



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

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ALDOT has postponed their TAP application deadline until July 1st. The Mobile MPO deadline is still May 15th (See Funding Opportunities).

The Mobile MPO held a virtual meeting last week and the 2045 Long Range Plan has been adopted (See MPO Updates). FTA has relaxed some of its regulation for Transit Safety Plans, which Alliance Transportation is doing for the State of Alabama [HERE](#). State DOTs Feeling The Budgetary Impact Of COVID-19 and no Infrastructure in new Senate bill despite Trump touting Infrastructure (See *Legislative Updates*). One good thing is that COVID 19 is reducing crashes, but it is also reducing highway funding (See *In The News*). This week's *Just For Fun* is..... symbolic.

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 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 23rd, 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 25th 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 Goodwn, 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.

[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](#).

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project:

<http://mobileriverbridge.com/>

About the project:

The Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project would reduce congestion on I-10 in South Alabama through the addition of additional capacity: a new six-lane bridge over the Mobile River, full replacement of the existing Bayway with an eight-lane structure, and redevelopment of seven interchanges. The project would run from Virginia Street in Mobile to the US 90/98 interchange in Baldwin County. Information in the project is available at www.MobileRiverBridge.com. On August 28, 2019 the Alabama Department of Transportation ceased project development efforts on the proposed Mobile River Bridge & Bayway.

Mobile MPO Perspective

Although the I-10 Mobile River Bridge is commonly mentioned in the LRTP comments, currently the I-10 Mobile River Bridge is in the LRTP as a Visionary Project. This means it is NOT in the fiscally constrained LRTP, it is on a wish list of sorts as there is not available funding identified. The Bridge is also not in the current Transportation Improvement Program ([TIP](#)); it has to be in the LRTP in order to be on the TIP.

When the State of Alabama, the Gulf Coast citizens, and the local elected officials agree on how the project can be funded, ALDOT will have a better idea on what type of project can be afforded. Once this happens, and I am confident it will, the Mobile MPO can amend the *Envision 2045 LRTP*, and the TIP to include the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. The Mobile MPO would like to know the facts, like how much funding is available, and where does it come from, before adopting a resolution supporting a plan.

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

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

Project : 100069091 (PE)
Federal aid number : IM I010
County : MOBILE
Project Description : RESURFACING ON I-10 FROM 1.36 MILES EAST OF SR-193 TO THE WALLACE TUNNEL
Old Target start date : July 01, 2021
New Target start date : May 01, 2020

South Alabama RPO Updates

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."

HSCTP Public Meeting Postponed

In consideration of health concerns of participants regarding COVID-19, the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission will postpone the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday, March 18th 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 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 April 24th, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY

None at this time

BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- For constructing the Bridge Repairs and Overlay (Grading, Drainage, and Pavement) on SR-41 over the Conecuh River to include the Demolition of Existing Bridges on SR-41 in Riverview. Length 0.826 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$4,240,029 to \$5,182,258 .

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

Legislative Updates

Congress is in session with strict stipulations due to COVID-19 precautions

Trump Shines Spotlight on Infrastructure Amid Uncertain Legislative Agenda

President Donald Trump by Sarah Silbiger/Bloomberg News

President Donald Trump continues to press lawmakers to take up an infrastructure funding package as part of ongoing COVID-19 relief efforts, repeating his desire to see action on a measure as April drew to a close and Senators readied a plan to return in early May to Capitol Hill.

"We want to do infrastructure, but a lot of people — a lot of the Republicans — would like to keep that as a separate bill," Trump told reporters April 28, adding, "We have to rebuild our country."

The president, who has maintained that launching a nationwide campaign focused on rebuilding the transportation networks would revamp the economy, in late March proposed a \$2 trillion infrastructure package that would be backed by low-interest borrowing.

Compare each of the presidential candidates' plans for addressing America's infrastructure needs. See our Candidate Infrastructure Tracker.

So far during the pandemic, the president has signed into law emergency bills totaling nearly \$3 trillion.

The rapid economic descent brought on by the pandemic has raised concerns among elected officials and industries eagerly pushing for a return to normalcy. Although the response from Republicans on an infrastructure measure has been tepid, senior Democrats have reacted with a strong show of support.

