



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, August 29th, 2014

Volume 11, Number 8

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Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission's Rural Planning Organization (RPO) is planning a meeting soon. (See *RPO Updates*). The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met last week (See *MPO Updates*) and there is something interesting going on under Interstate State 10 in front of the Wallace Tunnel. (See *In The News*). We hope you all have a safe and enjoyable Labor Day Weekend!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK
706-1CAR

Rural Planning Organization (RPO) Update

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) will host a meeting of the **Rural Planning Organization (RPO) Committee** at **2:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 11, 2014 at the Baldwin County Central Annex at 22251 Palmer Street in Robertsdale, Alabama.**

Items on the agenda include adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting, adopting the Fiscal Year 2015 Work Program, updating the RPO Transportation Plan and Safety Needs List of Projects, and a discussion of current and future transportation projects in the rural areas of Mobile, Baldwin and Escambia Counties.

The agenda for the meeting, the minutes to be adopted, and the Draft Work Program for Fiscal Year 2015 are available for review on the RPO website [HERE](#).

If you would like to suggest an item to add to the agenda or if you have any questions or comments, or if you need assistance attending the meeting, feel free to call us at (251) 433 – 6541.

Mobile MPO Updates

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE NON-MOTORIZED MOBILITY STUDY FOR DOWNTOWN MOBILE, ALABAMA

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission is requesting submittal of interest in the form of a proposal from all qualified firms interested in performing work outlined in the following scope of work. (All firms submitting proposals must be on ALDOT's List of Qualified Consultants). Proposals are due September 3, 2014. For scope of work and information, please see [\[HERE\]](#)

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In case you missed it, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge has been approved by the FHWA and public meetings have been announced. ALDOT will host two public hearings for the Mobile River Bridge project. Officials will be on site to answer questions about the proposed bridge and Bayway widening and solicit comments and concerns from the public. Please see <http://www.mobileriverbridge.com/> where you can view the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Under the Documents Tab) and keep up with the latest developments.

Public Meetings:

Tuesday, September 23, 2014 - 4 p.m. until 8 p.m.
Alabama Cruise Terminal
201 S. Water Street
Mobile, AL 36602
<http://www.shipmobile.com/>

Monday, September 29, 2014 - 4 p.m. until 8 p.m.
Five Rivers Delta Resource Center
30945 Five Rivers Blvd, Spanish Fort, AL 36527
<http://www.outdooralabama.com/outdoor-adventures/5rivers/>

The Mobile MPO Met Last Week

The Mobile MPO met on Wednesday, August 20, 2014. The board adopted the FY2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and included various projects into the FY 2012-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Mobile MPO voted on the following recommendations made by the TCC/CAC. Projects to be included into the TIP are:

Mobile Urban Area FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Funds projects recommend for approval. The projects selected include:

- The City of Bayou La Batre - \$44,600 federal funds for a 15 passenger van
- Mobile ARC \$173,000 federal funds for operating assistance for public transit for disabled clients
- AHEPA - \$40,000 federal funds for a 15 passenger van
- Mercy Life - \$64,000 federal funds for a 28-30 passenger bus
- Mobile Bay Transportation Company - \$64,964 for two vans and \$21,563 for operating assistance for public transit for elderly and disabled clients

HSIP Funds

- ROW, Interchange modifications on US 45 at SR 158 to install roundabout design; \$208,000
- UT, Interchange modifications on US 45 at SR 158 to install roundabout design; \$48,048
- CN, Interchange modifications on US 45 at SR 158 to install roundabout design; \$1,248,000

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As you may recall we contracted with SARCOR with Nelson Nygaard to develop a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Mobile MPO study area. We received a draft of the document and are currently reviewing it. Once we get comments from the WAVE Transit, the document will be available for public review, starting next week hopefully. The TDP is going to be the focus of the Transit Element of the *Destination 2040* Long Range Transportation Plan, and will be adopted as part of LRTP.

