



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 8th, 2021

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The engineering consultant (Neel Shafer) has been given notice to proceed on the CRRSAA projects for the Mobile MPO members in Mobile MPO Updates. This week in Legislative Updates highway funding gets kicked down the road. The Mobile MPO has FTA 5310 Funds available for member governments, see Funding Opportunities. A new hanger facility for Mobile and climate adaptation is In The News this week and this week's *Just For Fun* is well...God help us all. Have a great weekend!

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

Update on Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project on 9/20/21

Recently, ALDOT presented to the Mobile MPO and the Eastern Shore MPO an update on Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project at Five Rivers Resource Center in Spanish Fort. This meeting was the second of many updates that ALDOT will provide to both MPOs.

When the Mobile MPO and Eastern Shore MPO both met separately on June 2nd, 2021, both MPOs amended each Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project. Both MPOs passed the amendments unanimously. Both the Mobile and Eastern Shore LRTPs included funding for Phase One to be a toll on heavy trucks, with the potential for voluntary vehicular tolls. All legacy routes would remain free.

It was recognized by the Mobile MPO and ESMPO Chairman, that there needed to be more communication between the two MPOs concerning this project, and more transparency from all those involved. The next meeting will likely be in November or early December.

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission has created a web site that will house the Joint MPO updates from ALDOT on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project [HERE](#)

Mobile Area Major Road Plan

The Plan is for better integration and connectivity of land use and transportation planning, to ensure existing and future on-system corridors are managed and/or preserved as part of the long-range comprehensive planning efforts and as development occurs. A complete Major Road Plan to include regulatory components, current practices, case studies, and guidance for Mobile County and Municipalities within Mobile County. The Plan will include methods and tools for acquiring and preserving right-of-way in the context of expediting the environmental clearance process and review how corridors are prioritized, designated, and adopted for management or preservation. This will require coordination with all planning jurisdictions in Mobile County.

Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project are added to LRTP and TIP

On September 1st, 2021, a letter was submitted to ALDOT from both the Eastern Shore MPO and the Mobile MPO, requesting that ALDOT investigate the possibilities of building the project in less than the three phases.

ALDOT has agreed to provide formal updates to both MPO's every two months. The first Update was held July 27th, 2021 at Five Rivers, and the second update was on September 20th, at Five Rivers at 2:00PM in the Theater. The slide presentation can be found [HERE](#). The Mobile MPO will house all of the slide presentations from these ALDOT Updates at www.mobilempo.org.

The next step is that ALDOT will authorize the Preliminary Engineering (PE) that was approved as part of the project, and begin a Toll and Revenue Study to further hone in on potential tolling revenues. These tolling revenues will not be from just trucks, but voluntary vehicles willing to pay the toll as well; all legacy routes will remain free.

Moving forward, at a minimum, we have a way to build a bridge. The federal government, federal legislature, and new administration are currently developing numerous bills that potentially may help us move past this "at a minimum" scenario.

[HERE](#) is the Amendment with update Section 1.7 that summarizes the public comments.

[HERE](#) is APPENDIX A with all of the comments we received prior to deadline

[HERE](#) is a National Geographic article on Africatown that was presented as information.

100 % Funding for Resurfacing of Local Roads Through the Mobile MPO with CRRSAA

LINK TO MAP [HERE](#)

In accordance with the Highway Infrastructure Program Funds Pursuant to the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) dated January 15, 2021 from the Federal Highway Administration, the Mobile Transportation Management Area (TMA) through the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is apportioned \$3,193,942 (FY 2021). In consultation with the State of Alabama, it is the intention of the Mobile MPO to use the Mobile TMA apportioned CRRSAA funding (\$3,193,942) for a one time resurfacing program. This funding can be 100% federal funding with no matching requirements; this presents a rare opportunity for the Mobile MPO.

The cities of Creola, Satsuma, Saraland, Chickasaw, Prichard, Semmes and Bayou la Batre have provided a prioritized list of roads that need to be resurfaced within their jurisdiction. The PE projects (design projects) were sent to FHWA for fund authorization.

