



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, April 13th, 2018

Volume 26, Number 2

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET APRIL 27th, 2018
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Recently Completed Planning Studies

- Destination 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Toole Design Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile
- [2015 Unified Planning Work Program](#)
- 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program
- Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>
transportation@sarpc.org

Kevin Harrison, PTP
Director of Transportation
kharrison@sarpc.org

Tom Piper
Senior Transportation Planner
tpiper@sarpc.org

Monica Williamson
Transportation Planner
mwilliamson@sarpc.org

Anthony Johnson
Transportation Planner
ajohnson@sarpc.org

South Alabama Regional
Planning Commission
110 Beauregard St
Mobile, Alabama 36602
(251) 433-6541

There will be a Mobile MPO meeting on May 23rd, TCC/CAC ON May 9th and BPAC will be May 2nd; please mark your calendars. Both the State and the Mobile Urban Area TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Funding have been announced, and are both due May 1, 2018. The Mobile MPO web page has been updated: Check it out! <http://mobilempo.org/>. President Trump is streamlining the EIS process which is good news, please see *Legislative Updates*. There are people that do not want another "free" evacuation route at the beach? See *In The News*, and this week's *Just For Fun* deals with a date....

Have a great weekend!

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

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

www.mobilempo.org  check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

Please see Funding Opportunities below for the Mobile Urbanized Area TAP Funding announcement

MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

The Mobile MPO will meet on May 23rd, and the TCC/CAC Advisory Committee will meet on May 9th, and the BPAC for the Mobile MPO will meet on May 2nd. Also, the Mobile MPO web site has had a makeover. Please let us know what you think <http://mobilempo.org/>

There are several items on the agenda. The Long Range Transportation Plan needs to be modified to accurately portray the I-10 Mobile River Bridge in terms of a considered toll, environmental justice considerations, and the bicycle/pedestrian component. Also, we will be discussing a draft 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and there are some revisions to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We will be continuing our discussion of performance measures, and we must adopt a resolution supporting a Transit Asset Management Performance Measure for the WAVE Transit. Finally, the Southern Rail Commission will be present (5/23/18) to briefly bring the MPO up to date on the status of the initiative to return passenger rail to the Gulf Coast.

NEW SARPC Transportation Video



[HERE](#)

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

- [Planning and Community Development](#)
- [Area Agency on Aging](#)
- [Employment and Economic Development](#)

US 45 Feasibility Study

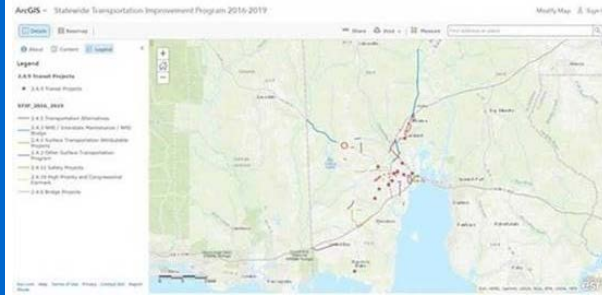
SARPC staff has met with Volkert and CERM as the kick off and introductory meeting to the project. Public participation is important for this project, so we expect our stakeholders to be heavily involved. Volkert and SARPC staff are currently compiling data for the project. SARPC, Volkert and CERM have finalized the Advisory Committee, and we will be meeting at 6:30 PM on April 17th. If you are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee, please contact Kevin Harrison.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

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

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

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



Mobile MPO 101

Here are a couple of great videos that were produced by our counterpart in Birmingham (Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham). The videos are a summary of the MPO planning process and are below:



Funding a Project with an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210829210>



Inside an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210825997>

[HERE](#) are the slides and presentations of the Mobile MPO 101 training.

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

This critically important, high-priority transportation project will involve constructing a new six-lane bridge across the Mobile River to increase Interstate 10's capacity and replace the existing four-lane Bayway with an eight-lane facility at an elevation above the 100 year storm surge event to reduce traffic headaches for thousands of commuters each day by saving motorists time.