The Republican-led Senate as of press time was planning to return to Washington on May 4. House Democrats charged with managing their chamber's schedule had not set a date for their return.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), chairman of the transportation panel, touted the potential economic benefits that a large infrastructure funding bill could bring. His colleagues unveiled a five-year, \$760 billion infrastructure plan at the start of the year. The House transportation committee also is crafting surface transportation legislation to update a highway law that expires this fall.

"The best way to restart our economy and put workers first is with a massive investment in the kind of infrastructure that will help future generations succeed — from better bridges and roads, to robust transit and passenger rail service, to fully functioning ports and harbors, to modernized waste and drinking water systems, and widely available broadband internet," DeFazio said a day after the president's remarks.

Notwithstanding the messaging from the House and down Pennsylvania Avenue, debating a massive infrastructure plan is not on the Senate's radar. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has encouraged senators to direct their energy on the ongoing economic response to the pandemic and avoid partisan distractions.

"We have an equal interest in doing an infrastructure bill. We don't have an equal interest in borrowing money for future generations to pay for it," McConnell said April 28. "I agree with the president. Infrastructure is important. I just don't believe that we should be borrowing, adding to the national debt. We've added \$2.8 trillion to the national debt in the last month."

Last year, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Trump sought to collaborate on a long-term infrastructure package before negotiations ended prior to the president's impeachment. Around the same time, a Senate committee approved a five-year highway bill. That bill's floor consideration has not been scheduled. Continue [HERE](#)

McConnell: Infrastructure will not be in next coronavirus relief bill

BY JORDAIN CARNEY - 04/28/20 05:28 PM EDT



Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said on Tuesday that infrastructure will not be part of Congress's next coronavirus relief package, even as President Trump has pushed for it to be included.

McConnell, speaking to Fox News, said that while he was interested in passing an infrastructure bill, it was "unrelated" to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, which Congress is expected to address with another bill as soon as next month.

"We have an equal interest in doing an infrastructure bill. We don't have an equal interest in borrowing money from future generations to pay for it. In other words, it's unrelated to the coronavirus pandemic," McConnell said.

Pressed on whether he was saying he did not want the next coronavirus bill to include infrastructure, McConnell added, "Yeah, I'll be clear. Infrastructure is unrelated to the coronavirus pandemic that we're all experiencing and trying to figure out how to go forward."

"We need to make sure that whatever additional legislation we do is directly related to this pandemic," he said.

Instead, McConnell said the Senate will pass a "more modest" infrastructure bill "in the near future." That package is expected to build off a highway bill that passed the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last year.

Trump and the White House have indicated they want to include infrastructure as part of the government's response to the coronavirus pandemic. The administration and some lawmakers in Congress have hoped for years to strike a deal on a larger infrastructure package but struggled to cut an agreement.

He tweeted last month that there used to be a "big" and "bold" package included in the so-called phase four coronavirus legislation.

"It should be VERY BIG & BOLD, Two Trillion Dollars, and be focused solely on jobs and rebuilding the once great infrastructure of our Country! Phase 4," the president tweeted at the time.

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) had also embraced infrastructure spending as part of the response to the coronavirus.

But Trump appeared to tip his hand to skepticism among some Republicans earlier Tuesday when he noted that some GOP senators want to keep it separate from the ongoing response to the coronavirus.

"I think Mitch is looking at it, as I do, to an extent, as the infrastructure — he likes infrastructure. We all do," Trump told reporters.

"We want to do infrastructure, but a lot of people, a lot of the Republicans, would like to keep that as a separate bill, so we'll see how that works out," he added.

One of the main hang-ups to getting a deal on infrastructure is how to pay for it. McConnell has warned repeatedly that he is not supportive of borrowing money to help for it.

"It would take a lot of convincing to convince me that we should do transportation in a way that's not credibly paid," he told The Washington Post recently.

State DOTs Feeling The Budgetary Impact Of COVID-19

editor@ashto.org April 24, 2020 [0 COMMENTS](#)



[Above photo by the NCDOT.]

Steep reductions in motor vehicle travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic are adversely affecting state department of transportation budgets – to the point where some agencies are laying off workers and shelving planned transportation projects.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation noted in an [April 21 statement](#) that as it is fully funded through the motor fuels tax, highway use tax and Department of Motor Vehicle fees, the traffic volume falloff is projected to cause at least a \$300 million budget shortfall for agency in its current fiscal year, which ends June 30.



