



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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ALDOT has announced the FTA 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities call for projects; see *Funding Opportunities*. In *Legislative Updates*, a new surface transportation bill to replace the FAST ACT (called the INVEST ACT) has been introduced, but is there time? The FHWA has made some awards, so did the State of Alabama; see *In The News*. This week's *Just For Fun*, is a stretch....

The SARPC staff is currently working remotely. Our phones, emails, are seamless and if you need us we are here.

Check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!

[www.mobilempo.org](http://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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### Mobile MPO Policy Committee Meeting Held

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met virtually using GOTO Meeting on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. This was the first time a Mobile MPO meeting was conducted in this manner, and was executed without any problems. There were test meetings to make sure our MPO members were familiar with the technology. It ended up being a largely attended meeting that included the press, and members of the public attending online. Items on the agenda included the adoption of the Long Range Transportation Plan. The Plan is required to be adopted every 5 years, and the deadline was March of 2020 for this plan. The March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting was postponed until the April 22 meeting due to the COVID -19 virus.

The LRTP is multimodal in scope, and is based on public input, and a travel demand forecast model. In 2019, an online survey was conducted with almost 150 respondents. Questions ranged from where is the worst congestion, what roads need improvements, problems with the transit systems, etc. There were a lot of comments about the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and the potential for tolls. Prior to the online survey, staff also conducted a South Alabama Freight Forum, which was an opportunity to hear from large manufacturers and trucking companies, to find out what the top issues are concerning the movement of freight in South Alabama. The Bicycle / Pedestrian plan was updated, and the public transit section was authored by the Wave Transit, less the Demand Response Transit Study currently being conducted (see below).

More information on the new plan can be found at <https://www.envision2045.org/>

The Appropriations Act of 2020 provided the Mobile MPO with \$564,549 (fed). These funds were introduced to the MPO during the MPO meeting, and will be discussed at the next TCC/CAC subcommittee meeting. It could be added to the pot to fund future shortfalls, or could be allocated to a specific project; the committee will decide.

### The MOBILE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM FEASIBILITY STUDY

SARPC staff is continuing to meet (virtually) with Via, and Goodwyn, Mills, and Cawood, for the feasibility study. The current health crisis has affected the potential outcome of the study. The intent of the study was to find potential local sponsors to match federal funds to create a transit system to operate throughout Mobile County to connect with WAVE Transit. The sponsors would have provided assistance through subscriptions or contracts for commuter trips. The current price of gasoline, and the threat of contracting virus on buses, may put a strain on ridership of a new system. However, there are still people in need of transportation, and there is some thought that regardless of the price of gasoline, there will be an increased number of distressed people due to the economy, that will need transportation. This may be the perfect time to consider transportation throughout Mobile County.

Please review the Tasks 1, 2 and 3 that are underway [HERE](#).

### [FY 2020-2023 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM \(TIP\) NOW ONLINE](#)

The TIP represents a four year program (2020-2023) 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. 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 [HERE](#).

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## Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

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

Project : 100068763 ( CN )  
Federal aid number : RASTPAA 4915 (251)  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : WIDENING, RESURFACING AND STRIPING ON DAWES ROAD (CR-33) FROM SCOTT DAIRY LOOP ROAD SOUTH TO DIBERVILLE DRIVE WEST  
Old Target start date : August 28, 2020  
New Target start date : November 06, 2020

Project : 100056130 ( UT )  
Federal aid number : BRF 0016 (522)  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : REPLACE BRIDGE, BIN 008714, SR-16 (US-90) WESTBOUND OVER TENSAW-SPANISH RIVER. (SUFF=49.7, STATUS=SD)  
Old Target start date : July 01, 2020  
New Target start date : September 01, 2020

Project : 100037215 ( CN )  
Federal aid number : DBMB-STPMB 7550 (600)  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : ZEIGLER BLVD ADDITIONAL LANES FROM ATHEY RD TO FOREST HILL DR  
Old Target start date : July 31, 2020  
New Target start date : August 28, 2020

Project : 100049566 ( CN )  
Federal aid number : BRF 0016 (522)  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : REPLACE BRIDGE, BIN 008714, SR-16 (US-90) WESTBOUND OVER TENSAW-SPANISH RIVER. (SUFF=49.7, STATUS=SD)  
Old Target start date : August 28, 2020  
New Target start date : November 06, 2020

Project : 100071607 ( CN )  
Federal aid number : HSIP 0016  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : STUDY - CORRIDOR STUDY ON US 90 IN MOBILE NEAR INTERSTATE10  
Old Target start date : April 01, 2020  
New Target start date : June 15, 2020

Project : 100067957 ( FM )  
Federal aid number : STPAA 0188 (505)  
County : MOBILE  
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-188 FROM LAKELAND DRIVE TO THE IRVINGTON BAYOU LA BATRE HIGHWAY  
Old Target start date : January 29, 2021  
New Target start date : February 26, 2021

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## South Alabama RPO Updates

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### **USDA Unveils Tool to Help Rural Communities Address the COVID-19 Pandemic**

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue unveiled a one-stop-shop of federal programs that can be used by rural communities, organizations and individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. [The COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#) is a first-of-its-kind resource for rural leaders looking for federal funding and partnership opportunities to help address this pandemic. Secretary Perdue announced, "This resource guide will help our rural leaders, whether they are in agriculture, education, health care or any other leadership capacity, understand what federal assistance is available for their communities during this unprecedented time."