Destination 2040

The MPO Staff is continuing to develop the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan titled Destination 2040. The objective of the plan is to identify, to the maximum extent feasible, the multi-modal transportation improvements which will be needed in the Mobile urban area between now and the year 2040 in order to maintain an acceptable level of mobility. The plan is multi-modal in scope, encompassing long-range plans for highway, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian networks. Regional growth, economic development, and accessibility within the study area along with environmental concerns necessitate that the long-range plan addresses not only improved vehicular travel but also improvements to other modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking. Preservation of the existing transportation system coupled with enhancement of all modal choices will contribute to the improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. You can learn more about the plan [HERE](#).

Projects Within Region Let August 29th, 2014

MOBILE COUNTY

- for constructing the Bridge Replacement and Approaches on CR-28 (Old Pascagoula Road) over Jackson Creek. Length 0.289 mi.
- for constructing the Widening, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on Juniper Avenue from the junction of SR-13 (US-43) to the junction of Aaron Drive in Satsuma. Length 0.865 mi.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on CR-30 (Huxford Road) from the intersection of SR-21 to the intersection of CR-45 (Butler Street) in Huxford. Length 2.491 mi.
- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on Sowell Road from the Brewton City Limits to the intersection of CR-7 (Kirkland Road) (Site #1) and on CR-7 (Kirkland Road), Sybil Lane, and CR-9 (Old Castleberry Road) from the Brewton City Limits on CR-7 to the Brewton City Limits on CR-9 (Site #2). Length 3.143 mi.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Funding Opportunities

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)








The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) has \$682,757 available for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a grant program that develops community parks, trails and outdoor recreation projects. This program, through The U. S. Department of Interior, provides funding to Alabama cities and counties for the development or establishment of outdoor recreational areas. Projects include parks, playgrounds, forest and wildlife refuges, recreational lakes and ponds, outdoor playing fields, and picnic and camping areas. The deadline for the 2014 Land and Water Conservation Fund Pre-applications is 12:00 noon on Tuesday, September 2, 2014. If you have any questions, you may contact:

Maureen Neighbors
Community Services Unit Chief
Community and Economic Development Division
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
401 Adams Avenue | Montgomery, Alabama 36104
Post Office Box 5690 | Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5690
334.242.5467

More information and the grant application is available [HERE](#).

Also, there are more funding opportunities from the ADECA Energy Division are listed below. All

proposals are due by Friday, September 5, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. Eligibility should be verified before submitting a proposal.

1.  [Energy Codes Training RFP](#)
Soliciting proposals from qualified applicants to provide training on the statewide commercial and residential energy codes
2.  [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of K-12 Schools RFP](#)  [Addendum A \(K-12 Schools\)](#)
Soliciting proposals from public school systems in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements in K-12 schools located within their jurisdiction
3.  [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of Non-Profit Organizations RFP](#)  [Addendum A \(Non-Profit Organizations\)](#)
Soliciting proposals from non-profit organizations in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements to their buildings
4.  [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of Wastewater Treatment Facilities](#)  [Addendum A \(Wastewater Treatment Facilities\)](#)
Soliciting proposals from wastewater treatment facilities in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements to wastewater systems.

Just For Fun

Eat your heart out, Luke Skywalker. Here's a robot riding a hovercycle!

This isn't a scene from a science fiction movie; the bike is less than four feet long and combined robot and bike weighs a maximum of 15.4 pounds. Created by [Malloy Aeronautics](#), the Drone 3 hoverbike is a 1/3rd scale model of the version ultimately intended for human pilots and passengers. To see it in action click [HERE](#)

In the News

The National Park Service and the Natchez Trace Parkway Association have partnered on a couple of pilot projects that will interest our cyclist readers.

They have installed 'Cyclist May Use Full Lane' signs and sharrows along the [Natchez Trace Parkway](#) around Tupelo, MS and Leipers Fork, TN to improve cyclist safety.