Neel Shafer received the Notice To Proceed earlier this week on the following seven Projects listed below:

CRSAMB-4921(251)	\$27,420.00
CRSAMB-4921(252)	\$32,285.00
CRSAMB-4921(253)	\$31,456.00
CRSAMB-4921(254)	\$65,000.00
CRSAMB-4921(255)	\$53,492.00
CRSAMB-4921(256)	\$31,124.00
CRSAMB-4921(257)	\$37,828.00

Soon, the cities will begin to see activities in terms of some survey work, geotechnical work, etc.. on the streets proposed for resurfacing. Also, Neel Shafer will soon begin the process of reaching out and working with the cities to provide the necessary documents required for the federal funds to be spent. This include documents such as the ROW certification, encroachment notices, etc...

As of now, due to the scope of these projects, the proposed letting date is sometime late spring/early summer in 2022, assuming no issues with the city certifications, etc.

Please call Kevin Harrison 706-4635 if there are any questions.

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](#).

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile MPO

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

Project : 100071916 Federal aid number : NH 0042 County : MOBILE Scope : FM
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-42 (US-98) FROM SNOW ROAD TO MAGNOLIA GROVE PARKWAY
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Target Start Date : 1/28/2022
Engineers Estimate : \$2,837,662.00

Project : 100046892 Federal aid number : STPMB 7550 (601) County : MOBILE
Project Description : CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD)
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Current Funding : \$1,500,600.00 Requested Funding : \$1,596,000.00
Reason for Request : Increase PE L23E and L230 funds

Project : 100073476 Federal aid number : NH 0042 County : MOBILE Scope : FM
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-42 (US-98) FROM BROAD STREET TO THE WEST END OF BANKHEAD TUNNEL (MP 27.433)
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Target Start Date : 2/25/2022
Engineers Estimate : \$637,576.00

Project : 100069061 (CN)
Federal aid number : IM I065 (512)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : RESURFACING ON I-65 FROM 0.56 MILE NORTH OF SR-158 TO 0.41 MILE NORTH OF SR-13(US-43)

Old Engineers Estimate : \$2,517,643.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$3,666,251.65

South Alabama RPO Updates

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met last week using the GoToMeeting app.

One item on the [agenda](#) was to amend the [Fiscal Year 2021 Work Program](#) to include assisting ALDOT by facilitating the public involvement process for ALDOT's draft Public Involvement Plan for Statewide Transportation Planning.

The purpose of the plan is to implement effective ways for ALDOT to gather information from the public about their transportation needs. The plan is available on ALDOT's website. All comments must be received on or before October 4, 2021.

ALDOT's Draft PIP is posted here:

<https://www.dot.state.al.us/news/publicinvolvement.html>.

Other items on the [agenda](#) included:

- Approve the [minutes of the previous RPO meeting](#)
- Review and Adopt the [Fiscal Year 2022 Work Program](#) which includes a new task of assisting ALDOT by hosting public meetings for the Statewide Long Range Transportation Process
- Amend the [RPO's Public Involvement Procedures](#) to include online virtual meetings when necessary
- Amend the [Annual Transportation Plan List of Projects](#)

RPO Staff is working to finalizing the RPO Transportation Plan. We're also building an online interactive map of all of the RPO projects. Once it's complete we will send out a link to all the RPO members and they'll be able to reference it for grant applications and the like.

Projects in Region Let September 24th, 2021

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Bridge Replacement over Bennett Creek and Bridge Culvert Removal on SR-17 (US-45) in Citronelle. Length 0.463 mi.
- The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$3,575,219 to \$4,369,712 .
- For constructing the Safety Improvements (Centerline Scoring) on SR-17/SR-57 (US-45) from the SR-158 Interchange in Prichard to the Mississippi State Line. Length 48.214 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$371,150 to \$453,628 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

Biden signs 30-day extension of highway funding into law

BY [LEXI LONAS](#) - 10/02/21

[President Biden](#) signed a 30-day extension of highway funding into law on Saturday following its passage earlier in the day by the Senate, according to a statement from the White House.