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### **HSCTP Public Meeting Postponed**

In consideration of health concerns of participants regarding COVID-19, the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission postponed the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at the GM&O Building. The meeting will be rescheduled at a later date. We welcome your comments and questions regarding the plan. If you wish, you may contact us via email at [transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org) or by phone at (251) 433 6541.

As part of this effort we are surveying transit providers, riders, and other stakeholders in our region. Please take a moment to answer the following questions and email them back to us.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Name of your Organization:

Does your organization operate a transit vehicle? If so,

How many vehicles?  
How many seats per vehicle?  
What is/are the funding sources for your vehicle(s)?  
What is your service area?  
Do you use or need transit services to get around? If so, which one(s)?  
What unmet needs are there in your area?  
Things like later hours, rural areas where transit service is needed but isn't available, etc.?  
Do you have any suggestions as to how these needs could be met?  
Will you be applying for 5310 funding? If so, what will you be applying for?

## Projects in Region Let June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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### MOBILE COUNTY

None at this time

### BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

[What's Under Construction?](#) [Project Status](#)

## Legislative Updates

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*The Senate is in session. The House is out until further notice due to coronavirus concerns.*

A hearing by the Senate's Committee on Environment and Public Works delved into how transportation infrastructure funding not only can help the United States recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but provide more "social equity" by helping uplift communities through expanded access to better schools and better paying jobs.

[Above photo by the Washington State Department of Transportation.]

"As Congress considers what can be done to help the economy recover, funding our nation's infrastructure should be at the top of the list," emphasized Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., the committee's chairman, in his opening remarks.



Sen. John Barrasso

"Investments in highways and bridges create jobs, reduce costs of goods and services, and grows the economy [and] the Senate has bipartisan legislation ready to go," he said. "[Our] historic highway bill [passed in July 2019] authorizes \$287 billion over five years from the Highway Trust Fund. It will provide record levels of investment to fix our roads and bridges, create jobs, boost our economy, and give states increased funding [with] the certainty they need for planning projects."



Sen. Tom Carper

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., the ranking member on the committee, noted in his opening comments that "infrastructure can be a part – a big part – of a greater multifaceted solution that brings equity and justice to all communities. Our roads, highway, bridges, railroads, and transit systems are not only important in moving all kinds of cargo across America as well as giving the American people the freedom to go where they want when they want but it also when done right helps uplift communities by expanding access to better schools and better paying jobs."

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials echoed that point of view in written testimony submitted to the committee continue [HERE](#)

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### House T&I Releases Five-Year \$494B Surface Transportation Bill

[editor@aaashto.org](mailto:editor@aaashto.org) June 3, 2020 0 COMMENTS

The five-year, \$494 billion surface transportation bill released by the Democratic majority within the House of Representatives' Transportation and Infrastructure committee on June 3 aims to direct monies from the Highway Trust Fund to a spate of new formula and discretionary grant programs.

Dubbed the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation or INVEST in America Act, out of the proposed \$494 billion in total funding from FY 2021 to FY 2025 for highway, highway safety, transit, and passenger rail programs the bill would provide \$411 billion in contract authority out of the HTF.



Photo by the Missouri DOT

Combined with general fund authorizations, the modal breakdown is as follows:

\$319 billion for the Federal-aid highway program under the Federal Highway Administration.

\$105 billion for transit programs under the Federal Transit Administration.

\$4.6 billion for highway safety programs under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

\$5.3 billion for motor carrier safety programs under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

\$60 billion for passenger rail programs under the Federal Railroad Administration plus Amtrak.

For the first year of the proposed bill, \$83.1 billion is provided essentially as an extension of the FAST [Fixing America's Surface Transportation] Act to ensure that states, cities, tribes, territories, and transit agencies can continue to administer programs, advance projects, and preserve jobs in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Photo by WV DOT

That dovetails with request to Congress made by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials on March 18 for a \$50 billion "backstop" to help state departments of transportation cope with severe near- and long-term revenue losses due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The committee noted that this "year one" funding allows highway, transit, and safety funds to be made available at 100 percent federal share, with about a quarter of total funding available for additional eligibilities, including salaries and operating expenses. Continue [HERE](#)

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## With no GOP input, stakeholders fear House highway bill may stall

Current highway authorization law expires Sept. 30 and agencies counting on the reauthorization worry there won't be time to get Republicans on board

A five-year, \$494 billion surface transportation bill crafted by House Democrats received a lukewarm reception from stakeholders who warned that it lacked the bipartisan backing needed to get it passed by the time the current highway authorization expires.