Baldwin Beach Express tested and other traffic notes for your Friday

By [Angela Levins | alevins@al.com](#)

MOBILE, Ala. -- The interstates and highways will be roadwork free for the holiday weekend. ALDOT will pull all workers from their projects at noon Friday. The crews will be back on the job Tuesday. Stay aware when driving, because emergency lane closers could still be possible depending on the circumstances.

MAWSS also plans to pull its work crew off the Royal Street emergency sewer repair work on

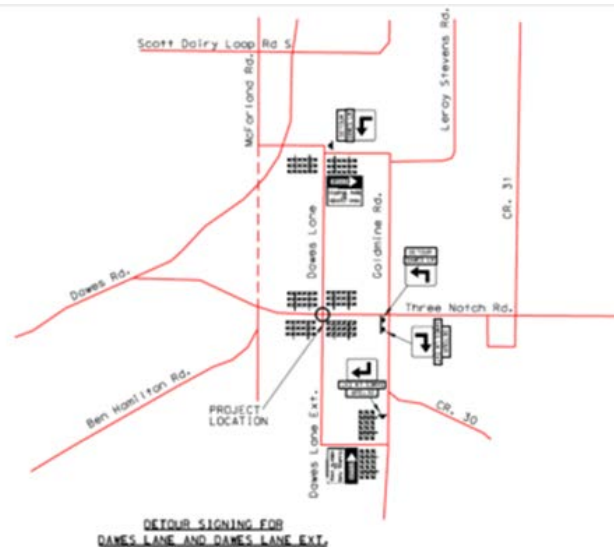
Friday. Royal between Dauphin and Conti Streets has been shut down for about two weeks. A MAWSS spokesman said tests will be done in the morning to make sure they can put a temporary patch on the road. MAWSS plans to resume work on Tuesday, and it should take another three to four days to complete.

The Baldwin Beach Express will be put to the test this weekend. But will the out of towners know it's there? **That's the concern for Baldwin County Engineer Cal Markert.**

"There is a lot of people that haven't found it yet, so I imagine it will take a cycle of summers and holidays before people really start getting on it," Markert told AL.com.

In our extremely unscientific poll, the majority of you don't plan to travel far from home for the holiday weekend. Out of the 181 votes cast, 111 people said they will travel up to twenty miles. However, about a third of the voters said they will travel 100 miles or more.

ALDOT reminds all drivers to drive safe; wear your seatbelt, don't text or drink and drive, and obey the speed limit.



Three Notch Road at Daves Lane and Daves Lane Extension will be closed for about two months starting Tues., Sept. 2, 2014 to complete the roundabout construction. (Courtesy Mobile County Commission)

A reminder that on Tuesday work will begin to complete Mobile County's second roundabout. The intersection of Three Notch Road at Daves Lane and Daves Lane Extension will be closed for about two months. Detour signs will be posted, so, keep your eyes peeled.

Here's where ALDOT will resume work after the holiday:

Mobile County:

SR-163: Resurfacing and safety widening started Monday. The daytime work is scheduled for 35 working days. Katie Hamlett, ALDOT's Media and Community Relations Officer, said the work could finish early if the weather continues.

I10: The interstate 10 ramp leading to Battleship Parkway that was damaged in a fiery accident July 31 remains closed.

I10: From Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George C. Wallace Tunnel. Road and bridge work is just getting started with completion expected next summer. Drivers can expect lane closures with minimal or no delays Sunday to Thursday from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m.

I65: From just North of AL158 in Saraland to a mile north of U.S. 43. Road and bridge work about 95% complete. Traffic impacts possible in the evening, but very few.

U.S. 90: From Halls Mill to Pine Hill Drive. Work getting started to resurface the road. Lane closures will be at night. Drainage repairs could temporarily detour traffic at times. Work is expected to be complete by December.

Baldwin County:

I10: CR 68 connector to Baldwin Beach Express. Work is about 90 percent complete. Drivers may see an occasional lane closure on CR 83.