The Senate [reconvened](#) for a brief session to pass the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2021 after Republicans did not allow the legislation to clear quickly Friday following passage in the House in a 361-51 vote.

The bill was sent to Biden's desk after Congress failed to reauthorize funding for highway and transit construction programs by its end-of-September deadline.

The Department of Transportation had to furlough around 3,700 workers on Friday since the funding was not passed. The furloughs put pressure on both chambers of Congress to act quickly and pass the short-term authorization before next week.

Congress failed to reauthorize long-term highway funding after two pieces of legislation including the money had not been taken up.

The funding had been incorporated in a \$1.2 trillion, bipartisan infrastructure package passed by the Senate. The bill was supposed to be put up for a vote in the House this week, but was delayed after progressive Democrats threatened to tank the bill without a sweeping social spending bill.

Biden made his way to Capitol Hill amid infighting between moderates, who would like to see the bipartisan bill passed, and progressives that want to see a \$3.5 trillion "human infrastructure" bill realized. Biden later told moderates that the vote on the \$1.2 trillion package would not occur Friday.

On Saturday, House Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) (D-Calif.) set a new, end-of-October deadline for the bipartisan package to pass.

"There is an October 31st Surface Transportation Authorization deadline, after last night's passage of a critical 30-day extension. We must pass BIF well before then – the sooner the better, to get the jobs out there," Pelosi said in a letter on Saturday.

Chair DeFazio Statement on 30-Day Surface Transportation Extension

October 01, 2021

WASHINGTON, DC— Today, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR) issued the following statement after the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation to extend the authorization of current surface transportation programs for 30 days.

"Today's extension protects thousands of Department of Transportation employees and will keep important projects on schedule," Chair DeFazio said. "Now we will continue our work to pass the Build Back Better agenda into law, including a historic investment in America's infrastructure."

Transportation Leaders Push Transformative Updates Post-COVID

Eugene Mulero October 7, 2021

WASHINGTON — Large-scale investments aimed at modernizing the country's mobility networks would help address connectivity concerns exposed during the pandemic, congressional transportation leaders argue as Congress negotiates a big-ticket infrastructure package.

Democratic lawmakers, assigned to manage the transportation committees, are ramping up calls for the mainstream adoption of technologies that respond to climate change, improve highway safety and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

In championing President Joe Biden's Build Back Better infrastructure agenda, the Democratic leaders are seeking support from colleagues on transformative updates of last-mile freight distribution centers, ports and waterways, freight rail systems, and the overall surface transportation network.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is among senior Democrats insisting Congress approve billions of dollars for severe-weather infrastructure resilience programs. He is advocating for long-term investments that build on the momentum set by the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

That response, he pointed out, targeted connectivity zones at airports, rail hubs and transit systems.

"Congress took unprecedented actions to help cushion the economic blow to these transportation sectors. The programs Congress created and the funding it authorized helped transit and bus operators, airlines, airports, and other companies provide paychecks to their employees and essential transportation services to communities across the country," DeFazio said during a recent hearing, specifically noting the approval of the Coronavirus Economic Relief for Transportation Services (CERTS), which is designed to assist the motor coach industry with payroll and workforce operations.

Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), at the helm of the Energy and Commerce panel, is emphasizing the adoption of electric vehicles, as well as autonomous technology. Pallone said his colleagues should back a multitrillion-dollar social infrastructure package that "invests billions in the creation of a greenhouse gas reduction fund, electric vehicle infrastructure and home energy efficiency rebates."

With congressional negotiators suggesting the adoption of a \$2 trillion social infrastructure Build Back Better package, climate and environmental programs must remain front and center. That is the sentiment from Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-Del.), who remains committed to pushing for environmental justice programs, energy efficiency and clean vehicles, as well as a long-term response to climate change.

Dedicating funds and resources that would amplify the resilience of freight and commuter corridors must remain atop Congress' agenda, or as he put it during a hearing this month, "The U.S. will continue to face natural disasters of increasing severity and intensity with even more devastating impacts. That's why we need to rapidly and dramatically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, while we increase investments in resilience."