The Wallace Tunnel currently averages 75,000 vehicles per day, reaching up to 100,000 vehicles during the peak tourism season. With almost double the daily traffic originally anticipated for the crossing, heavy congestions and longer travel times impact motorists, businesses, and the quality of life in the region. ALDOT expects this project to:

- **Reduce travel time between Mobile and Spanish Fort/Daphne.**
- **Increase reliability in travel times and accessibility to jobs, educational facilities, medical services, and recreational activities.**
- **Facilitate access to/from major industries and freight destinations in Mobile and Baldwin Counties and provide hazardous material vehicles a direct route away from the downtown district.**
- **Take all efforts to preserve and protect the Mobile Bay so that generations to come can enjoy the view and natural beauty from the bridge.**

Hyperlinks within the advisory:

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project: <http://mobileriverbridge.com/>

ALDOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, environmentally and economically sound transportation network across Alabama. For further information, visit www.dot.state.al.us.

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

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

Project : 100037215 (CN)
Federal aid number : DBMB-STPMB 7550 (600)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : ZEIGLER BLVD ADDITIONAL LANES FROM ATHEY RD TO FOREST HILL DR
Old Target start date : August 31, 2018
New Target start date : March 29, 2019

Region Let April 27th, 2018

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Sidewalk, Curb & Gutter Installation, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) at the Illinois Central Railroad Crossing (MP 31.246) west of the I-165 Interchange to MP 34.207. Length 2.840 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,665,560 to \$2,035,684.
- For constructing the Bridge Deck Replacement (Partial) on Airport Boulevard over I-65 in Mobile. Length 0.052 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,350,712 to \$2,873,092.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-13 (US-43) from the Cedar Creek Bridge south of Mt Vernon to the Washington County Line. Length 5.607 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,785,404 to \$2,182,160.

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Median Barrier Protection (Cable Guiderail Installation) on I-10 from the SR-181 Interchange in Daphne to the Perdido River Bridge and on I-65 from MP 75.500 to MP 105.500. Length 55.994 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,360,529 to \$2,885,091.
- For the Maintenance Dredging of Little Lagoon Pass in Gulf Shores as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,078,113 to \$1,317,693.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

Legislative Updates

[One Federal Decision MOU](#)

A dozen federal agencies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Monday to further the administration's goal of 'one federal decision' for environmental permitting. The MOU says that one agency will be responsible for navigating the entire federal environmental review process to create one *Environmental Impact Statement* and sign one *Record of Decision*. Agencies will have a goal of completing the process within two years.

"No longer will we allow the infrastructure of our magnificent country to crumble and decay. While protecting the environment, we will build gleaming new roads, bridges, railways, waterways, tunnels, and highways."

President Donald J. Trump

Speaker Ryan Won't Seek Reelection

After months of speculation, House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) announced yesterday that he will not seek reelection in the fall and will resign at the end of the current Congress. Ryan has served in the House of Representatives since 1999 and as speaker since 2015 — upon the retirement of former Speaker John Boehner (R-OH). Ryan's retirement will set off a skirmish among Republicans, including Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA), who will seek to take the gavel from Ryan if the Republicans hold the House after the November midterms.

[Pushing Back on Spending Cuts](#)

This week several Senate Republicans walked back the idea of a rescissions package to cut previously enacted Omnibus spending, which the administration has hinted it may want to pursue. GOP officials led by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) said they hope to put something out next month. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) said the proposal would go nowhere and Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) said he would want to see details before making a final decision but emphasized that Republicans need to keep their promises. Additionally, Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) said she was "baffled" as to why the administration would do this.

[Shelby Approved as Appropriations Panel Chairman](#)

The senior Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee Richard Shelby (R-AL) will be the committee's next chairman, following Thad Cochran's (R-MS) retirement on April 1. Shelby previously served as chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) will continue to serve as the vice chairman.

