



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 26, 2016

Volume 17, Number 8

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The Mobile MPO Policy Committee meets next week on March 2nd; see *Mobile MPO Updates*. **A NEW ROUND OF TIGER GRANTS IS ANNOUNCED** and Recreation Trails; See *Funding Opportunities*. This week's *Just For Fun* hits a high note. The WAVE Transit (*the City Of Mobile*) is proposing modifying/cutting some transit service, the public meeting was last night, and people are....angry; see *In The News*.



Hundreds of people showed up at the WAVE Transit's Public Meeting.

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

States and MPO's have been asked to review all roads classified as principal arterials that existed on October 1, 2012, and identifying any necessary functional classification changes to rural and urban principal arterials. For your jurisdiction please [review your Principle Arterials](#) and if there should any changes. If you have any questions, please call staff.

Functional Classification Manual, http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/
NHS Maps and Procedures, http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/national_highway_system/
NHS Questions and Answers, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/qandas/qanhs.cfm>

At some point in the near future staff will be prepared to have a conversation with each local government in the Mobile Urbanized Area about the Functional Classification of their roads. Please stay tuned...

The 2016 Alabama Statewide Freight plan is now available in DRAFT.

The Purpose of the Freight Plan is to:

- Assess existing and projected freight conditions to identify needs and significant project to meet those needs
- Align Alabama's freight policy with federal and related guidance
- Provide guidance to MPO's for freight planning.

Previous Efforts

- 2010 Alabama Statewide Freight Study and Action Plan
- 2013 Alabama Rail Plan and Rail Directory

2016 Alabama Statewide Freight Plan



Mobile, Alabama 36602
(251) 433-6541

MOBILE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) MEETING NEXT WEEK (3/2/2016)

The Technical Coordinating /Citizens Advisory Committee met last week. The MPO Policy Board will meet on March 2nd at 10:00 AM in the SARPC Board Room. There are some modifications (below) that need to be made to the Transportation Improvement Program; please plan on attending.

New Project with Interstate Maintenance Funds

I-165 service Road concrete repair from the end of north ramp to south ramp; CN; 9/30/2016; \$600,000

Projects being deleted

Emergency Bridge Funds: SR-42 (US-98) Extend Bridge over Big Creek East 1440'; 5/28/2021; \$ 10,376,246.24.

Bridge funds: SR-42 (US-98) Extend Bridge over Big Creek East 1440'; CN; 5/28/2021; \$ 10,791,296.08.

Projects being moved with National Highway Funds

SR-158 Extension from Lott Road (SR-217) to Schillinger Road. Grade Drain, Base, Pave and Bridge (EB Seabury Creek, EB Ramp over Seabury Creek Tributary, EB Rogers Road, and Schillinger Road Intersection); CN; From 7/31/2020 To 5/31/2019; \$24,532,239.53.

Construct Bridge on Glenwood Road over SR-42 (US-98); CN; From 5/31/2019 To 5/28/2021; \$ 5,590,990.05.

Projects being moved with Emergency Bridge Funds

Extend Eastbound Bridge on SR-42 (US-98) over Bridge Creek; CN; From 5/31/2019 To 5/28/2021; \$4,204,040.00.

Add the following projects using FTA 5310 Funds

City of Saraland - \$43,200 Federal funds for a 15 Passenger Bus

Goodwill Industries - \$43,200 Federal funds for a 15 Passenger Bus

City of Prichard - \$43,200 Federal funds for a 15 passenger bus

Mobile Association of Retarded Citizens - \$163,886 Federal funds for four small transit bus

City of Satsuma - \$24,800 Federal funds for GIS Equipment/Vehicle Shelter

ADA Transition Plans

SARPC has contracted with Neel-Schaffer to conduct the municipal ADA Transition Plans for Public Rights of Way, and assist Mobile County in conducting their ADA Transition Plan for Public Rights of Way. The consultant has completed the initial assessment and well underway in the compiling the inventory of sidewalks and ramps not in compliance in terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act within the MPO Study Area. ALDOT has provided us with State and US "shielded" routes and cross sections that they have inventoried.