The bill, to be formally be introduced Thursday during the House's pro forma session, is a behemoth: It would almost double the \$287 billion highway bill (S 2302) approved unanimously by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in July.

It includes ambitious greenhouse gas reduction provisions, would invest money in charging stations for alternative fuel vehicles, and would effectively punish states that do not make progress reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

It was crafted with minimal input from the GOP, as reflected in the comments of ranking Republican Sam Graves R-Mo., and two subcommittee ranking Republicans shortly after the text of the bill was released.

The trio criticized the bill as lacking flexibility for states and giving "outsized" funding to urban areas at the expense of rural communities.

"We were not given the opportunity to address any of our priorities in this legislation," wrote Graves in a joint statement with Subcommittee on Highways and Transit ranking member Rodney Davis, R-Ill, and and Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials ranking member Rick Crawford, R-Ark.

Their concern was shared by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials who said while they appreciated the \$83.1 billion included in the bill aimed at helping them address budget shortfalls caused by the coronavirus, "it is disappointing that this legislation was not developed in a bipartisan manner."

"Transportation has traditionally been a bipartisan issue and both sides of the aisle will have to work together to get a surface transportation bill over the finish line," they said, noting the current law expires on Sept. 30.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President and Chief Policy Officer Neil Bradley echoed those concerns.

"With historic unemployment, tremendous unmet infrastructure needs, and less than four months before the expiration of surface transportation programs, this is no time for another partisan approach to infrastructure," Bradley said. [HERE](#)

## Funding Opportunities

### Fiscal Year 2021 Section 5310 Capital Award

**Application(statewide) is now open** (deadline is 5:00PM, July 17<sup>th</sup> at SARPC office)

[HERE](#) is the application and guidelines for ALDOT's FTA 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities funding.



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
1409 Coliseum Boulevard Montgomery, Alabama 36110  
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION BUREAU



Key Ivey  
Governor

John R. Cooper  
Transportation Director

May 15, 2020

#### MEMORANDUM

TO: Section 5310 – Statewide Applicants  
FROM: D. E. Phillips, Jr., P. E. *Kasey Rogers For D.E.P.*  
State Local Transportation Engineer  
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2021 Section 5310 Capital Award Application (Statewide)

The annual statewide award application for federal capital assistance provided through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program is open for FY-2021. All projects funded through Section 5310 must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation planning process. ALDOT has designated the 12 Regional Planning Councils to coordinate transportation services in their regions.

Please note that the one year sit out rule will be waived for FY-2021. Any eligible applicant can apply for an ALDOT Section 5310 capital award.

Please see the application and related documents on the Alabama Department of Transportation website at <https://www.dot.state.al.us/tweb/transit/index.html> under the Section 5310 tab. Please read the application in its entirety as there are time-sensitive requirements that need immediate attention.

Completed award applications must be submitted before 5:00 p.m. on July 17, 2020, to the appropriate Regional Planning Council (contact information is found in Appendix C) in the geographic area of the state where Section 5310 transportation services are proposed.

Technical assistance is available on an as needed basis. If you have any questions or need technical assistance with the application development process, please contact Kasey Rogers at (334) 242-6764 or email at [rogersk@dot.state.al.us](mailto:rogersk@dot.state.al.us).

DEP:KR/cr

## New CDBG GRANT Program

### To Address COVID-19 Impacts (currently no deadline)

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is in the process of developing a special Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant program to address COVID-19 impacts.

DETAILS: Currently, no application deadline, grant ceilings or other program details have been finalized.

MORE DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED AT A LATER DATE; however, please download the guide below to get started and identify potential partners as needed.

[CLICK HERE](#) to download the Quick Guide to CDBG Eligible Activities to Support Infectious Disease Response that will assist applicants to begin thinking about possible project needs.

Please note that applications to the CDBG program must be in the name of a local government as the applicant/grantee.

Partnerships and agreements with other agencies/entities, etc. can be developed as necessary. CDBG projects must also benefit primarily low and moderate-income people and this requirement will likely remain for the new funds.

#### RESOURCES/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Department has technical assistance providers that may be available to assist grantees in their implementation of CDBG Funds for activities to prevent or respond to the spread of infectious disease.

Please contact your local CPD Field Office Director to request technical assistance from HUD staff or a TA provider.