Photo by NCDOT

As a result, the NCDOT is laying off temporary and embedded consultants, suspending or decreasing many programs and services, instituting a hiring freeze – except for positions that impact public safety – and delaying work on all but about 50 major transportation projects scheduled over the course of the next 12 months.

The agency added that it “is in the process” of developing plans for potential furloughs as well as a reduction in force or RIF initiative, though it stressed those plans are not yet complete and “no decision has been made at this time” to enact them.



Roger Millar (at podium)

Meanwhile, in an [April 17 letter](#) to state legislators, Washington State Department of Transportation Secretary Roger Millar noted that “given the uncertainty of the duration of the pandemic and the lag in revenue reporting,” current traffic and ridership numbers suggest that his agency could expect a loss of revenue of as much as \$100 million per month; approximately 38 percent of its average monthly transportation revenue collections.

Over the past six weeks, he said that overall state traffic volumes dropped 45 percent on average, with ferry ridership down 75 percent, transit ridership off 75 percent; and use of toll facilities down between 42 percent and 77 percent.

Funding Opportunities

CARES Act Grants for Governments

Potential uses: hiring personnel, paying overtime, purchasing protective equipment and distributing resources to hard-hit areas. Funds may also be used to help correctional facilities cover costs related to COVID-19, including, but not limited to, sanitation, contagion prevention and measures designed to address the related medical needs of inmates, detainees and correctional personnel.

The solicitation deadline according to website is May 29th. Subject to Federal rules funds may apply retroactively to January 20, 2020.

For more information <https://bia.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/bja-2020-18553>.

Awards including ADECA, Huntsville, Gadsden, Jasper, etc. are here: <https://bia.ojp.gov/program/cesf/awards>.

AARP Community Challenge Grants - May 15 Deadline

AARP's annual Community Challenge is on! Funding is available for eligible government agencies and nonprofit organizations to improve civic engagement, create vibrant public spaces, deliver a range of transportation options, support accessible housing, use Smart Cities data applications, and initiate other community improvements. The grant amount depends on project size.

[Learn more about the Community Challenge and apply.](#)

FTA has extended the deadlines for four competitive grant programs with active notices of funding opportunities (NOFOs). The affected grant programs are the Accelerating Innovative Mobility Program (new deadline 5/18/20), Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) Program (new deadline 6/3/20), Buses and Bus Facilities Program (new deadline 4/29/20), and the Passenger Ferry Grant Program (new deadline 4/29/20). NOFOs are available at transit.dot.gov.

The [HOPE program](#) supports planning, engineering and technical studies, or financial planning to improve public transportation services in areas experiencing long-term economic distress. The funding may be used toward coordinated human service transportation planning to improve transit service or provide new services such as rides to opioid abuse treatment and recovery.

Eligible applicants must come from counties with more than 20 percent of the population living in poverty for 30 years or more, as measured by the U.S. Census, or the 2013-2017 American Community Survey. Eligible applicants are defined as eligible recipients or sub-recipients of Section 5307, Section 5310 or Section 5311 funding. A state department of transportation may apply on behalf of eligible entities within its state.

U.S. DOT updates its COVID-19 Resource page as new information is available.

transportation.gov/coronavirus

U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao Announces \$25 Billion to Help Nation's Public Transportation Systems Respond to COVID-19

Thursday, April 2, 2020

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced [a total of \\$25 billion in Federal funding allocations](#) to help the Nation's public transportation systems respond to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Funding is provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020.

"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 depend on them," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

FTA is allocating \$25 billion to [recipients of urbanized area and rural area formula funds](#), with \$22.7 billion allocated to large and small urban areas and \$2.2 billion allocated to rural areas. Funding will be provided at a 100 percent Federal share, with no local match required, and will be available to support capital, operating, and other expenses generally eligible under those programs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

Further, operating expenses incurred beginning on January 20, 2020 for all rural and urban recipients, even those in large urban areas, are also eligible, including operating expenses to maintain transit services as well as paying for administrative leave for transit personnel due to reduced operations during an emergency. Answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about this funding are available on FTA's web site.

"We know that 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, including those in large urban areas as well as pay transit workers across the country not working because of the public health emergency."