Carper's colleague, Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), the Commerce Committee's chairwoman, is among policymakers leading a push for funding at the ports that would assist the freight industry with supply chain concerns.

"Congress has caught on that the supply chain is key to our economic strategy, and that a robust supply chain in the United States of America means we're going to continue to have robust employment," Cantwell said. "Without the resiliency of the supply chain, our services and security could be impacted."

The White House has been urging Congress to establish an electric vehicle network, and investments in technologies designed to maximize fuel efficiency across the transportation sector. Responding to myriad reports linking climate change to human activity, the president and his team are advocating for investments that enhance disaster mitigation projects, as well as electric and autonomous vehicles.

Recently, the administration unveiled a plan outlining steps meant to ensure federal facilities and operations have the resilience to withstand the impact of severe weather events. According to the White House on Oct. 7: “Agencies will embed adaptation and resilience planning and implementation throughout their operations and programs, and will continually update their adaptation plans.”

Transportation union urges Congress to pass infrastructure bill

BY [LIZ CAREY](#) | OCTOBER 8, 2021

In a letter to members of the House of Representatives, the Transportation Trades Department (TTD) of the AFL-CIO urged the two parties to come together and pass historic infrastructure investment bills.

The TTD, as well as the 33 affiliated unions it represents, highlighted the need for reliable, long-term reauthorizations for American highways, public transit and passenger rail systems, and called on lawmakers to pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act by the Oct. 31 deadline. The union also said it supported “large-scale infrastructure investments” that would modernize and repair the country’s aging transportation infrastructure.

“Beyond the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, TTD supports a number of labor priorities in the Build Back Better agenda that are likely to be included in a separate budget reconciliation package,” the letter said. “However, as you know, differences between the House and Senate over the size and scope of that package have put the entire Build Back Better agenda in jeopardy, risking immediate economic harm to working Americans.”

Calling short-term extensions of the surface transportation programs a hindrance to projects, the union asked the representatives to remember their campaign promises.

“As detailed in our policy statement, short-term extensions of our surface transportation programs have historically led to delayed or cancelled bids and increased highway and transit projects costs,” the letter said. “With our economy on the line as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the American people can no longer afford to sit by and wait on inaction. Many of you campaigned, and won, on the promise of infrastructure to your constituents. Now is the time to deliver on that promise.”

The group said that passing the budget reconciliation package would expand access to good jobs and strong labor protections, while enhancing the quality of life for Americans.

Funding Opportunities

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces the Availability of \$2.2 Billion in American Rescue Plan Funding to Help Transit Agencies with Additional Service Needs DEADLINE November 8, 2021

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for \$2.2 billion in competitive grant funding for transit systems demonstrating additional pandemic-associated needs. Funding is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021.

[Additional Assistance Funding](#) may be awarded to transit systems demonstrating additional assistance is needed to cover operating expenses related to maintaining day-to-day operations, cleaning and sanitization, combating the spread of pathogens on transit systems and maintaining critical staffing levels.

"As public transit systems continue to recover from the devastating financial and public health impacts of COVID, they must have the resources they need to keep trains and buses running, especially in heavily transit-dependent communities," said U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg. "The funding opportunity we are announcing today will help connect people to jobs, services and opportunities, while supporting crucial health and safety measures for the traveling public and our nation’s dedicated transit workforce."

FTA will review applications based on the level of financial need, including projections of future financial need to maintain service as a percentage of the 2018 operating costs. Funding that is requested by an eligible applicant must not have been replaced by funding made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) of 2021, and other ARP funding.

"The Additional Assistance Funding will support transit agencies demonstrating a continuing need for assistance in maintaining daily operations," said FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez. "Public transportation connects people to jobs, education and vital services, and this program will help transit agencies continue to provide critical transit services in communities that need it most."

The NOFO will be placed on public inspection at the Federal Register on Wednesday, September 8, and published on Thursday, September 9. An unpublished version of [the NOFO can be viewed here](#). Applications must be submitted electronically through the [Grants.gov](#) website by 11:59 PM ET November 8, 2021.

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and safety Improvements

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice).