Please keep in mind, that every city and county in the State, should have an ADA Transition Plan for not just public Rights of Way (sidewalks), but all public buildings and open spaces. It is your responsibility to have the ADA Transition Plans in place.

The Alabama Transportation Planners Association (ATPA) hosted an ADA Day in Birmingham on October 29th. The Federal Highway Administration gave a presentation on the Americans with Disabilities Act and Transition Plans, then each urban area in the State gave a brief benchmark report as to where they are in developing the Transition Plans for each local government in an Urban Area, if they did not already have them. The afternoon was a question/answer period with a panel of ALDOT and FHWA officials. For a copy of those questions and answers, and the FHWA ADA Presentation, please see [HERE](#).

Projects Within Region Let February 26th, 2016

Mobile County

· For constructing the Permanent Restoration of a damaged site on SR-17 (US-45) at MP 13.130 near the junction of Hogg Road northwest of Prichard. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$105,716 to \$129,208 .

· For constructing the Historic Whistler Bike Trail (Bike Path along an abandoned Railroad Corridor) along SR-17 from a point near the I-65 Interchange (Exit 9) to a point near the SR-158 Interchange in Prichard. Length 1.293 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$525,351 to \$642,096 .

Baldwin County

· For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-180 from 0.560 mile east of the Foley Beach Express (MP 26.038) to just west of SR-161 (MP 28.264) in Orange Beach. Length 2.226 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$783,958 to \$958,171 .

Escambia County

· For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31) from north of the intersection of Tiger Drive/Douglas Lane (MP 71.961) to just south of the Conecuh County Line (MP 81.196) in Brewton. Length 9.235 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,761,504 to \$2,152,950 .

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

Feds push Congress to spend \$98B on transportation this year

By Keith Laing - 02/24/16 03:37 PM EST

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx pushed lawmakers Wednesday to approve a plan from President Obama to spend \$98 billion on transportation projects this year.

The proposal, part of a \$4.1 trillion budget for fiscal 2017, calls for increasing federal transportation spending this year by about \$40 billion over the amount that was included in a highway bill Congress passed last year.

Foxx said Tuesday Obama's plan is a "robust budget proposal that creates an American transportation system unrivaled in its ability to meet the challenges of the future.

"In Fiscal Year 2017 the President's plan includes \$98 billion in transportation investments — a significant increase over FAST Act levels — to support advances in safety, in repairing and replacing aging infrastructure, and in driving forward the innovative technologies that will help us move more safely and efficiently in the coming years. That is a robust investment," he said in a blog post on the transportation department's website.

The new transportation proposal from Obama comes after lawmakers passed a five-year, \$305 billion highway bill last fall. The new law was first highway funding measure that lasts longer than two years that was approved by Congress since 2005.

Lawmakers have raised questions about the feasibility of increasing federal transportation spending levels beyond the approximately \$57 billion per year that is included in the 2015 infrastructure funding law.

"The President's final budget unfortunately doesn't look much different than other years — it is a spending wish list that doesn't reflect our real budgetary constraints and that would saddle hard-working Americans with additional taxes and fees," House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rep. Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) said in a statement when he proposal was released.

The White House has said the plan to increase transportation spending could be paid for by a proposed \$10-per-barrel fee on oil production. Continue [HERE](#)

Mileage fee backers to meet in DC



By Keith Laing - 02/22/16 03:47 PM EST

Backers of plan to tax drivers based on how many miles they travel, instead of how many gallons of gas they buy, are scheduled to meet in Washington this week.

The Mileage-Based User Fee Alliance (MBUFA) will hold its third annual conference on Tuesday to discuss the plan, known in transportation circles as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

The proposal has faced staunch opposition in Washington, where it has been floated as alternative to the 18.4 cents per gallon gas tax that is currently used to pay for infrastructure projects. Critics say it will allow government officials to track the movements of U.S. drivers.