In addition to the \$25 billion funding allocation announced today, FTA has taken a number of steps to support the transit industry during this public health emergency, including [expanding the eligibility of Federal assistance](#) available under FTA's Emergency Relief Program to help transit agencies respond to COVID-19 in states where the Governor has declared an emergency. All transit providers, including those in large urban areas, can now use Federal formula funds under the Urbanized Area Formula Program and Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program for emergency-related capital and operating expenses. This includes the provision of personal protective equipment or special-purpose trips.

FTA also established an [Emergency Relief docket](#) that allows transit providers in States where the Governor has declared an emergency related to COVID-19 to request temporary relief from Federal requirements under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 as well as any non-statutory FTA requirements.

Additionally, FTA [recently announced](#) that it would provide a 30-day extension of the deadline for current competitive grant program funding opportunities, including: FTA's Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program; Passenger Ferry Grant Program; Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) Challenge Grants; and Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) Program.

The U.S. Department of Transportation is working closely with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and other Federal partners to provide guidance to the public transportation industry in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). FTA has held regular conference calls with transit stakeholders and posted [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) regarding COVID-19 on its web site.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao Announces Availability of \$1 Billion to Upgrade American Infrastructure (deadline May 18, 2020)

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) today published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to apply for \$1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program.

“BUILD grants will upgrade infrastructure across America, making our transportation systems safer and more efficient,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

As the Trump Administration looks to enhance America’s infrastructure, FY 2020 BUILD Transportation grants are for planning and capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation.

Projects for BUILD will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental sustainability, state of good repair, innovation, and partnership.

To better address the needs of rural America, which has historically been neglected, DOT intends to award 50% of BUILD Transportation grant funding to projects located in rural areas that deliver positive benefits for these communities, consistent with the Department’s R.O.U.T.E.S. initiative. For this round of BUILD Transportation grants, the maximum grant award is \$25 million, and no more than \$100 million can be awarded to a single State, as specified in the appropriations act.

To provide technical assistance to prospective applicants, DOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2020 BUILD grant application process. A webinar on how to compete for BUILD Transportation Grants for all applicants will be held on February 25, 2020. Further details will be made available at <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>. The deadline to submit an application is May 18, 2020.

For more information, please visit <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>.

Transportation Alternatives Program Grants

Mobile MPO Grant Deadline May 15th, 2020

The Mobile MPO has announced the availability of the Fiscal Year 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The maximum amount that can be applied for per project with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$200,000 (federal). Applicants are welcome to submit more than one project.

The TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

This year applications will only be accepted electronically. Applicants should email their complete application to transportation@sarpc.org.

Applications are due to the Transportation Planning Department of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) no later than 12:00 p.m., Friday, May 15, 2020.

Electronic versions of the applications are available online at <http://mobilempo.org/TAP.html>

Project budgets should be itemized and completed by a Professional Engineer that is certified by the State of Alabama.

If you have any questions please call the SARPC Transportation Planning Department at (251) 433 6541.

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.

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.

[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](#)

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

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

Ancient symbols only Mobilians will understand



Congress, Lawrence & Martin Luther King



Old Shell & Bay Shore



Broad, Baltimore, Washington & Pettus



Michigan, Duval, Partridge, Montrose & Arlington



St. Stephens, Martin Luther King & South Craft Highway



Halls Mills, Duval, Gosson & Dauphin Island Parkway



Beauregard, Water & I-165



Palmetto, Chatham & Charleston



Stanton, Hart & Florida Street Extension



Broad, Spring Hill & St. Louis



Ann, Spring Hill & St. Stephens



Government, Old Government & Houston



Dauphin, Spring Hill & Washington



Broad & Canal



Dublin, East Dublin & Ghent



Airport & University



Government & Three Notch



St. Stephens, Catherine & Congress



Zeigler, Gaillard & Flournoy



McVay, Englewood & Dauphin Island Parkway

In the News

Coronavirus side effect – Alabama highway traffic wrecks plummet

MOBILE, Ala. (WALA) – One side effect of the novel coronavirus pandemic – and the counter-measures imposed to fight it – can be seen in plummeting highway accidents.



© Provided by WALA Mobile

Rarer sight: Statistics from the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency show that highway traffic accidents and deaths plunged in April, 2020, in Alabama and the Mobile area.

According to statistics provided by the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, accidents investigated by state troopers plunged 43 percent this month compared with last month. Accidents were down 48 percent compared to April 2019.

The decline was similar in Mobile and Baldwin counties. Accidents declined 41 percent this month compared with last month. They are down 54 percent over April of last year.