[CBO: \\$1 Trillion Deficit in 2020](#)

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the U.S. budget deficit will exceed \$1 trillion in FY 2020. In June, CBO estimated that the budget gap would not hit \$1 trillion until 2022. These higher estimates are the result of tax cuts and spending increases over the last six months, and spending will exceed revenues by \$804 billion in FY 2018. The previous report estimated a \$563 billion shortfall for FY2018. The current report also found that the new tax legislation will increase the deficit by almost \$1.9 trillion over the next 11 years. CBO predicts that unemployment will drop to 3.3 percent in 2019 and that real gross domestic product will expand by 3.3 percent in calendar year 2018 before slowing to 1.8 percent in 2020.

[USDOT Announces \\$264 Million in Grants to Improve Bus Infrastructure](#)

USDOT recently announced that 139 projects in 52 states and territories will receive a portion of the \$264 million from FTA's Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program. The grants will be used to replace, modernize, and purchase buses and related equipment.

Trump-era transportation project more focused on rural areas including Alabama

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS ON APRIL 9, 2018 INFLUENCE & POLICY, SLIDER

Forget about bike-share stations in Chicago or pedestrian walkways in Oakland. That's so Obama-era.

In the Trump administration, a popular \$500 million transportation grant program is focused more on projects in rural areas that turned out for Donald Trump in the 2016 election. That means more road and rail projects in GOP strongholds such as Idaho, North Dakota, and Oklahoma, and fewer "greenways," "complete streets" and bike lanes.

The latest round of these grants has nothing for New York City, Los Angeles or Chicago. Money in those Democratic heavy states went instead to projects in Trump-friendly regions: repainting a bridge in New York's North Country, contributing to a highway project in Modesto, California, and upgrading an interstate highway in southern Illinois.

It's a refocusing from the priorities of the previous administration, which gave most of these TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grants to urban areas represented by President Barack Obama's Democratic allies on Capitol Hill.

"More than 64 percent of this round of TIGER funding was awarded to rural projects, a historic number that demonstrates this Administration's commitment to supporting the country's rural communities," the Transportation Department said in a release announcing the grants last month.

"I was very pleased," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, when asked about the focus on rural areas. Maine won \$10.8 million to help repair three rural bridges on routes critical to the state's timber industry.

The program was established under Obama's 2009 economic recovery bill. The grants, distributed at the discretion of the administration, are just a small fraction of the overall federal transportation dollars when compared with more than \$50 billion distributed annually to states by formula from the highway trust fund.

Trump has twice targeted the grant program for elimination, only to sign a huge spending bill into law last month that tripled its budget to \$1.5 billion.

Questions arose during the Obama administration about political favoritism when grants consistently went in greater numbers to congressional districts represented by Democrats. For example, in 2013, about two-thirds of TIGER money was awarded to such districts.

One of those grants went to help Florida International University construct a pedestrian bridge over a busy road. The structure collapsed last month, killing six people. Continue [HERE](#)

Funding Opportunities

Transit Planning Funding

CTAA announces the availability of funding for inclusive planning projects ([deadline May 4th, 2018](#))

The Community Transportation Association along with its partners the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Institute for Community Inclusion of the University of Massachusetts-Boston is pleased to announce the availability of a new round of funding for local inclusive planning projects. CTAA, with financial support from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, and in collaboration with other federal and national partners, is making available grants of up to \$35,000 each for up to 20 organizations for a six-month period. The new projects are expected to adopt inclusive strategies that fit their communities and build upon learning from previous projects. It is anticipated that the experience from these grants will add to the knowledge garnered from previous project and help to build recognition and support for inclusive planning across the U.S.

[To learn more about the grants and to apply, download the grant application package here.](#) (PDF)

The mission of this project, sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living (ACL) in collaboration with the Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration, is to demonstrate the value that inclusive processes can bring to coordinated transportation efforts.

