve been engaged in the biofuel debate my entire career in Congress,” Rep. Shimkus noted [in a joint statement](#). “In this Congress – through three stakeholder roundtables, five subcommittee hearings, and countless other meetings and conversations – my goal was to look beyond just the RFS to comprehensively reshape federal transportation fuel policies in a way that could provide more value to consumers and more certainty to industry stakeholders.”

Rep. Flores said “much has changed” for vehicles and fuels since Congress established the RFS as part of the [Energy Policy Act of 2005](#) and then expanded it via the [Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007](#).

“We have learned from robust stakeholder input through hearings, roundtables and meetings, that higher octane fuels can bring increased fuel economy and performance for next generation engines,” Rep. Flores noted. “Since ethanol is one of the lowest-cost sources of octane in many areas of the country, a transition from the RFS beginning in 2023 to a national octane specification creates new market opportunities for biofuel producers and gives certainty to refining stakeholders. Most importantly, the draft legislation preserves consumer choice and optimum fuel and vehicle costs for more efficient transportation for future decades.”

“The draft legislation we are sharing today enables a transition to 21st century vehicle drivetrains by bringing together both new ideas and technologies as well as long-sought reforms to existing policies,” added Rep. Shimkus. “This sets the stage to modernize federal policies and deliver a new generation of more efficient and cost-effective vehicles and engines and fuels for American consumers. We appreciate the stakeholders who have engaged in this effort and look forward to continuing to improve upon the policies and legislative language we’ve put forward for consideration and discussion.”

A [policy paper](#) issued by the Federal Highway Administration 10 years ago noted that the RFS would change the composition of fuels used by state DOT motor vehicles and equipment, while the Environmental Protection Agency issued [new reports and rules](#) in support of such fuel blends earlier this year.

Senate ‘Informational’ Hearing Seeks Solutions for Surface Transportation Infrastructure Needs

editor@aaashto.org

The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held an informational hearing on Nov. 28 that sought suggestions on how to generate funding to support U.S. surface transportation infrastructure needs now and into the future.

Carlos Braceras, executive director of the Utah Department of Transportation and president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, testified along with Robert Lanham, vice president of the Associated General Contractors of America, and James Corless, executive director of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments.

All three stressed that fuel taxes need to be bolstered in the near-term while alternative funding mechanisms need to be explored in the future.

“Just to keep our current FAST [[Fixing American’s Surface Transportation](#)] Act funding levels, Congress has to find \$90 billion in additional revenues for a five-year bill or \$114 billion for a six-year bill,” Braceras noted in his [written remarks](#). “At the same time, the purchasing power of [highway] trust fund revenues has declined substantially due to the flat, per-gallon motor fuel taxes that have not been adjusted since 1993, losing half of its value over the last quarter century.”

He said that ultimately means federal highway programs are expected to experience a 51 percent drop after the FAST Act expires in 2020, while federal transit programs would have to be “zeroed out” in 2021 and 2022.

“In the past, similar shortfall situations have led to cuts in federal reimbursements to states on existing obligations, leading to serious cash flow problems for states and resulting in project delays,” Braceras emphasized. “Simply put, this is a devastating scenario that we must do all we can to avoid.”

He noted that while federal investment has lagged, states have stepped up to “fill the gap,” with 31 states successfully enacting state-level transportation funding packages since 2012.

“In Utah, our legislature recently adopted an increase to the state fuel tax and indexed both the fuel tax and registration fees to keep pace with inflation. Also, we’ll be the second state in the nation to implement a road usage charge program,” Braceras pointed out. “But efforts by Utah and other states to fund the system ourselves are not enough. The federal government must step up its share of investment and it will not be easy.”

Both AGC's Lanham and SACG's Corless made similar points in their comments before the committee.

"It is impossible to address the future of the nation's surface transportation program without first getting to the heart of our biggest challenge: the transportation 'fiscal cliff' that's staring at us when the current FAST Act authorization expires in 2020," Corless stressed in [his testimony](#).