SUMMARY: This notice details the application requirements and procedures to obtain grant funding for eligible projects under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program, and related Trespass Prevention projects. The

opportunities described in this notice are made available under Assistance Listings Number 20.325, “Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements.”

DATES: Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5:00 p.m. ET, DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. Applications that are incomplete or received after 5:00 p.m. ET on [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] will not be considered for funding. See Section D of this notice for additional information on the application process.

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)

Imagine.... If there was a way, to instantly get fresh air as you drive your car. If your air conditioner in your car is broken; no problem, the cruise and breeze has now been invented.

<https://www.unnecessarinyinventions.com/cruise-n-bree/>



In the News

Mobile gets \$5.1 million grant to build hangar facility near future downtown airport

Updated: Oct. 05, 2021

By John Sharp

A \$5.1 million federal grant will be used to build a new multi-cargo warehouse and hangar facility at the Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley and in close proximity to a future commercial aviation terminal near downtown Mobile.

The announcement came Tuesday in a news release issued by the Mobile Airport Authority. The grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) will be matched with \$747,275 in local funds and is expected to leverage \$1.5 million in private investment. The project, according to the Airport Authority, will create 50 jobs.

“This investment in our infrastructure will improve our resiliency, attract additional business and strengthen our capacity for long-term growth,” said Mobile Airport Authority president Chris Curry.

The facility will include a cold-storage area that is capable of holding COVID-19 related materials. It will also allow for quick distribution and shipment of food products to any location in the country.

"We wanted the ability to use the facility whether it was for (storing) perishable goods such as flowers, fruits and berries or products such as salmon that otherwise we know has a very high demand in this area and sometimes is imported from other foreign countries," Curry said. "We know there are businesses in and around this area that could benefit from this facility."

Curry said similar facilities exist near international ports, such as in Miami.

"They are really big in flowers, fruits and vegetables that come from countries in South America," Curry said. "Once we expand our commercial service element, I think we will start to seriously take a look at how to get into that international cargo market especially with us being located (at the Port of Mobile)."

Curry said the timeline for the facility's construction is "to be determined." He said the Airport Authority is seeking a grant through the Federal Aviation Administration to support infrastructure work to the building.

"If I had a company that came to me tomorrow and they wanted to invest and needed a facility of this type, then the Airport Authority could make it a higher priority to build that out," Curry said.

MAA's highest priority remains on its "aggressive" three-year timetable to build a new airport terminal complex, estimated to cost around \$250 million. The goal is for Mobile to have commercial flights out of the Brookley Airport by the summer of 2024.

In August, the MAA board [approved a contract with Birmingham-based Hoar Program Management to serve as the project manager.](#)

Prospective teams looking to serve as the "progressive design build team" have to submit their proposals to the authority by late October. Those proposals include the plans for the construction of the complex.

"Once we receive those proposals, we'll have our evaluation team evaluate them and our schedule is to have (the team) before the Mobile Airport Authority board of directors for a decision in December," Curry added.

The plans are for the new terminal to be designed to meet the standards required for it to be designated as an international airport. MAA officials have decided the terminal should have five gates rather than the initial four, thought that's also under further consideration.

The goal is to shift Mobile's commercial aviation services from Mobile Regional Airport in west Mobile to Brookley. Supporters of the airport swap believe that Brookley's proximity to downtown and Baldwin County, and its close proximity to Interstate 10, will make Mobile a more competitive market with airports in other regional cities such as Gulfport, Mississippi, and Pensacola, Florida.