We are developing, testing, and demonstrating ways to empower people with disabilities and older adults to be actively involved in designing and implementing coordinated transportation systems. The project's goal is to support communities nationwide in adopting proven, sustainable, scalable, and replicable models that include participation of people with disabilities and older adults in the design and implementation of coordinated transportation systems that are responsive to their needs. To date, the project has funded [25 demonstration programs](#) and compiled a wealth of information and resources on the inclusive planning process.

For questions about the project, contact project director Charles Dickson at dickson@ctaa.org.

[ACL Inclusive Planning Project Round Four Grantees: Case Studies](#)

Our eight 2016-17 projects across the country demonstrated different approaches to inclusive planning. [Read here about each project's approach, lessons learned, and accomplishments.](#)

Mobile Urban Area Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funding Availability Announcement

(deadline May 1st, 2018)

The Mobile MPO has announced the availability of the Fiscal Year 2019 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., Tuesday, May 1, 2018.

Electronic versions of the applications are available online at:

<https://mobilempo.org/TransportationAlternatives.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 Program (TAP) for FY 2019. *(Deadline May 1st, 2018)*

There are several changes to the State's TAP application and instructions this year. Application information packets were mailed out to city and county agencies this week.

The deadline for submission of FY 2018 TAP applications including support documentation is Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

Please contact Tina Milton at (334) 353-6441 (miltont@dot.state.al.us) if you have questions regarding this matter.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant programs

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (FY 2017)

CRISI program: Applications are due no later than *5:00 p.m. EDT, June 21, 2018*.

More information on FRA's CRISI website: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1079>

Overview: This program will fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of passenger and freight rail. See the [FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for more information.

Legislative Authority: This program was authorized in Section 11301 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. 114-94 (2015); 49 U.S.C. § 24407. Funding under this program was made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Public Law No. 115-31, Division K, Title I. **Amount:** \$65,232,400

Restoration and Enhancement Grants Program (FY 2017)

REG program: Applications are due no later than *5:00 p.m. EDT May 22, 2018*.

More information on FRA's REG website: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1081>

Overview: This program will fund operating assistance grants for initiating, restoring, or enhancing intercity rail passenger transportation. See the [FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for more information.

Legislative Authority: This program was authorized in Section 11303 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94 (2015); 49 U.S.C. § 24408. Funding under this program was made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Public Law No. 115-31, Division K, Title I. **Amount:** \$4,796,500

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

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

FHWA Offers New Funding for Innovative Demonstration Projects

New funding is available from the Federal Highway Administration's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program to

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

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

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

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

Industrial Access Road and Bridge

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

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available click [HERE](#) or type www.grants.gov in your browser.

Just For Fun



Today is Friday the 13th. A day synonymous with bad luck which until today, I thought was attributed to only Hollywood. HOWEVER, this unlucky day actually has quite a history https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friday_the_13th. ALSO, in Hispanic and Greek cultures it is not Friday the 13th that everyone is afraid of, but it is [TUESDAY the 13th](#). FURTHER, in Italy, [Friday the 17th](#) is considered bad luck, and you should never mess with a Sicilian, when death is on the line!

Speaking of bad luck... Can you imagine this poor guy in New Orleans getting multiple (10) speeding tickets.... for his parked car? AND the city is hassling him about fighting it in court or paying the ticket... How is this even possible? I guess anything is possible in the Big Easy. [HERE](#)



In the News



County promotes its own to lead engineering, public works

Posted by [Jason Johnson](#) | Apr 5, 2018 | [Latest News](#) | [0](#) |

After an 18-month search and a retooling of its public works department, Mobile County has found a replacement for long-time engineer Joe Rufer in two current employees.

During a conference meeting Thursday morning, Mobile County Commissioners voted to name Bryan Kegley as the county engineer and Ricky Mitchell as the new public works director and chief engineer of the division of public roads.