AL 181: From U.S. 31 to south of U.S. 90. Road resurfacing creating lane closures at night. Delays and minor backups are possible. Work should be complete by October.

Little Lagoon Pass bridge remains under construction. ALDOT reports that the work is about 50 percent complete. There is a detour bridge next to the Little Lagoon Pass bridge. It's expected to be in place until the end of 2014. Expect minimal traffic delays.

Pipes with human faces and old outhouses: Digging for treasures near I-10

By [John Sharp | jsharp@al.com](mailto:jsharp@al.com)

MOBILE, Alabama – Bonnie Gums combs through the dirt like she's digging for gold. For her, the discoveries several feet below ground level are akin to the jackpot. She's an archeologist and the artifacts she's finding date back to colonial days – the late 1700s.

Since May, she and her staff that consists of University of South Alabama students and employees at the [Center for Archeological Studies](#) have been parked near the interchange of Interstate 10 at the Wallace Tunnel, digging for artifacts.

The conditions haven't been favorable -- it's been very hot work -- and the hours are long – nine hour days are not uncommon. The work can be tedious for the common person.

To top it all off, the staff is unearthing privy pits – commonly called outhouses.

"It's really rich, dark soil," said Gums, a research archeologist for 19 years.

She said there is no centuries-old foul odor.

The digging near the I-10 interchange is required before a state and federally funded project moves forward that will require plenty of excavation and road work.

"The whole process is designed to allow construction and archeology co-exists," said Greg Waselkov, director for the Center for Archeological Studies at USA. "The whole process involves searching for sites and when we find them, we learn if we can tell anything new from them and then we go on excavations. When we're finished, the (Department of Transportation) can come in and do their work."

Gums and her staff are doing their work ahead of the Alabama Department of Transportation's \$30 million reconfiguration of the interchanges leading into the Wallace Tunnel. The project could be under construction by 2016.

It's unrelated to the proposed Interstate 10 Bridge project over the Mobile River.

"People had been coming by thinking it's part of the bridge work, but it's not," said Waselkov said. While work is winding down on the approximately four-month project, Gums and her staff will plan to do a smaller dig closer to I-10 in October. That project will last one month.

This summer, the team has found a lot. Some of the artifacts link back to 19th century neighborhoods and give researcher ideas about how Mobile lived during that era.

Some of the items found include pipes with human faces carved into them, a coin dating to the 1750s, shoe leather dating to the early 1800s, and plenty of soil deposits that requiring further analysis by the USA archeologists.

At one point the team thought they found what might have been the remnants of a rice field during colonial times. Instead, the thinking has shifted to possible "hurricane deposits," indicating that the area closest to I-10 might have been devastated by a years-ago storm.

"We have an indication of hurricane deposits," Waselkov said. "There are specialists we'll ask to look at things like the pollen and ... bits of the plants. We're not sure where it's all heading."

But it's the litter that is unearthing some of the more tangible finds. Ironically, in a time when Mobile is becoming more conscious to litter, the unearthed remains appear to be those left by the trash people dumped into privies.

"There is a lot of trash from the abandonment of pits," Waselkov said. "It's a time capsule of what was in use at that moment in the lives of those people. They are often quite informative."

The Center has done similar archeological digs nearby in downtown Mobile. The digs often provide the group with a historical perspective of what used to exist in the downtown area, near Fort Conde.

But the digging requires patience.

Sarah Mattics, an archeologist with the Center and a Semmes resident, was busy one hot August afternoon sifting through the dirt analyzing the soil to see how and where it "changed dramatically" in colors. A darker soil might indicate the existence of a privy, a field or something else.

"You learn not to mind these nine hour days," she said.

Gums' team also consisted of graduate and non-graduate archeology majors at USA, including Jacob Wells, 24; Gabriel Gold-Vukson, 27; and Amanda Sutton, 30.