Feds Want Sidewalks Fixed In Southside Neighborhood

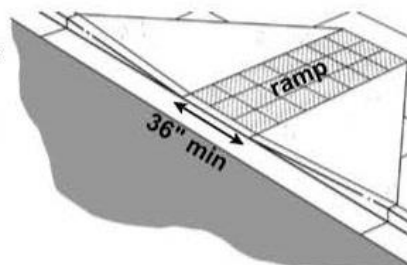
ADA Standards

ADA Accessibility Survey Instructions: Curb Ramps

1

[§ 4.7.3]

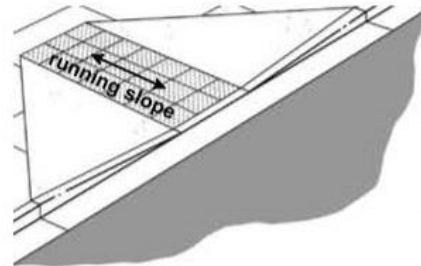
Only measure the width of the ramp section of the curb ramp (labeled "ramp" to the right). The ramp section of a curb ramp is also known as the "ramp run." If the curb ramp has flared sides, which can also be seen in the illustration to the right, do not include them in the measurement. The ramp run must be at least 36 inches wide.



2

[§§ 4.7.2; 4.8.2; 4.1.6(3)(a)]

The running slope of the curb ramp is the slope in the direction that people travel when going up or down the ramp run. The arrow in the illustration to the left, aligned parallel to the ramp run and perpendicular to the curb, shows where to measure the running slope.

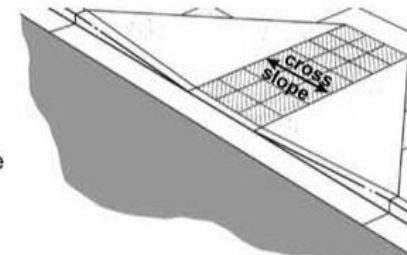


For new construction (when the curb ramp was built after January 26, 1991), the running slope of the ramp run must not exceed 8.33 percent. For alterations (when the curb ramp was altered after January 26, 1991), the slope must not exceed 10 percent for a 6-inch rise or 12.5 percent for a 3-inch rise.

3

[§ 4.3.7]

The cross slope of the curb ramp is perpendicular to the running slope. Unlike the running slope, which runs along the ramp, the cross slope is measured *across* the ramp. The arrow in the illustration to the right, aligned perpendicular to the ramp run and parallel to the curb, shows where to measure the cross slope. The cross slope of a curb ramp, or any accessible route, may not exceed 2 percent.



DISABLED ACCESS LACKING?

After receiving a complaint from a resident of the Southland Place neighborhood (south of Fairhope High School), the federal highway administration wants the city to "voluntarily" bring sidewalks there into compliance with requirements of the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991.

In a letter received by the city last year, the FHWA determined that "pedestrian facilities under the city's jurisdiction were constructed in a manner that did not meet ADA requirements ... inaccessible sidewalks and missing curb ramps" at locations on Vivian Loop, Davison Loop and Kemper Lane.

During its last meeting, the city council selected Neel-Schaffer Engineering for the engineering/design work; construction is expected to begin May, 2022. Total cost estimates have yet to be determined..

Homes in the neighborhood were built circa 2003/06, by [Adams Homes Llc.](#), according to property records.

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Buttigieg Statement on Agency's Newly-Released Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

Thursday, October 7, 2021

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, as part of President Biden's whole-of-government approach to confronting the climate crisis, the U.S. Department of Transportation released its climate adaptation and resilience plan. The plan is focused on ensuring that Federally supported transportation infrastructure—as well as USDOT programs, policies, and operations— both consider climate change impacts and incorporate adaptation and resilience solutions whenever possible.

“The climate crisis is here today, threatening Americans' lives and livelihoods, our homes and businesses, and even the way we travel and operate our federal agencies,” **Secretary Pete Buttigieg said**. “The good news is that we know what to do about it, and America is fully capable of rising to the occasion. While we work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent the worst outcomes of climate change, the U.S. Department of Transportation's plan will help ensure that our transportation infrastructure, policies, and programs will be more resilient to the climate impacts already facing our country. Thanks to the leadership of President Biden, we now have a government-wide strategy to protect our people and way of life from the threat of climate change.”

Among the priorities included in the USDOT Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan:

- Incorporate resilience into USDOT grant making programs
- Enhance resilience through the project planning and development process
- Ensure resiliency of USDOT facilities and thousands of operational assets
- Ensure climate-ready services and supplies
- Improve climate education and research on resilience

In addition to these plans, President Biden's Build Back Better Agenda and the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal](#) include bold, historic, and transformational investments to strengthen our nation's resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, including the first-ever formula and competitive grant program to help States improve the resilience of transportation infrastructure.