Under Rufer, [who held the post for 42 years](#), the engineering department functioned as one body, but that changed after a \$30,000 evaluation the county commissioned in 2017 suggested the position wielded too much direct control over a wide-range of county functions.

After a recommendation from an [outside consulting firm](#), the commission decided last summer that several duties previously administered by the county engineer alone would be divided between the position and a newly created public works director position.

In addition, some previous engineering functions like parks and recreation and environmental services were removed from the department entirely and placed under the control of county administration — eliminating a number of what the firm called “duplicative” and “unnecessary” internal functions like IT services, human resources and a standalone finance department.

Under the new format, the supervision of road projects will be handled by Kegley, while other functions like building maintenance and equipment services will fall under Mitchell’s purview, though each will have additional responsibilities outside of those primary roles.

Mitchell and Kegley were each selected from a number of applicants after undergoing public interviews in March.

Kegley, a graduate of Baker High School and the University of South Alabama, has served as the county’s assistant engineer since August 2011. He holds a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and is a licensed, professional engineer and land surveyor.

Likewise, Mitchell has served as the county’s deputy public works director since 2011, though he hails from north Alabama. A graduate of Pinson Valley High School, Mitchell attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham where he completed a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering. He is also licensed, professional engineer. The transition should be a smooth one, as Kegley and Mitchell have been supervising engineering functions since Rufer’s retirement in 2016. Going forward, they’ll oversee a department that typically takes up around 30 percent of the county’s multi-million dollar budget.

In a press statement announcing the hires, Commission President Connie Hudson specifically acknowledged the pair’s leadership over the past year and a half as the department was restructured and reorganized from the top down.

“Mr. Kegley and Mr. Mitchell have stepped up and led their respective departments well over the past 18 months,” she said. “We look forward to their continued service and dedication to the citizens of Mobile County.”

Florida to Alabama: Resolve your coastal bridge concerns before coming to us

Updated Apr 11; Posted Apr 11



Wynell Bell, a longtime resident along Canal Road in Orange Beach, Ala., talks in opposition toward including a new state-funded bridge project within the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization’s long-range plan during an April 11, 2018, meeting in Milton, Florida. The TPO decided to hold off until its June 2018 meeting on whether to include the bridge project within its plans. (John [Sharp/isharp@al.com](#)).

By [John Sharp](#)
[jsharp@al.com](#)

The battle over bridges and the widening of a congested roadway in coastal Alabama wound up in the lap of Florida public officials on Wednesday. Those same officials told Alabama they had to deal with the issue first.

"This thing needs to be resolved in Alabama before coming to his board," said Grover Robinson, a member of the Escambia County Commission.

The Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization, an arm of the West Florida Regional Planning Commission and a group that consists of mostly Pensacola area government officials, opted to postpone until its June meeting whether to include two coastal Alabama bridge projects in its long-range plan. The TPO’s boundaries encompass Santa Rosa and Escambia counties in Florida, and a small portion of Baldwin County that includes Lillian and Orange Beach.

"There are 12 Floridians present to vote on this and ... I'm not prepared to vote on the items in Alabama," said Robinson, a TPO member. "It's not that they are not worthy (projects), but if the shoe was on the other foot, I'd expect some Floridian to be in attendance to vote. Not a single Alabama member is present at this TPO meeting."

Alabama has two voting members on the TPO - Baldwin County Commissioner Charles "Skip" Gruber and Orange Beach City Councilman Jerry Johnson, who were both absent. Johnson is challenging Gruber for his Baldwin County seat during the June 5 Republican primary.

Matthew Brown, a Baldwin County design engineer, represented Gruber at the meeting. He emphasized the county's support for the two bridge projects.