Submit your questions to:

## EDA CARES ACT RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

### OVERVIEW

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, [signed into law](#) by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020, provides the Economic Development Administration (EDA) with \$1.5 billion for economic development assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance, which is being administered under the authority of the bureau’s flexible [Economic Adjustment Assistance](#) (EAA) (PDF) program, provides a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

On May 7, 2020, Secretary Wilbur Ross made EDA’s CARES Act Recovery Assistance funding available with the announcement that EDA had published an Addendum to its FY 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity. EDA intends to deploy its CARES Act funding as quickly, effectively, and efficiently as possible, and in a manner that meets communities needs.

### RESOURCES

- [EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Scope of Work for EDA Economic Development Districts and EDA Indian Tribe Planning Grant Recipients\\*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: Economic Development Districts and Indian Tribes\\*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: Revolving Loan Fund Awards\\*](#)
- [EDA’s CARES Act Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund Award Flexibilities Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Scope of Work for University Center Grantees\\*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: University Centers\\*](#)
- [EDA regional office contacts](#)
- [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov)
- [coronavirus.gov/smallbusiness/](https://www.coronavirus.gov/smallbusiness/)
- [CDC.gov/COVID19/](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19/)
- [USA.gov/coronavirus/](https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus/)

\* As stated in the CARES Act Recovery Assistance Addendum to the PWEAA NOFO, EDA may invite existing grantees, such as Economic Development Districts and Tribes currently in receipt of Partnership Planning awards, operators of existing EDA funded Revolving Loan Funds, and EDA-funded University Centers, to apply for supplemental awards. These standard Scopes of Work and Specific Award Conditions are for use with these supplemental awards only. Existing grantees who are eligible to apply for these awards will be contacted individually for instructions on how to apply.

Applications are now being accepted for EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance. Please see the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) and apply today! For up-to-date info on COVID-19, visit [www.coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

## The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is soliciting applications for the Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program (TAP) for FY 2021.

### New Deadline July 1, 2020

The guidelines and the application can both be found on the ALDOT website, on the Local Transportation Bureau page under the Operations Section.

<https://www.dot.state.al.us/ltweb/operations/index.html>

The deadline for submission of FY 2021 TAP applications including support documentation has been extended until Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

## Federal Lands Access Program

Deadline June 16, 2020

Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (EFLHD) will be conducting another Call for Projects for the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) in Alabama for Federal Fiscal Years (FY) 2020 through FY 2022. All final project approvals will be contingent upon the availability of funds

in the year for which they are being requested. **Funding beyond 2020 is dependent on reauthorization of the Access Program by Congress.**

**The Call for Projects application period opens March 16, 2020 and runs through June 16, 2020.**

**An estimated total of \$1.5M will be available for programming in your State.**

EFLHD has found that a higher level of outreach at local levels has increased both the number and the quality of competitive applications submitted and ultimately recommended for project programming and implementation. We ask that you provide the widest circulation possible of this announcement to provide a robust pool of applications. **Please feel free to use any of the materials included in with this message to assist in your outreach efforts.** The Federal Lands Access Program website is: <https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

**Federal Land Management Agencies:** We appreciate your efforts in the provision of an expanded outreach to your units and gateway communities regarding this program opportunity.

**FHWA Federal Aid Division Office:** We appreciate your efforts in the provision of an expanded outreach regarding this program opportunity to the MPOs and RPOs in your state via email or on your website.

**State DOTs:** We appreciate your efforts in the provision of an expanded outreach regarding this program opportunity to your District staff and Local Agency Program Coordinators (if applicable), Public Information Officers, via email and/or on your websites.

**Local Agency Representatives:** We appreciate your efforts in the provision of an expanded outreach regarding this program opportunity to other County, MPO and Local agencies in your state via email and/or on your local websites.

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## Opportunity Zones

EDA's Opportunity Zone Web Page

EDA now has an [EDA Opportunity Zone Web page](#) for economic development stakeholders and others to use as a resource to further help foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas across the United States.

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## [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](#)

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To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

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## Just For Fun (THIS IS SATIRE, AND JUST FOR FUN)

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It is June already, the sixth month of the year and time is flying when we social distance. But June also means it is **National Accordion Awareness Month** [HERE](#). That's right, the National Accordion Awareness Month has been educating the public about the musical stamina of this outstanding instrument since 1989. So if you are home social distancing, you are encouraged to take accordion lessons through zoom; your family members will love it! Honda has a proto type to celebrate the month called the Honda ACCORDion.



## In the News

### U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao Announces \$2.2 Million For Alabama Department of Transportation COVID-19 Response

By opelikaobserver - June 3, 2020



The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced a \$2.2 million grant award to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020.

ALDOT will use the grant funds for planning and operating assistance for its buses and support equipment and facilities needed during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

See FTA's apportionment tables for the totals apportioned to each area at [transit.dot.gov/cares-act-apportionments](https://transit.dot.gov/cares-act-apportionments). (This funding is based on the agency's current request and may not represent the full amount the agency will receive.)