You can find a link to plans for all 23 federal agencies, including USDOT, [here](#).

Additional information:

The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Office of Management and Budget seek public input on the agency climate adaptation plans. Members of the public may submit comments via the docket at <https://www.regulations.gov/> (Docket ID: CEQ-2021-0003) until Nov. 6, 2021. CEQ also will hold a virtual convening this Fall with national organizations that have expertise in climate adaptation and resilience or have expressed interest in the agency plans.

Transportation Research

The important economic factors rarely mentioned in infrastructure debates

All large infrastructure projects should be vetted via a rigorous benefit/cost analysis.

Robert Poole Director of Transportation Policy

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With the ongoing national focus on infrastructure, one of the best papers I've read in several years is “Economic Perspectives on Infrastructure Investment” by Harvard's Edward Glaeser and Massachusetts Institute of Technology's James Poterba. The economists' report was prepared for the Aspen Economic Strategy Group and released on July 14, 2021. What distinguishes the paper from so much that is being written about the need for increased infrastructure investment in the United States is its comparison of how engineers frame the problem and how economists do so. (And I write this as an MIT-trained engineer who has spent much of his career trying to explain economic reasoning to transportation engineers.)

Glaeser and Poterba explain in some detail that infrastructure “needs” as defined by groups like the American Society of Civil Engineers and a series of reports by McKinsey are lacking in assessing the benefit/cost ratio of proposed investments. Instead, these reports on infrastructure either compile what amount to engineering wish lists or create ratios of infrastructure spending as a fraction of gross domestic product (GDP) which tell us little about whether these are economically worthwhile projects to invest in. They also point out the potential conflict of interest when engineering consulting firms do the preliminary work estimating a project's costs and usage—and then gain lucrative contracts to manage the actual projects. This system often results in huge cost overruns (e.g., the Big Dig in Boston and California's high-speed rail project approved by voters in 2008).

From Glaeser and Poterba's economic analysis perspective, they argue that, at least, all large infrastructure projects should be vetted via a rigorous benefit/cost analysis (BCA) to decide if they are worth being funded or financed. They suggest several possible ways to require this, including having Congress mandate that federally-funded highway and transit projects must pass a benefit/cost analysis screening in order to proceed; requiring state departments of transportations (DOTs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to do that for every project, or shifting large projects to a national infrastructure bank subject to a benefit/cost analysis mandate. The problem with each of these is politics. Many elected officials—federal, state, and local—love to select infrastructure projects based largely on their political benefits rather than their benefits exceeding their costs.

Another long-standing problem in U.S. infrastructure is deferred maintenance. And, again, the problem is mostly political. Elected legislators tend to prioritize new projects with ribbon-cutting opportunities over adequate ongoing maintenance, which may be barely visible to voters. The result is that roads and bridges wear out prematurely, need repeated repaving and other unplanned maintenance, and often need to be rebuilt sooner than they would have otherwise. This is penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Consequently, and unfortunately, despite lots of talk about “fix it first” provisions in federal or state infrastructure legislation, this hardly ever seems to happen.

The authors also discuss the many cost-increasing provisions of federal law that raise U.S. transportation infrastructure costs above those of other developed countries. These include “Buy American” provisions and other protectionist measures that increase material costs, Davis-Bacon “prevailing wage” laws and other regulations that increase labor costs, and the well-known practice under design-bid-build contracting of bidding low to get the contract and making it up with numerous cost-increasing change orders.

Another key point on which they elaborate is that the United States should make greater use of pricing and user fees for major transportation projects. This is not only a better way to finance most large projects, but if the pricing is allowed to vary in proportion to demand, it can produce greater user benefits and, in some cases, reduce the total number of lanes needed, which would be an important cost-saving.

Glaeser and Poterba discuss transportation public-private partnerships (P3s) as a useful alternative to business as usual, but they don’t fully explain how valuable the design/build/finance/operate/maintain approach can be in addressing the seemingly intractable politicization of U.S. transportation funding and management that they discuss.