"We have folks coming to the beach and one of the big concerns is what happens in case of a major emergency," said Brown. "There are two bridges allowing folks off the beach area and it's simply not enough in a major emergency." Continue [HERE](#)

In coastal Alabama, a public-private clash over bridges to beaches

Updated Apr 8; Posted Apr 8



The toll plaza at the Foley Beach Express bridge on Wednesday, June 28, 2017. The plaza's owner, the Baldwin County Bridge Company - a subsidiary of American Roads LLC - is battling the Alabama Department of Transportation in a condemnation lawsuit for a portion of the bridge.

By [John Sharp](#)
jsharp@al.com

An \$87 million state-funded bridge project across the Intracoastal Waterway connecting the Foley Beach Express to Alabama's beach cities is an "unnecessary waste of taxpayer funds" and violates past agreements. That's according to a strongly worded court filing that is setting up a rare high-profile condemnation case in coastal Alabama: The private Baldwin County Bridge Company - a subsidiary of American Roads LLC - is duking it out with the Alabama Department of Transportation about the Foley Beach Express toll bridge.

The showdown could have bigger implications for the future of bridges and roads into and out of [Alabama's hottest tourism destination](#). It also might give pause to the popular talk statewide about establishing public-private partnerships to undertake expensive infrastructure projects.

"We have to be able to move traffic., we've got to be able to evacuate and we have to be able to grow," said Orange Beach Mayor Tony Kennon, who is watching the litigation closely but is not a party to it. "One bridge with a toll does not help us do that."

Presently, only two bridges lead visitors into Gulf Shores and Orange Beach - the Foley Beach Express toll bridge adjacent to The Wharf entertainment complex in Orange Beach and the Alabama 59 bridge in Gulf Shores. Continue [HERE](#)

Transportation Research

[FTA's 2018 Comprehensive Review Guide](#)

This FTA *Comprehensive Review Guide* strives to streamline FTA review programs and outlines the minimum compliance requirements for grant recipients. Part of the effort in putting the guide together was to ensure that all requirements relate directly to "specific, citable, written requirements." This will help grantees know exactly how FTA will determine compliance, what is expected during a Triennial or State Management Review, and the reasons behind a deficiency finding.

[Identification of High Pedestrian Crash Locations](#)

This FHWA guidebook presents a process to help state and local agencies identify high pedestrian crash locations and includes a literature review, case studies, and other research needed to develop a five-step process.

NEW! AASHTO LRFD Bridge Design Specifications, 8th Edition

Check out this video for details about the new 8th edition of the *LRFD Bridge Design Specifications*, including information on the major updates that have been made to the Specifications since the 2014 7th edition.

For more information or to purchase a copy, visit the AASHTO Bookstore online at <https://bookstore.transportation.org>, and search by the item code, LRFD-8.



Bicycle Safety Survey

ALDOT is conducting a research project "Comprehensive Investigation of Bike Crash Causes, Patterns and Countermeasures in Alabama". Please help us share this link to participants (both drivers and bicyclists). This survey is being conducted by the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) on behalf of the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). The main objective of this survey is to identify the status of drivers' and bicyclists' understanding of cycling regulations and rules in Alabama. The survey results will help design the appropriate outreach programs to better educate both drivers and bicyclists.

https://uah.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_exhrpcJAXEaijWl

FHWA Publishes Guidance on TPM Travel Time Metric Data Reporting to HPMS

The third performance measure regulation in the National Performance Management Measures requires state DOTs to submit performance metric and related data to the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) by June 15, 2018 and annually thereafter. The national travel time-based performance measures include the: Interstate Travel Time Reliability Measure, Non-Interstate NHS Travel Time Reliability Measure, Freight Reliability Measure, and CMAQ Peak Hour Excessive Delay Measure. FHWA released a document with information and guidance on complying with these requirements

New ADA Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Compliance App

Download it Today



<http://www.vueworks.com/sidewalks-and-curb-ramps-application/>

- Simple to Use
- Download from Apple Store or Google Play
- Collect information at your pace
- Gathers ADA Compliance inventory and condition information
- Location is automatically collected in GIS

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.