The mileage fee group said Monday that states are studying and the proposal and the recently completed highway bill includes money for additional pilot programs, however.

"While many states have studied or tested mileage-based user fees, for the first time federal funding was approved for such activities in the FAST Act," the group said. "Section 6020 of the new law creates a \$95 million, five-year grant program to pilot mileage-based user fees in states and regions across the country. With the addition of federal funding, it is expected that far more states will pilot this transformational

road funding technique."

States like California and Oregon are conducting pilot programs that will involve 5,000 drivers who will volunteer to track their mileage via one of five manual and automated means.

Officials in both states have stressed that participants in the mileage fee pilot program will not be forced to install GPS trackers on their cars.

"Participants do not need to purchase or install any new technology to be part of the pilot, and many can use existing technology such as smartphones and their vehicle odometer," the California Department of Transportation says in a frequently asked questions section of its Road Charge website.

"The pilot will give participants several options for reporting mileage, including those which do not require technology in the vehicle or mileage reporting," the website continued.

Transportation advocates in Washington have suggested moving to a mileage-based fee system as receipts from the gas tax have dwindled in recent years, but found little support in Congress. Continue [HERE](#)

Time is Running Out: Tell Congress to Support the TIGER and Transit Programs in FY 2017

Erika Young
Director of Strategic Partnerships
Transportation for America

Congress is currently finalizing appropriations requests for FY 2017 and you have only one week to tell Congress to support TIGER and Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment programs.

We need you to support a fully funded TIGER and Capital Investment Programs by signing onto T4A's nationwide support letter. Deadline: Friday February 26th, 2016.

[Read and Sign](#) T4A's TIGER and Capital Investment Program support letter.

The incredibly popular TIGER grant program is one of the few ways that local communities like yours can apply for and win funds from the federal government for important priority projects of almost any kind. This important program gets the best locally-supported projects off the ground. In 2015, TIGER funded 39 projects in 34 states, including a brand new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line in Birmingham, Alabama.

FTA's Capital Investment Program includes funding for New Starts, Small Starts and Core Capacity improvement, all of which fund vital public transit projects. Without full funding this year, projects like Indianapolis' Red Line BRT project and Seattle's light rail extension to Lynwood will be in jeopardy.

Know of others in your community who support the TIGER and Capital Investments Programs? Share this and let's keep the momentum going.

Funding Opportunities

U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx Announces \$500 Million in Eighth Round of TIGER Funding (Due April 29th, 2016)

WASHINGTON –Today, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced \$500 million will be made available for transportation projects across the country under an eighth round of the highly successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program.

"The TIGER program funds vital transportation projects that provide real benefits to communities all across the country. Every year, we see hundreds of compelling applications that have the potential to improve people's access to economic opportunities, make people safer, and improve their well-being," said Secretary Foxx. "I am proud that for seven rounds, TIGER has been able to make a valuable contribution to improving our nation's transportation infrastructure, and I look forward to this year's competition."

Like the first seven rounds, FY 2016 TIGER discretionary grants will fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region.

The 2016 TIGER grant program will continue to make transformative surface transportation investments by providing improvements over existing conditions. The grant program will focus on capital projects that generate economic development and improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation for communities, both urban and rural.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, does not provide dedicated funding for the planning, preparation, or design of capital projects; however, these activities may be funded as part of an overall construction project. Continue [HERE](#)

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Application Workshop

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is sponsoring a RTP application workshop on **Tuesday, March 22, 2016**, at the Center for Commerce, 401 Adams Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama in the 7th Floor Auditorium. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. and the workshop will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end by 12 noon. Participants can access the Center for Commerce parking deck from the South Decatur Street entrance by entering the code 3308#. Everyone interested in competing for RTP grant assistance during this funding cycle is encouraged to attend.

Registration is required. To register, please call Kim Martin at (334) 353-3151 or email her at kim.martin@adeca.alabama.gov by Friday, March 11, 2016. Please provide the name(s) of the workshop attendees and the organization they will be representing. The maximum capacity for the meeting location is 100. Should registration exceed 100, a second workshop will be scheduled.