Here is how P3 projects procured as design/build/finance/operate/maintain (DBFOM) address key problems:

Deferred maintenance: Under DBFOM the project is designed to minimize not the initial construction cost but the life-cycle cost because long-term, ongoing maintenance is built into the long-term concession agreement. This amounts to ensuring better long-term stewardship of the expensive and valuable asset.

Benefit/cost analysis: Especially under the revenue-risk version of DBFOM, the project cannot be financed unless the projected revenues are enough to service the bonds issued to finance the project and produce a return on the developer/operator’s equity investment. For an availability payment DBFOM that does not include toll revenue, the state DOT’s willingness to commit to a 35-year stream of payments so the project can be financed means the DOT must complete a benefit/cost analysis to ascertain that the project makes financial sense.

Willingness to charge users: In a number of cases, a megaproject (such as the original express toll lanes on the I-495 Beltway in northern Virginia) was developed based on variable tolling as the means of financing, while the state DOT had deferred adding new lanes due to lack of gas-tax funds. This was an early example of what some have called “outsourcing of political will” to implement variable pricing that the state itself was unwilling to do.

Cost overruns: DBFOM projects are not immune to cost overruns, but the key question is who bears the risk of this happening. To my dismay, the authors dismiss this by writing, “large public entities are typically better able to bear risks than most private firms.” But the large public entity does not bear those cost overruns: taxpayers do, whereas in DBFOM projects the investors willingly take on megaproject cost overrun risks. This premise has been demonstrated by the fact of several bankruptcy filings of toll-financed megaprojects in both Australia and the United States, not mentioned by the authors.

In their summary of the case for (limited) use of long-term P3s, Glaeser and Poterba cite as potential benefits reduced costs, specialized expertise, and improved quality, for all of which there is evidence. But they also state that the case for such public-private partnerships depends on “their being able to borrow at better rates than a city government or bear risk better.”

Thanks to the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and tax-exempt private-activity bonds, borrowing cost differences are minimal, but the report’s authors don’t mention those important tools, and as noted above, they devote little attention to the very real risk transfers that are possible (and should be identified in competent value-for-money analyses).

Despite minor shortcomings on P3s, Glaeser and Poterba’s overall economic assessment of how poorly the United States addresses major infrastructure is excellent and much-needed. In this brief review, I have only scratched the surface of the valuable insights and examples set forth in their paper.



State seeks feedback from Alabamians on broadband access

Posted on [September 21, 2021](#)

MONTGOMERY – Want to see further improvements in broadband access in Alabama? Here's is a simple way Alabamians can help. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is requesting information about broadband internet access and speed from Alabama residents and businesses.

Alabamians are encouraged to take the speed survey at <https://alabama.speedsurvey.org/> to help the state more precisely locate gaps in broadband service areas. The information gathered will be used for more specific mapping of service gaps and planning efforts to help fill those gaps.

"The COVID-19 pandemic shined a spotlight on the importance of having access to high-speed internet across the Alabama," ADECA Director Kenneth Boswell said. "Taking this speed survey will help us gather the data we need to map and plan our efforts to help close those service gaps."

ADECA administers the Broadband Alabama program, which includes the Broadband Accessibility Fund created by the Alabama Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Kay Ivey. Since 2018, the fund has assisted broadband providers with extending high-speed internet service for households, businesses and community anchors in unserved areas of the state or in areas lacking minimum threshold service.

Many Alabama homes and businesses receive less than the current federal definition of broadband service, which is 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed and three Mbps upload speed. The information gathered from the speed survey will help pinpoint the specific areas that lack this coverage. Your address will not be made public and the information will be used solely for the state's planning efforts.

"Broadband is a huge economic driver for recruiting industry and jobs," Boswell said. "This survey is quick and easy and helps show us precisely where the service gaps are, so we encourage all Alabama residents and businesses to take it and help us continue Gov. Kay Ivey's efforts to grow Alabama's economy."

A video explaining the survey is available on the [ADECA YouTube channel](#):