"This historic \$25 billion in grant funding will ensure our nation's public transportation systems can continue to provide services to the millions of Americans who continue to depend on them," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

"We know many of our nation's public transportation systems are facing extraordinary challenges and these funds will go a long way to assisting our transit industry partners in battling COVID-19," said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams. "These federal funds will support operating assistance to transit agencies of all sizes providing essential travel and supporting transit workers across the country who are unable to work because of the public health emergency."

In addition to the CARES Act funding, FTA has issued a Safety Advisory with recommended actions for transit agencies to reduce the risk of Coronavirus (COVID-19) among transit employees and passengers. Transit agencies should follow the current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommendations for the spread of COVID-19, which include face coverings, social distancing, frequent hand washing, facility and vehicle cleaning and other measures to the maximum extent practicable

### COVID-19's Impact on Travel, Safety Varies by Region, Traffic Experts Say

California traffic pandemic

Light traffic moves along California 110 toward downtown Los Angeles on March 31. (Marcio Jose Sanchez/AP)

[Ensure you have all the info you need in these unprecedented times. Subscribe now.]

Statewide stay-at-home orders prompted by the coronavirus pandemic have resulted in various trends related to traffic volume and safety, according to transportation experts.

The stay-at-home orders generally have caused a drop in traffic volumes, as fewer people are commuting for work and engaging in personal travel. Fraser Shilling, co-director of the Road Ecology Center at the University of California-Davis, said traffic volumes declined about 80% from early March to mid-April across certain California counties before starting to inch back to normal levels.

Shilling participated in a webinar held by the Transportation Research Board on June 2.

However, Shilling said not all counties have responded the same. Miles traveled per day started to drop sharply in San Francisco County prior to March 16, which is when a Bay Area stay-at-home order was announced, and have remained low. Siskiyou and Kern counties, on the other hand, experienced declines in miles traveled that soon were followed by gradual increases.

In Virginia, regional differences in traffic declines also were visible. Sanhita Lahiri, data and system analysis manager for the Virginia Department of Transportation, said traffic volumes came down quickly in Northern Virginia, which often is influenced by the practices of federal government offices in nearby Washington. In Lynchburg, on the other hand, volumes didn't decline as much and started increasing sooner.



Lahiri

Traffic volumes began to decline in Virginia on March 12, when Gov. Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency. Lahiri noted levels for truck volumes didn't drop as sharply as levels for all other vehicles.

"After [the emergency declaration], the decline kept on happening until it reached a trough around mid-April and then gently started ticking up," Lahiri said. "The trucks kept continuing because of all the deliveries happening around the state. Truck traffic took some time to go down, and then it didn't go as much down as the rest of the vehicles. It's creeping back up."

Shilling identified a few positive outcomes of the stay-at-home orders, such as reduced traffic and crashes and improved air quality. He said California experienced a decline in traffic crashes and fatal injuries. Preliminary data indicates Sacramento regional hospitals reported a 38% reduction in injuries that occurred in vehicles and a 46% reduction in injuries to pedestrians and cyclists between early March and mid-April.



Daniel Carter

Crashes also dropped in North Carolina, according to Daniel Carter, traffic safety project engineer for the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Preliminary data indicates North Carolina experienced a steep reduction in multivehicle crashes, which dropped to 70% below normal levels in late March and early April. Single-vehicle crashes dropped to about 30% below normal levels in this same period.

The webinar participants anticipate that the decline in travel will have a negative effect on state transportation revenue. Shilling said, while the travel reduction saved drivers across the country \$8.6 billion per week in fuel purchases, it has cost states \$1.2 billion per week in fuel tax revenue.

"For North Carolina, that has been a significant impact for NCDOT across the board," Carter said. "That has been a very serious hit to our revenue. The drop-off in miles traveled and the drop-off in the fuel tax revenue is hitting us pretty hard."

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## ALDOT awards latest round of local road, bridge grants

Governor Kay Ivey and the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) on Thursday announced that \$1.7 million in funding is being awarded to cities and counties for various local road and bridge projects.

The funding is part of ALDOT's Annual Grant Program, which was created under the Rebuild Alabama Act [enacted](#) in spring of 2019.

The annual program by law sets aside \$10 million off the top of the state's share of Rebuild Alabama gas tax revenues for local road and bridge projects. This accounts for a small portion of the overall tax revenues that are put towards infrastructure improvements across the state.

A total of \$7 million was [already awarded](#) earlier this year, with approximately \$1.3 million to be awarded later this fiscal year.

“Alabamians across the state are continually seeing the progress made on our roads and bridges. These projects now nearing a total of \$9 million are going to go a long way in improving our state and the daily lives of every Alabamian,” Ivey said in a statement.