"By many accounts, we will have a financial hole to fill in the tens of billions. In filling this hole, we have two enormous challenges to confront," he said. "First, we need a short-term fix that either means raising the federal gasoline tax or continuing stopgap funding solutions of the recent past. Second, we need to accelerate our efforts to deploy the successor to the gas tax. It's my belief that whatever successor emerges as the favorite will need to be tested and deployed in a majority of the states before it's adopted at a national level."

"The time for infrastructure investment is now; the U.S. transportation infrastructure system's needs cannot sustain a status quo approach to investment," added AGC's Lanham [in his testimony](#). "Continued federal, state and local partnership is critical to the success of our national transportation system [but] a broad infrastructure package must include a sustainable, long-term solution to funding the Highway Trust Fund."

He stressed that "none of these themes are new [and] in fact, I imagine that you have heard them before, time and time again. What's different today, however, is that leaders on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue and on all ends of the political spectrum agree that the addressing our nation's transportation infrastructure is the top priority for the new Congress. And, this committee and its leaders are an essential component to making this priority a reality."

The EPW committee's chairman, Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., and its ranking member, Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., echoed Lanham's sentiment in their comments during the hearing.

"Surface transportation connects all of us [and] the time has come to cut red tape to make significant investments in roads and bridges and keep the HTF solvent," Sen. Barrasso said. "And I agree that using a formula-based approach will allow states to use federal money to their best advantage, [for] what works best for Chicago and Los Angeles does not necessarily work in our rural communities."

"I've long believed our committee can lead in bipartisan fashion on this issue," added Sen. Carper.

"The role of government is to provide a nurturing environment for job creation – and building roads, bridges, and highways is big part of that," he stressed. "Finding funding to keep the highway trust fund solvent, though, is the 800-pound gorilla in the room. I've shared with the president the idea of restoring the purchasing power of fuel tax and said we need a 25 cent per gallon increase and it should be done now. So the key to getting something done on financing side [for surface transportation funding] will be leadership."

Another critic slams time-pressured driverless car bill

By SAM MINTZ

MORE OPPOSITION TO REVISED AV START: Another critic of the self-driving car legislation ([S. 1885 \(115\)](#)) was not convinced by revised text produced by Senate sponsors this week. Rep. [Jan Schakowsky](#) (D-Ill.), incoming chairwoman of House Energy and Commerce subpanel with jurisdiction over driverless cars, said the draft "falls woefully short in terms of passenger safety, data security, privacy and regulatory accountability." Our Tanya Snyder [reports](#) that her opposition is "a blow to lawmakers racing to shore up support for the bill ... in both chambers in the hope that it can be pushed through to enactment before the end of the year."

Hope abounds: Sen. [John Thune](#) (R-S.D.) [said](#) he's gotten good feedback on the new draft and that there's still a pathway to passage. Attaching the bill to a year-end spending bill would bypass the need for unanimous support in the Senate, where a trio of Democrats remain opposed. But, Thune said, "I know where we are in terms of the schedule and it's going to be challenging." Putting more pressure on lawmakers to act is the fact that Waymo officially [launched](#) its commercial self-driving ride-hailing service Wednesday in Phoenix, Ariz. The rides will have safety drivers to start, but may transition to a fully driverless service.

DEFAZIO'S VMT PLANS: Incoming House Transportation Chairman [Peter DeFazio](#) (D-Ore.) is planning to propose a national vehicle miles traveled fee pilot, your host [reported](#) Wednesday. He also said the only fair way to make the switch to VMT is with congestion pricing. "You shouldn't charge a farmer who has to travel 20 miles to the feed store the same per mile fee as someone who jumps on 205 in Portland and causes a backup," he said. However, he acknowledged issues with public perception and acceptance. "The people in the rural parts of my district, it's like, 'After you get the gun out of my cold hand, then you can track my vehicle.'" The planned pilot would let people opt in, and then give them a rebate for the estimated gas tax they would have paid.