It's a similar story with traffic deaths. Highway fatalities statewide declined by 58 percent from March to April, and by 42 percent from April a year ago. Troopers in Mobile and Baldwin have worked only one fatality this month, a motorcycle accident in Grand Bay.

"It's pretty unusual for around here. ... That kind of stood out," ALEA spokesman Lt. Joe Piggott told FOX10 News on Wednesday.

Total accidents were down somewhat in March statewide, and by a greater degree in southwest Alabama. But the decline greatly accelerated in April, after Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey [issued an order](#) closing certain non-essential businesses and asking residents to work from home as much as possible.

The ALEA data cover only wrecks worked by troopers, not local police agencies. But it offers a snapshot at how much of an impact the state-at-home order had.

"Traffic is noticeably lighter," Piggott said.

He added that he would have thought there would have been a sharper decline in March.

"I was a little surprised when I saw those numbers. ... It wasn't as big a change as I thought," he said.

The statistics track with data kept by the Alabama Department of Transportation from car counters along Interstates 10 and 65. Traffic volume from April 5 to April 23 was off by almost half – 46.4 percent – compared with the same period in 2019.

One consequence of less congestion, however, may be a tendency for drivers who are on the roads to step on the gas. Piggott said social media posts from other state law enforcement agencies point to that, and he added that he has seen it in Alabama, as well.

"It seems like the speeds are increasing on the highways," he said. "We've clocked quite a few at triple digits."

U.S. Department of Transportation Provides Greater Flexibility for Transit Agencies to Meet Safety Plan Requirements

WASHINGTON – In response to COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced that it will give transit agencies more time to meet the requirements of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation.

"We understand that many transit agencies are experiencing disruptions to normal operating procedures during the COVID-19 public health emergency and, as a result, we are announcing this flexibility while they work to comply with the PTASP regulation," said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams.

The PTASP regulation requires transit agencies to incorporate Safety Management System (SMS) policies and procedures as they develop safety plans to manage safety risks. The regulation set July 20, 2020 as the deadline for transit agencies to certify that they have established a compliant agency safety plan. However, with today's announcement, FTA is alerting transit agencies that it will provide relief by refraining from taking any enforcement action until December 31, 2020 against agencies that are unable to meet the July 20, 2020 deadline.

"To continue to support the transit industry during this unprecedented public health emergency, we are offering this flexibility, recognizing the vital role that transit agencies play in the response to COVID-19," Williams added.

More information about the PTASP requirement is available on FTA's [website](#), and further information about today's announcement is available in the [Notice of Enforcement Discretion](#).

\$41.2 million grant award going to the Alabama Department of Transportation

by Sumner Harrell
Wednesday, April 29th 2020

The Alabama Department of Transportation is set to receive \$41.2 million grant award as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced on April 29 that the reception of the grant was based on the request of the agency and may not represent the full amount that will be received.

The Alabama Department of Transportation says it will use the money to help transit providers throughout the state continue to operate established transit routes to aid communities during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao says, "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,"

As gas tax revenues fall, expect road maintenance delays

04/29/20 6:35 AM By Ben Nuelle

Local county road and bridge maintenance projects could see delays as gas tax revenues that help fund those projects are declining.

Most counties rely on gas tax revenues to help fund public works and maintain the local roads and bridges producers use to take their product to market. With social distancing and a boom in teleworking and homeschooling, people are driving less, resulting in decreased gas purchases.

Matthew Chase, executive director of the National Association of Counties, said the organization is hearing from rural counties about transportation budgets.

"When it comes to roads and bridges there are several sources of funding — gas tax is typically number one and we are obviously seeing massive declines," Chase said.

He said some counties also rely on oil production and new or used vehicle sales.

"For our transportation infrastructure, between the gas tax, the new and used vehicle tax in some states, and the oil and gas bust, we are seeing incredible pressures on our infrastructure budgets," Chase noted.

Soy Transportation Coalition Executive Director Mike Steenhoek said the loss of revenue will have a significant impact at the state and county level if COVID-19 continues to keep people off the roads.

"The fact that you are just having fewer gallons purchased is really going to have a major impact on the amount of work that is going to be able to occur in the foreseeable future," Steenhoek said.

Douglas County, Neb., Commissioner and NACo President Mary Ann Borgeson said her county's gas tax revenue, reported around April 10, dropped 15% from the March report and roughly 6% from the average of the previous 12 months. The county encompasses Omaha, stretching west to the Platte River.