“Having a modern and safe infrastructure system will help Alabama continue to advance, and I remain committed to ensuring that this is a reality for us,” she concluded.

This latest award cycle sees six projects added to the 31 projects announced earlier this year. It is anticipated that all projects will be under contract by the end of the calendar year, after bids are taken.

You can view a list of the six new projects awarded grants [here](#).

In addition to the Annual Grant Program, local governments can also apply for infrastructure funding under the [ATRIP-II program](#), also created by the Rebuild Alabama Act.

*Sean Ross is the editor of Yellowhammer News. You can follow him on Twitter [@sean\\_yhn](#)*

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the Unified Development Code (UDC) Comment Period Open

In these challenging times, communication is more important than ever. As part of our commitment to transparency and community outreach, we have organized a regular e-newsletter to keep you informed about important city planning initiatives and opportunities to provide input.

As you may know, in March, draft version 3 of the Unified Development Code (UDC) was made available for review and comment on [www.mapformobile.org](http://www.mapformobile.org). While comments can be submitted now, the official comment period will run from May 28 to June 28. We will be holding a set of virtual meetings in addition to various online resources to answer your questions about this version.

Thank you for your continued support of our implementation of the Map for Mobile initiative!

### **UDC version 3**

#### **Formal Comment Period**

#### **May 28 - June 28**

Due to COVID-19, the City has organized a series of virtual meetings and online tools to learn about the code and provide feedback.

June 3 • 3:30pm

Virtual Community Meeting Register for the video conference or view the livestream.

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## **Diverging diamond interchange coming soon, see how to navigate it**

by James Gordon

Friday, May 29th 2020

BALDWIN COUNTY, Ala. (WPML) — Alabama's very first diverging diamond interchange is quickly taking shape in Baldwin County. Drivers will soon have to navigate an intersection like no other.

Post cards explaining the change have been sent out to homeowners in the area, and people have logged on to ALDOT's Facebook page. It has 18,000 hits so far.

Ready or not, it's a big change that is coming by the end of June.

[To learn how to drive through the interchange, click here.](#)

With dryer weather, work on the diverging diamond is now nonstop. You will see a push to do asphalt work in preparation for shifting lanes.

Motorists will soon be driving on opposite sides. That's right, the opposite side of what drivers are used to driving on.

"Traffic will cross to the other side of the road at signals. So there are signals there to guide people through that interchange," said Katelyn Turner with ALDOT.

The diverging diamond at I-10 moves traffic more quickly by reducing the number of places where traffic must stop and eliminating turn lanes.

Jan Griffin says she's seen the animation, and she believes there will be a "learning curve."

"I'm going to be very careful whenever I first do that. I'll go at 10 a.m. when all the 8 a.m. people and the noon people are not out. That's what I'm going to do," said Griffin.

"The number of traffic light cycles will be cut in half. That should tell you something there," said Kevin Spriggs, a business owner in the area.

Residents and business leaders say they are satisfied with drainage improvements and new turn lanes off of U.S. 90.

"Highway 90 was really tightly constrained here at the intersection, and now we're getting a right turn lane and an additional lane on the other side of the road. It should make things work a lot smoother," said Spriggs.

Most drivers we talked to say they just want ALDOT to get the project done. The project is right on schedule with a completion date for late Summer.

## Transportation Research

### FHWA Releases Integrated Corridor Management Video

[editor@aaashto.org](mailto:editor@aaashto.org) May 22, 2020



The Federal Highway Administration released a video on May 7 touting the benefits of “Integrated Corridor Management,” which is a surface transportation strategy that targets major highway congestion events, such as truck overturns, chemical spills and multi-vehicle crashes.

The vision of Integrated Corridor Management or ICM is to improve the efficient movement of people and goods through institutional collaboration and aggressive, proactive integration of existing infrastructure along major transportation corridors. Through an ICM approach, transportation professionals manage the corridor as a multimodal system and make operational decisions for the benefit of the corridor as a whole.