The workshop will be accessible to all persons. If you have a disability that requires special services, materials, or assistance, please notify Ms. Martin when you preregister. We look forward to working with you during the next funding cycle.

2015 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program

Approx. Grant Amount: \$155,000

The DERA program provides public and/or private on-road and off-road diesel fleet owners and operators funding to help reduce diesel emissions within the State of Alabama. Reducing diesel emissions, such as carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and particulate matter will help improve air quality and human health in Alabama. We would like to partner with fleet owners/managers to retrofit 2006 or older on-road diesel engines and 2009 or older off-road engines with diesel emissions control devices and/or anti-idling systems.

Diesel Emissions Exhaust Control Devices and Anti-Idling Systems Used in Previous Projects:

- Diesel Oxidation Catalysts (DOC)
- Closed Crankcase Ventilation (CCV)
- ZTR Smartstart II (Locomotive Anti-idling System)
- Tri-Pac (Long Haul Truck Anti-idling System)
- Arctic Breeze (Long Haul Truck Anti-idling System)

All devices and systems must be EPA and/or CARB-certified.

Entities awarded funding under this program must secure vendors and contractors through a competitive bidding process required by the U.S. EPA and the State of Alabama.

Interested parties should contact:

Anthony Smiley	Dale Hurst
Office Number: 334-271-7803	Office Number: 334-271-7882
Email: asmiley@adem.state.al.us	Email: adh@adem.state.al.us

Alabama Department of Environmental Management
1400 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, Alabama 36110-2059

EDA releases FY 2016 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Funding Opportunity, announces new grant process to stream application process

EDA recently released the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) notice announcing the availability of funding through the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. The Public Works program is designed to provide funding for design, construction, or renovation of critical public infrastructure needed to create or retain jobs in a locality. The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides resources for both design, construction and renovation as well as technical assistance to support long-term job creation/retention in cases of sudden and severe economic events.

This funding solicitation also announced that EDA is moving towards a two-step application process where applicants can submit a proposal at any time to determine alignment with EDA priorities before submitting a full application. This means there are **no longer any quarterly deadlines for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs**. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact EDA's state representative to develop their project and EDA application. To learn more about EDA's grant programs and opportunities, please feel free to contact Diane Burnett at dburnett@sarpc.org.

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](#)

Just For Fun

**America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!** *(click pic)*



TIJERAS, N.M. (AP) -- New Mexico transportation officials are hoping a "singing road" along historic Route 66 will curb speeding. Tigress Productions is creating the road between Albuquerque and the mountain community of Tijeras for a new National Geographic Channel series dubbed "Crowd Control" that will debut in November. The road uses a series of rumble strips to create music. The driver will hear the tune as long as the speed limit is obeyed. There are only a few such "singing roads" in the world. Aside from getting drivers to slow down, state Transportation Secretary Tom Church says the rumble strips will keep drowsy drivers from falling asleep at the wheel. He says the goal of the experiment is to change driver behavior in a fun way by giving them a reward for obeying the speed limit. [HERE](#) is a good example of the experience. What about [THIS](#) in the Wallace Tunnels?

In the News

WAVE Transit supporters decry cuts at public comment session



By [Lawrence Specker](#) | lspecker@al.com

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on February 25, 2016 at 9:37 PM, updated February 25, 2016 at 9:53

The decision over cuts to Mobile's WAVE Transit system might ultimately come down to numbers, but a Thursday night gathering made clear that the discussion has its emotional side as well.

The occasion was a public comment hearing called by WAVE leaders to gather input on proposed service changes that they say have been made necessary by a reduction in funding from the city of Mobile. The changes are mostly reductions in stops and hours of operation, and the greatest effect would fall on Prichard and Chickasaw.