Funding Opportunities

Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program

A Notice by the [Federal Railroad Administration](#) deadline **5:00 p.m. EDT, on March 18, 2019**

FRA recently issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the **Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program** (Partnership Program). The NOFO makes **\$272,250,000 million** in grant funding available. Here's the link to FRA's Partnership Program website which includes a link to the NOFO: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1107>

The Partnership Program is intended to benefit both the Northeast Corridor ("NEC") and the large number of publicly-owned or Amtrak-owned infrastructure, equipment, and facilities located in other areas of the country, including strengthening transportation options for rural American communities. The NOFO will assist in

funding capital projects to repair, replace, or rehabilitate publicly-owned railroad assets, and to improve intercity passenger rail performance. Eligible projects include those that replace existing assets in-kind; replace existing assets with those that increase capacity or provide a higher level of service; and those that ensure existing assets maintain service while being brought into a state of good repair.

Selection preference will be given to projects where Amtrak is not the sole applicant; multiple applicants submit applications jointly; the proposed federal share of total project costs does not exceed 50 percent; non-federal shares consist of funding from multiple sources, including private sources; and applications indicate strong project readiness. Applications for capital projects funding under this solicitation must be submitted via www.Grants.gov and are **due no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on Monday, March 18, 2019**. Prior to the application deadline, FRA plans to provide Web-based training and technical assistance to answer questions from applicants.

- **WEBINAR: Wednesday, December 12 at 1:00 PM and Tuesday, January 8 at 1:00 PM - How to Apply for Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program Grants – Register now for either the [December 12 session](#) or the [January 8 session](#)**

The Federal-State Partnership Program is authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and this [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) makes available funding from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018. During the webinar, FRA will provide information about the new grant opportunity and how to apply for grant funding. For additional information about this grant opportunity, please see FRA's Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs website at <https://www.fra.dot.gov/grants>

Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program

Applications Due: January 31, 2019

The Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program (FMA) provides funding to states, territories, federally-recognized tribes, and local communities for projects and planning that reduces or eliminates long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. FMA funding is also available for management costs. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires state, tribal, and local governments to develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for Hazard Mitigation Assistance projects. Generally, local communities will sponsor applications on behalf of homeowners and then submit the applications to their state.

Section 5307, 5310, and 5311: Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Administration for Community Living](#) (ACL) has worked with the [National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#) to clarify the ability of grantees to use Older Americans Act Title IIIB Supportive Services Funds to match Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs. These FTA programs include Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307), Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities (Section 5310), and Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311). This information has been publicized [HERE](#)

FHWA Offers New Funding for Innovative Demonstration Projects

New funding is available from the Federal Highway Administration's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program to encourage the transportation community to adopt proven innovations. [Funding](#) or the AID Demonstration program, launched in 2014 as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, was continued by the 2015 [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act](#). Since AID Demonstration was introduced, FHWA has provided more than \$43 million for 61 awards.

Under the program, funding of up to \$1 million may be awarded for projects that use proven innovations in any project phase, including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment and construction. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through Grants.gov, the federal government's website for information on funding opportunities. For more information on the AID Demonstration program, contact [Ewa Flom](#) of the FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation.

The FHWA continues the Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration authorized within the Technology and Innovation Deployment Program (TIDP) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The AID Demonstration provides incentive funding for any project activities eligible for assistance under title 23, U.S.C. in any phase of a highway transportation project between project planning and project delivery including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment, and construction that address the TIDP goals. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published on September 1, 2016 (<https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-21063>) requests grant applications and provides selection criteria, application requirements, and technical assistance with Grants.gov during the grant solicitation period.

Link to Additional Information: [FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation Grants page](#)

Industrial Access Road and Bridge

Industrial access funds are intended to provide adequate public access to new or expanding distribution, manufacturing and industrial firms. The industry must be committed to new investment and the creation of new jobs. The new access must be on public right of way for public use (state, city or county) and the project sponsor (city or county) must maintain the completed facility unless the facility consists of turn lanes, crossovers, etc., that are located on state highways. Industrial access funds are limited to construction, construction engineering and inspection costs. The project sponsor is responsible for all preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation costs.