"We will definitely see impacts on being able to get road projects completed that were on the books," Borgeson said.

Thomas Nelson, county executive for Outagamie County, Wisconsin, in the northeast part of the state, told Agri-Pulse road projects must get done eventually, and delays only make them more costly.

"If you look at construction inflation, that is going up 3 or 4%," he said. "If you delay something by five years, soon before you know it, costs have gone up 25% and you've lost five years of life."

Nelson boasts the county he represents has one of the largest dairy producers in the state of Wisconsin. "You've got the milk trucks lumbering down a road that really eats away at it and we've got to keep those fixed," he said.

Missouri Department of Transportation officials already notified Lafayette County Presiding Commissioner Harold Hoflander they would delay repaving a rural stretch of highway in his county, which is located roughly an hour east of Kansas City.

"That's on hold, that is not going to happen this year," Hoflander told Agri-Pulse. "That is getting pushed down because (officials) know the income is not going to be there for the state to do that."

Hoflander said since the gas tax revenues are released each quarter, he did not have numbers immediately available but he expects a significant decline.

Ed Hassinger, deputy director and chief engineer for the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDot), told Agri-Pulse the state has already had to reduce the number of contracts it is putting out for bid next month by \$40 million, or 30%.

He stated average passenger traffic volumes have dropped 35% in the state since mid-March.

“Our red flag goes up because you can pretty well tie traffic volumes to gas tax revenue, and Missouri is really dependent on fuel tax revenue both at the federal and state level,” he said.

Missouri’s fuel tax rate is 17 cents per gallon. MoDot’s director, whom Hassinger works under, is president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation officials.

Hassinger said AASHTO is projecting a 30% drop in revenue for as much as a year to 18 months which, according to AASHTO, is a loss of about \$925 million.

“State DOTs are forecasting a significant reduction in state transportation revenues that will challenge their ability to maintain and operate our transportation system in a way that can support the COVID-19 response,” Jim Tymon, AASHTO’s executive director, said in a statement.

Transportation Research



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

ModalPEX:

the multimodal freight peer exchange

This May, the Federal Highway Administration’s Office of Operations will hold a national peer exchange focused on helping State DOTs, MPOs, and their partners plan and deliver multimodal freight projects—and you are invited!

Attending ModalPEX will help you:

- Identify best practices in selecting, prioritizing, and delivering multimodal infrastructure and how to incorporate these concepts into State Freight Plans during the next round of required plan updates;
- Learn innovative multimodal freight data analyses strategies;
- Improve your understanding of multimodal freight networks/supply chains via bus tour of several Memphis freight facilities; and
- Network with your freight stakeholders and peers.

Formal details and RSVP request forthcoming.

Contact: Tiffany Julien (tiffany.julien@dot.gov; 202-366-9241)
DJ Mason (dj.mason@dot.gov; 617-494-3968)

SAVE THE DATE
MAY 12-13, 2020
University of Memphis

Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research April 2020

A note from our office:

During these complex times, CBER remains committed to serving you and helping you navigate the COVID-19 landscape. Currently, we are following UA’s directive to telecommute and social distance, but CBER is continuing to work hard to provide you with insightful data and information. Please reach out to us at [205-348-6191](tel:205-348-6191) or uacber@culverhouse.ua.edu with any project needs. We are here to serve you!

[COVID-19's Impact on the Economy](#)

In the midst of the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, CBER's experts are here to offer some insight. Sam Addy, Ph.D. and Ahmad Ijaz, CBER's Executive Director & Director of Economic Forecasting, weigh in with what we can expect from our local and national economies in the coming months. Click [here](#) to read more.

[CBER Shines in 2020 Census Count Review](#)

Thanks to the hard work of CBER staff, 200 group quarter addresses and 21,470 housing units were added to the Census Bureau's Master Address File for Alabama to include people who otherwise would not have been counted during the 2020 Census. Read more about the 2020 Census Count Review [here](#).

[Q2 2020 ABCI Results Released April 15](#)

The second quarter 2020 Alabama Business Confidence Index (ABCI) results will be available April 15. Business leaders throughout Alabama are invited to register and participate in this unique forecasting tool. Find more details on the [ABCI webpage](#).

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](#).

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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>

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.