Consequently it was Prichard Mayor Troy Ephriam who made the most forceful statement of the night, flanked by members of the Prichard City Council as he called on Mobile leaders to reverse their decision. "We're here to stand in opposition to any proposed changes to the routes of the WAVE Transit," Ephriam said. He was cheered by the audience of 200 or so people who packed the rotunda of the GM&O Transit Center, the distinctive former train station on the edge of downtown that now serves as a hub of the WAVE's bus network.

Ephriam said that Prichard leaders had been told that maintaining service in their city would cost nearly \$600,000, and said that the city had never had to pay for WAVE service in the past. He said he found it difficult to believe that Mobile could provide millions in funding, but not the disputed \$700,000.

[Prichard resolution on WAVE Transit](#)

Prichard Mayor Troy Ephriam reads a Prichard City Council resolution to the audience at a public hearing on the WAVE Transit system on Thursday, Feb. 25, 2016.

Ephriam went on to read a joint resolution signed by himself and the members of the Prichard City Council, aimed squarely at their counterparts in Mobile. Among other points, it contained the charges that "the city of Mobile gains federal funding for the WAVE Transit Authority by using the city of Prichard's ridership and demographics" and "The city of Mobile has adjusted its current municipal budget by \$700,000 to create a perceived operating shortfall with the Wave Transit Authority," which in turn is being used as the justification for reducing service.

Ephriam and the Prichard council received an ovation, with most of the audience standing. At the beginning of the meeting, the stage was set by Tyrone Parker, WAVE Transit's general manager. He explained that in September, when the Mobile City Council unanimously passed its 2016 budget, it cut \$703,640 from its allocation to the WAVE, which had forced WAVE leaders to study service reductions. Their proposals were based on several factors, he said, including route inefficiency, route productivity and routing outside Mobile. (Mobile currently is the only local government that funds the WAVE, and after September's cut it still provides about \$5.5 million.) Continue [HERE](#)

The Wave Transit System will be seeking comments from the public regarding proposed transit service changes. The public is encouraged to attend the public hearing. Written comments are welcome and should be mailed to [The Wave Transit System, Attention: Public Comment-#2016, The GM&O Transportation Center, 110 Beauregard Street, Suite 104, Mobile, Alabama 36602](#). All correspondence should include name and address for the official records and will be received until **FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2016, 5:00 p.m. (CST)**. You may also submit comments through The Wave Transit Systems website at www.thewavetransit.com

ROUTE	ROUTE #	ACTION
Highway 45	#5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service operating after 7pm
Dauphin Street	#7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service operating after 7pm Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service to Bel-Air Mall Modify weekday and Saturday bus service, with direct service along Dauphin Street between the GM&O and Springhill Memorial Hospital

Broad Street	#9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service operating after 7pm
Crosstown	#10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service operating after 7pm Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service to Chickasaw Center
Plateau	#16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service operating in Happy Hills and to Eight Mile Shopping Center
Highway 90	#12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate weekday and Saturday bus service to Pleasant Valley Road, Cottage Hill Road, I-65 West Service Road, and Bel Air Mall Modify weekday and Saturday bus service along Government Street, with service expansion to McGowin Park
Tillman's Corner Circulator	#20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate bus service
Downtown Moda!	#14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify weekday bus service Eliminate Saturday bus service
Jury Shuttle	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate bus service

Ahead of public hearing on bus cuts, WAVE supporters turn backs on mayor, city council



By Lawrence Specker | lspecker@al.com

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on February 23, 2016 at 12:40 PM, updated February 23, 2016 at 12:51 PM

As Mobile's WAVE Transit system prepares to grapple in earnest with proposed cutbacks, supporters turned their backs on the Mobile mayor and city council in protest during the council's Tuesday meeting.

Back in September, the Mobile City Council unanimously approved a budget for fiscal year 2016 that cut \$703,640 from the WAVE Transit budget. That dropped its city allocation to \$5.5 million, which is still [far more than what is spent by Huntsville and Montgomery](#), on their public transit systems.