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the

Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available visit www.grants.gov.

Just For Fun

'Elvis Presley' Helps Pedestrians Cross The Street In German Town

DENISE COUTURE December 6, 2018



Elvis Presley's image has been used to create action figures, reading lamps and Christmas ornaments. His likeness has adorned socks, slippers and soap – and countless other products over the decades since the American rock legend first got audiences all shook up.

Why not traffic lights?

The town of Friedberg, Germany, this week [installed three pedestrian traffic lights](#) that incorporate images of the King. The don't-walk light shows Presley at a microphone, while the walk light depicts him in his trademark dance pose – heels up, hips swiveled.

Presley [was stationed](#) in Friedberg from October 1958 to March 1960 while he was in the U.S. Army.

It was in Friedberg, a town located about 16 miles north of Frankfurt, that Presley met his future wife, Priscilla Beaulieu, [according](#) to the German news organization Deutsche Welle.

Friedberg and the nearby town of Bad Nauheim, where Presley lived, are "keen" to keep their connections to the entertainer, reports Deutsche Welle. In Bad Nauheim, tourists can see the house where Presley stayed during his deployment (though they can't [go in](#)) and even attend the annual [European Elvis Festival](#).

In the News

Wolf Bay Bridge project in months-long permitting phase

Posted by [John Mullen](#)

Widening Canal Road spells bad news for the Tom Thumb at the corner on Alabama State Route 161 in Orange Beach.

But a south landing of the Wolf Bay Bridge within steps of its front door isn't going to require a move by the iconic Doc's Seafood Shack and Oyster Bar, kitty-corner to Tom Thumb.

"Doc's is an institution," Orange Beach Mayor Tony Kennon said. "They're not going anywhere."

The ramshackle building that sits on a slab has had several additions during its storied life and can hardly be picked up and moved, even a short distance. Kennon said it won't have to.

"We own the property behind it so we're able to work out some trades and agreements so they can have parking in the back," Kennon said. "Doc's is going to be fine."

Doc's owner Richard Schwartz's parking lot is directly west of the restaurant but the bridge riser will be between the two lots and will make it inaccessible for his customers.

Tom Thumb looks to lose its building as the Alabama Department of Transportation is planning a sweeping two-lane turn south so beach-bound traffic doesn't have to stop at the intersection. Kennon hopes it can stay in the area, though.

"The question is Tom Thumb and that eastbound, southbound turn, and can we move the Tom Thumb and rebuild on the property just slightly to the west is what we'd like to do," Kennon said. "We would have to take all of their property to make the sweep so it may work where we can relocate, because we do need a gas station for the inbound traffic."

As far as actual work on the Wolf Bay Bridge, officials say it is in the early 12- to 24-month permitting phase.

"Burt-Kleinpeter, they are working [with us on] surveying, Geotech, all of that with the bridge," Kennon said. "With the roadways, they're doing all the design. They've been a big help to us. We're in a holding pattern going through the process. Until we get the permitting and contractual agreements with [adjacent property owners] Mr. Barber and Mr. Lawrenz, but for the most part it's just waiting on getting a permit."

David Lawrenz and George Barber own land on Sapling Point where the bridge will land on the north side. Larenz's property is already in the city limits and though Barber's is not, an improved road on his property will be used to take traffic north to County Road 95 and eventually to County Road 20 or U.S. 98 to connect to the Foley Beach Express.

Kennon said he likens the bridge project to an economic development move he hopes will move some of the burgeoning development on the island to the north.

"We are not looking to annex anyone that doesn't want to be annexed," Kennon said. "We're not going to try to annex Josephine, Pirate's Cove or anything else except those willing landowners. The last thing we want is people in Orange Beach that don't want to be in Orange Beach."