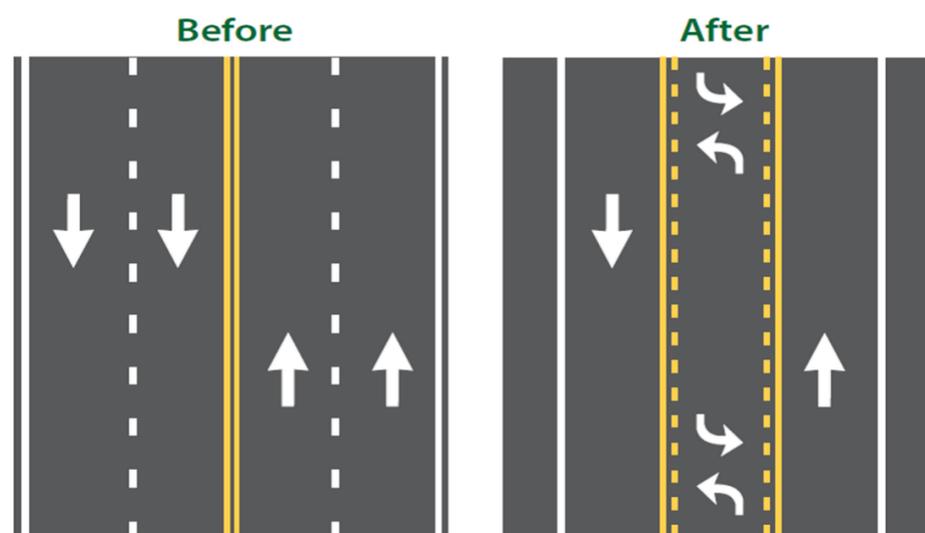
When it comes to roadway congestion, the FHWA noted that travelers respond in a variety of ways: finding an alternate route, selecting a different roadway (freeway versus surface street), adjusting their trip to another time of day, or remaining on their current route and enduring the significant delays.

Such disruptions range in scale, frequency, predictability, duration, and have the potential to impact a number of facilities or modes, the agency noted.

To reduce the potential of increased traffic congestion on a larger segment of the transportation network due to such decisions, the FHWA said ICM strategies focus on the use of managed lane strategies, alternate routing of traffic, and managing and controlling traffic within freeway corridors.

They help achieve significantly greater levels of utilization of existing roadway capacity, while improving travel safety and reliability, the agency added.

## ONLINE WORKSHOP: Road Diet (Lane Reconfiguration)



Sometimes referred to as a “Road Diet”, the reconfiguration of travel lanes on an existing roadway can allow transportation agencies to reallocate the existing roadway pavement width to better utilize the road space for new purposes such as to create turn lanes, or on-street parking, or to improve service for other travel modes such as providing bicycle lanes, transit lanes, or creating wider sidewalks. Lane reconfigurations may come in many different forms to serve the various goals and objectives that a community may have for improving the safety, function or purpose of a street. This workshop will introduce participants to the important considerations for potentially applying lane reconfigurations to make better use of the roadway cross sectional area by implementing

features that improve safety, create spaces that are more livable, contribute to economic development and support a community-focused “Complete Streets” context. When implemented in conjunction with street resurfacing projects, lane reconfigurations can be achieved at low cost. This workshop will show examples of where lane reconfigurations have been successfully applied around the country and provide guidance about implementation including factors for selecting candidate locations and public outreach and awareness.

This technical workshop, **led by Mark Doctor of the Federal Highway Administration**, is aimed at professional staff of local and state transportation agencies that implement road improvements as well as consulting engineers. The workshop may also be of interest to policy leaders, community advocates and other stakeholders involved in influencing the planning and decisions for street improvements.

**This is a two-part online workshop that will be held Tuesday, June 16 and Wednesday, June 17 from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM CST, respectively.**

[ONLINE WORKSHOP: Road Diet \(Lane Reconfiguration\) brochure](#)

## Study Finds COVID-19 Wipes Out Traffic Congestion in U.S. Cities

[SANDY SMITH](#) MARCH 25, 2020

It turns out that the travel restrictions ordered by mayors and governors around the country to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus have sped up travel and reduced traffic congestion dramatically for those who must remain on the roads. And, according to [a report](#) on the study in Smart Cities Dive, the restrictions have also led some cities to implement measures advocates for reduced auto use have long advocated.

How dramatic is the congestion reduction? According to the study conducted by mapping software and transportation analytics company INRIX, enough to speed up travel into the core of Chicago by 77 percent and Los Angeles by 53 percent. The study, which examined average travel speeds in 25 of the country’s most populous cities during the week of March 11-18, found increases in travel speed ranging from that 77 percent figure in Chicago to a mere 16 percent in Atlanta.

“Dramatic changes in travel speed continue to spread across the country,” Trevor Reed, INRIX transportation analyst, said in a emailed statement on March 19. “If current trends persist, it is probable major congestion will cease to exist in the country’s most congested cities within the week.”

In addition, the article notes, some cities have turned parking spaces into loading zones for curbside restaurant pick-ups, and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has called on Mayor Bill de Blasio to ban auto travel in the city in order to allow pedestrians to walk while maintaining a safe distance from one another.

It goes without saying that a reduction in traffic is the smallest of silver linings in what is now a global crisis. The CDC [reports](#) that there are more than 44,000 confirmed cases of the virus in the United States, and 544 people have died.

### Transit Agency Heads Send Bigger Relief Bill to Congress

This column [reported last week](#) that the American Public Transportation Association had asked Congress to include \$12.75 billion in relief for mass transit agencies dealing with a dramatic drop in ridership thanks to the coronavirus pandemic.