Then there is Traci Cunningham, a retired Bay Minette elementary school teacher who heads out for archeology digs with the USA team. "I do this for fun," she said.

She spent one hot afternoon shaded from the overpasses of I-10, looking for artifacts from a load of dirty hauled to her in a wheelbarrow.

Call it the thrill of the chase.

"It's rare to go through a wheel barrow and not find anything," she said. Check out a video [HERE](#)

Alabama Association of Regional Councils Annual Training Conference

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils (of which SARPC is one) is having the Annual Training Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach October 26-29, 2014. This conference is open to anyone associated with SARPC. There are training sessions for Planning and Transportation, Economic Development, Medicaid Waiver and Aging, and Local Leaders. For more information and to register click [HERE](#).



September – Multi State Passenger Rail Meeting in New Orleans

Last Week, representatives from the Southern Rail Commission held a conference call with staff members of the Federal Railroad Administration to discuss and initiate formal coordination for a multi-state passenger rail meeting. The meeting will be primarily sponsored by the SRC.

Where: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission offices. 10 Veterans Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70124

When: September 18th, 2014

Time: 10am to 2pm (tentative)

Agenda topics will tentatively include:

SRC will lead discussion regarding gulf coast passenger rail service restoration from New Orleans to Orlando

FRA will lead workshop/discussions on their recently announced funding for multi-state planning and ways to jointly apply for this funding.

Opportunities for individual states to share their rail planning, and discuss their opportunities and plans to connect with neighboring states

Invitees: To include key mayors from our gulf coast route, DOT representatives from each state, and Regional Planning Commissions from key cities that are actively working on rail projects.

States involved: - Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Tennessee

Sponsor opportunities: The Southern Rail Commission is the major sponsor, along with the FRA, and the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission.

Transportation Research

1ST ANNUAL ALABAMA RURAL ROAD SAFETY WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE

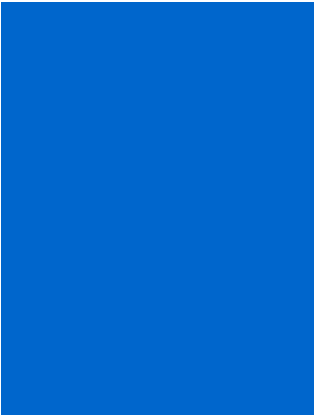
The Alabama Rural Road Safety Workshop and Conference is for engineers, planners and others who are responsible for the design, maintenance, and safety of rural roads. It will strengthen your knowledge of available tools, countermeasures and processes to improve safety on your roads, and includes a one-day eight hour Workshop followed by a one and one half day Conference. The Workshop explains how road safety may be integrated into rural/ local transportation projects at all stages including planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. The Conference emphasizes methods to identify rural road safety issues and appropriate countermeasures. Participants may attend either the Workshop or Conference, or both. For more information click [HERE](#).

A Useful Resource: Roadway Safety Guide: A Primer for Community Leaders

The Roadway Safety Foundation is a non-profit organization created in 1995 whose mission is to "...reduce the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities through improvements to roadway systems and their environment." Earlier this year, the RSF released an updated version of its Roadway Safety Guide: A Primer for Community Leaders, available online [HERE](#).

The guide is intended to be a document that is useful for people who are not highway safety professionals (such as elected officials and other community leaders). The guide begins by providing a context for highway safety issues and a general primer on roadway safety. This is followed by a series of stories on case studies and best practices. There is a chapter on vulnerable users – older drivers, young drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists, and suggestions on resources for funding and further information.

Combined Intelligence - Working Together for Smarter Transportation



In September of 2014 the Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society (GRITS), the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida (ITSFL) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Georgia (ITSGA), will come together for a joint annual meeting. Join us in 2014 for the ITS 3C Summit.

ITS 3C Summit

The conference will be held **September 14-17, 2014** at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center along the waterfront in Mobile, Alabama.

Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center

One South Water Street

Mobile, AL 36602