McNair appointed to Southern Rail Commission (SRC)

Posted by [Dale Liesch](#) | Dec 4, 2018

Mobile native Stephen McNair has been appointed by Gov. Kay Ivey to serve on the Southern Rail Commission. The owner of McNair Historic Restoration and unsuccessful GOP candidate for House District 97 will serve a four-year term that will expire on July 31, 2022.

"As one of my appointees, you will be making important decisions that directly affect the citizens of Alabama," Ivey wrote to McNair in a letter sent on Nov. 26. "I have made honesty and integrity a priority in my administration and I know you will embody these two virtues while serving the people of Alabama."

McNair, who lost his House race to incumbent Democrat Adline Clarke last month, wrote in an email Tuesday afternoon that he built a relationship with Ivey's office while running for the seat.

"As a candidate for the Alabama House of Representatives, I began working with Governor Ivey's team on the possibility of passenger rail returning to Mobile," he wrote. "The last Amtrak train to pass through Mobile was in 2005, and I believe that there is an appetite for services that fulfill an economic development requirement while also serving as an alternative mode of transportation. My appointment was a result of these conversations with the Governor's office."

Ivey has previously balked at the state funding needed to return passenger rail service to Mobile and other southern Alabama cities.

In his email, McNair wrote that he's excited to join the commission.

"My goal is to find solutions and work with leaders in the rail industry that eventually lead to a regular Amtrak service through Mobile," he wrote.

McNair's first meeting with the three-state commission will be Friday in Mobile.

The Wave Transit 2018 Stuff the Bus

The Wave Transit System has announced the kick-off the 2018 Christmas Holiday season with our [Annual Stuff the Bus Toy Drive!](#)

The purpose of the event is to make a child's Christmas morning *Memorable, Enjoyable and Festive*.

This year's "Toy Drive" will be held on [Saturday, December 1, 2018 from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the Midtown Walmart, 101 East I-65 Service Road, Mobile, Alabama.](#)

In an effort to make the holiday season Memorable, Enjoyable and Festive for underprivileged youth, the Wave is soliciting donations (new / unwrapped gifts or toys) from your organization.

Donations may be made the day of the event (at Walmart) or prior at one of the following locations:

Mobile Community Action, Inc.

461 Donald Street, Mobile, Alabama 36610

The Wave Transit System-GM&O Transportation Center

110 Beauregard Street, Suite 104, Mobile, Alabama 36602

Thank you for your consideration and please contact Gerald Alfred at 251.338.0100 or via email, galfred@thewavetransit.com for additional information.

Trump tariffs inflating cost of public works projects across the country: report

BY BRETT SAMUELS - 12/04/18

Contractors working on infrastructure projects across the country have reportedly had to contend with higher costs as a result of steel tariffs imposed by the Trump administration earlier this year.

[Bloomberg](#) reported Tuesday on infrastructure projects in Michigan, Virginia and Utah, where construction efforts have already dealt with increased costs associated with the tariffs.

STUFF The BUS

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For example, the cost of steel for construction on repairs to Detroit's Lower Rouge River have risen by about \$1.3 million, according to Environmental Protection Agency data reported by Bloomberg.

A project engineer on a new [wastewater treatment facility](#) in Utah told the outlet that costs there shot up by roughly \$29 million in part because of higher steel costs.

It's unclear how much of the costs are directly attributable to the Trump administration's tariffs on steel and aluminum imposed earlier this year, but Bloomberg cited a report from the American Road & Transportation Builders Association that found 10 cents of every \$1 spent on highway and bridge construction goes toward steel-related materials.

The added costs generally fall to the contractors working on each project, Bloomberg noted.

[President Trump](#) imposed the tariffs earlier this year on the grounds of national security, despite resistance from GOP and Democratic lawmakers.

The president has retained the tariffs in the months since, insisting that they are necessary to ensure fair trade deals with other countries.

The administration has since negotiated trade deals with [South Korea](#), [Canada](#) and [Mexico](#), and is in talks with China. However, the tariffs have largely remained in place.