This week, a letter signed by the heads of 10 of the country’s largest transit systems, including the largest one, says to Congress that that figure is too small by half.

Metro Magazine [reports](#) that the letter, sent March 23 to the leaders in both houses of Congress, seeks at least \$25 billion in assistance for the country’s mass transit systems.

“Federal aid, utilizing federal formulas, must be directed to areas of the country that have had significant financial impacts and where essential workers rely most heavily on public transit,” the letter states. “While emergency personnel need our infrastructure to do their jobs, overall ridership on our systems has plummeted every day – dropping as much as 90 percent in some cases. Combined with falling tax revenues and dramatically increased cleaning costs, this collapse of revenue has resulted in immediate and enormous funding gaps.”

Pointing out that their agencies cannot cut service enough to close the budget holes without damaging their ability to provide that essential service, the letter complains that assistance promised to date is merely a stop-gap measure and demands “comprehensive, permanent solutions that put public transportation first.”

The letter was signed by the heads of the following 10 agencies:

- Metropolitan Transportation Authority of the State of New York, which had asked for \$4 billion in aid in a separate letter last week
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- New Jersey Transit Corporation
- Chicago Transit Authority
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority
- Bay Area Rapid Transit District (San Francisco/Oakland)
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
- Dallas Area Rapid Transit
- Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
- King County Metro (Seattle)

### Breakthrough in Sydney: Harbor Subway Tunnel Is Complete

In Australia, where construction work has not been stopped to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, the International Railway Journal reports that the Sydney Metro City and Southwest construction project has reached a major milestone.

On March 18, Kathleen, the boring machine digging the tunnels that will carry the Sydney Metro Northwest across Sydney Harbor and into the city center, broke through the sandstone at the north end of the second tube. With that, all tunneling work on Australia’s first rapid transit subway through a city center was completed.

Kathleen's northbound trip took one month less to complete than the southbound one thanks to lessons the contractor learned on that first pass. Those included modifying the cutter head and revising processes to better handle the clay that lay beneath the harbor bottom.

In all, the five tunnel boring machines that worked on this project dug 31 km (19.3 miles) of tunnel in 17 months. The tunnels will connect the already-in-service Sydney Metro Northwest line with an existing regional rail line heading southwest from central Sydney. This 13-km (8.1-mile), 11-station line will be reconfigured to handle the metro trains. The new tunnels will add a 15-km (9.3-mile), seven-station central section to the line.

The entire line is scheduled to open in 2024. A second metro line headed west from the city center to Parramatta is in the planning stage.

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## Sustainable Highway Construction Guidebook

Sustainability is often an element that informs decisions made during the planning, programming, and design phases of highway construction projects. However, the construction phase of a highway project is also an opportunity to advance sustainability.

The TRB National Cooperative Highway Research Program's *NCHRP Research Report 916: Sustainable Highway Construction Guidebook* provides clear and practical information on what constitutes sustainability in the context of highway construction and how to evaluate any proposed construction practice for its sustainability potential.

The guidebook supports implementation by describing ways to explicitly advance sustainability in procurement and contracting and how to develop a sustainability management plan for the construction phase.

An overview of NCHRP Research Report 916 is provided in this [PowerPoint presentation](#). A separate publication, [NCHRP Web-Only Document 262: Sustainable Highway Construction](#), describes the research process and outcomes used to develop NCHRP Research Report 916.

A summary of NCHRP Web-Only Document 262 is provided in this [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Project: [Project Information](#)

DOI: [10.17226/25698](#)

Project Number: 10-91A

E-Newsletter Type: [Recently Released TRB Publications](#)

TRB Publication Type: [NCHRP Report](#)

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## The Department of Transportation has identified transportation assets that fall within Opportunity Zones with the goal of driving investment of all types to these important areas.

Despite the growing national economy, economically distressed communities are located in every corner of the United States and its territories. These communities have high levels of poverty, failing schools, job scarcity, and a lack of investment. A new tax incentive—Opportunity Zones—was created to spur economic development and job creation by encouraging long-term investment in low-income communities nationwide.

Read about our partner's roles in Opportunity Zones:

- [Housing and Urban Development: Implementation Plan for The White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council](#)
- [The IRS: Tax reform creates opportunity zone tax incentive](#)
- [Treasury Department Community Development Financial Institutions Fund](#)

The Opportunity Zone designation encourages investment in communities by granting investors extensive Federal tax advantages for using their capital gains to finance new projects and enterprises. There are more than [8,700 designated Qualified Opportunity Zones located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and five United States territories](#). Of the Qualified Opportunity Zones 40 percent are in rural census tracts, 38 percent are in urban tracts, and 22 percent are in suburban tracts.

South Alabama Opportunity Zones



<https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/subdoc/906/build-fact-sheet2019.pdf>

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## 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.

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