The tariffs could complicate infrastructure projects at home, even as the subject is one area where the president and Democrats could find common ground moving forward.

Vice President Pence [told Hill.TV](#) in an interview last month that he expects Trump to push an infrastructure reform package after the new Congress is sworn in next year.

Transportation Research

AASHTO Offers Steel Bridge Specification Update

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials just released a new, fourth edition of the [S2.1-2018 Steel Bridge Fabrication Guide Specification](#) – an AASHTO-National Steel Bridge Alliance Collaboration publication – that gathers together in one place recent updates to the group's Load Resistance and Factor Design or LRFD bridge/construction specifications.

AASHTO noted that it works with the NSBA work together to develop specifications, codes, standards, and policies in an effort to unify the existing diverse requirements governing steel bridge construction and all of the AASHTO-NSBA Steel Bridge Collaboration publications are available for download, free of charge, from the [AASHTO Store](#), the group noted.

This revision provides clarifications and removes conflicts between the latest S2.1 and the latest AASHTO specifications while continuing to provide an AASHTO-NSBA consensus on “best practices” for fabrication specifications.

The group emphasized that this update is intended to be used in tandem with AASHTO-NSBA Steel Bridge Collaboration *S4.1*, [Steel Bridge Fabrication QC/QA Guide Specification](#).

[Transportation Safety Planning and the Zero Deaths Vision: A Guide for Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Local Communities](#)

FHWA has released this new guidebook geared towards MPOs and local stakeholders to reduce fatalities and serious injuries across transportation systems. To address this, USDOT seeks to foster collaboration across all stakeholders to improve the behaviors and conditions that impact these safety outcomes. The Guide seeks to assist MPOs, communities, and other transportation agencies to utilize, implement, and evaluate their safety planning processes to further the zero deaths vision.

[The Data Collected by Dockless Bikes is Helping Cities Map Your Movement](#)

Dockless bikes use a combination of GPS, 3G wireless connections, and solar power to transmit their location to providers and consumers. Providers, and the cities they partner with, have unparalleled access to rider behavior and are leveraging this knowledge to meet the needs of their consumers. In South Bend, IN, Lime is providing aggregate statistics on travel and heat maps showing where most riders occur in the city. South Bend used this data to paint drop-off areas for the bikes and is now hoping to use this information to plan for new bike paths and lanes. Lime is also working with cities to identify a format that makes it easy for them to pull data from multiple operators into their databases to analyze with their own tools.

[Transportation Safety Planning and the Zero Deaths Vision: A Guide for Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Local Communities](#)

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Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO): Transportation Partnerships for the 21st Century

This work will deliver a historical review and contemporary analysis of the institutional structures and performance of MPOs, producing conclusions and lessons learned that are relevant to current challenges. This research will address ways in which MPOs can respond more nimbly and effectively to rapidly changing transportation demands, conditions, and technologies. It will provide a range of strategies and tools drawn from cases and practice in order to better equip MPOs and MPO-state partnerships in planning, maintaining, and improving transportation systems for U.S. metropolitan areas and the economies reliant on those systems.

Staff Contact: Harlan Miller, 202-366-0847

Transportation Dictionary

The USDOT released a searchable online dictionary that includes over 9,000 transportation terms and acronyms. The terms were collected from a variety of public and private transportation publications and databases. This dictionary presents over 9,000 terms and acronyms related to transportation. The terms and acronyms were obtained from various transportation publications and databases which exist within the federal government, private organizations, Canada and Mexico.

Search Tips

- Sources are listed in parenthesis after the definition.
- None of the searches are case sensitive. Searching for PEDESTRIAN will produce the same results as searching for pedestrian.
- The Dictionary searches for the word, phrase or acronym as it is entered and returns all records that match or contain that word, phrase or acronym.

For example, searching for pedestrian will return records for pedestrian and pedestrian walkway.

Click [HERE](#) for the search engine.