Recently, WAVE has been promoting a public hearing at which it will seek comments on proposed service cutbacks. Several routes in Mobile, Prichard and Chickasaw would lose service after 7 p.m. on weekdays and weekends, and some routes would be cut back. At least two buses, a Tillman's Corner Circulator and a Jury Shuttle, would be eliminated altogether, and the downtown Moda! Shuttle would lose Saturday service.

During the council's Tuesday meeting, more than a dozen WAVE supporters, including employees wearing the service's logo, stood up and turned their backs as Mayor Sandy Stimpson made his regular address to the council near the beginning of the meeting, then filed out afterward. The mayor and council made no comment on the protest as it happened, and nothing related to WAVE was on the council agenda.

Outside the council chambers, Amalgamated Transportation Union President Antonie Maiben explained that the protest was directed at both the council and the mayor. He urged interested parties to turn out to a town hall meeting planned for 4 p.m. Tuesday at the Prichard Municipal Complex, and for the more widely advertised public hearing on Thursday. That event takes place at 6 p.m. Feb. 25 at the GM&O Transportation Center at the corner of Beauregard and Water streets.

Details on the proposed service cuts can be seen at [WAVE Transit's Facebook page](#) and at www.thewavetransit.com.

According to the WAVE website, the service will provide outbound public transportation services for passengers attending the hearing. For additional information contact Zenja Dubose, Director of Operations at 251-344-6600, Ext. 247.

Restoring passenger rail on Gulf Coast among topics discussed at congressional hearing



By John Sharp | jsharp@al.com

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on February 24, 2016 at 6:00 AM, updated February 24, 2016 at 5:11 PM

Fresh off [a historic Amtrak inspection ride through the Gulf Coast last week](#), supporters of reviving passenger rail from New Orleans to Orlando are pushing Congress for to support grant programs that could boost capital needs in getting the service restored. Knox Ross, a Southern Rail Commissioner and mayor of Pelahatchie, Miss., [pushed for on Tuesday](#) the funding of two discretionary grant programs [created in last year's \\$325 billion long-term transportation bill that kick-started efforts to revitalize passenger rail along the Gulf Coast](#). He made his case during [a U.S. Senate Commerce hearing on passenger rail](#).

[Ride along on the historic Amtrak inspection train](#) Ride along on the historic Amtrak inspection train

Ross lobbied the congressional committee for the funding of the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement program and the Restoration and Enhancement Grants program. [More than \\$1.1 billion was earmarked into the safety improvement program through the federal transportation bill](#), but the Commerce committee is charged with overseeing its future appropriations.

"This program funds everything from positive train control to capital construction to planning and research and it's available to all states," Ross said. "Congress has not made dedicated passenger rail capital funding available to our states since 2010. We are past due for Congress to partner with us to implement the state rail plans that are required by this legislative body."

Ross also suggested that Congress not prioritize the popular Northeast Amtrak corridor from Boston to Washington, D.C., over the rest of the U.S. He said continued prioritization of that region is "not fair to our states that have subsidized" the system and "sends the wrong signal to thousands" of Gulf Coast residents who showed up on Thursday and Friday to support Amtrak's inspection train ride.

The transportation bill aims to separate accounts for the Northeast Corridor and a "National Network" that combines long-distance and state-supported networks for accounting and budgeting purposes.

Ross also called on committee members to appoint a southern representative to the Amtrak board of directors and that Amtrak's new CEO – who will be appointed once Joe Boardman retires later this year – have an understanding of the needs of the entire national passenger railroad system. Continue [HERE](#)

Water Street in Downtown Mobile to be Transformed

A new web site has been created to show folks how Water Street can potentially look. Check it out, really great stuff.... [HERE](#)

Created by: DREW BUCHANAN, PUBLISHER AND SENIOR EDITOR Drew Buchanan is a founding partner of The Pulse who currently serves as publisher and senior editor.



CREPE MYRTLE TRAIL RIDE



4.2.2016 Free, with required registration

LENGTH:12 miles

SPEED: Beginner friendly pace, 8-12 mph

WHEN: Saturday, April 2, 2016 ;

8:00 a.m. registration; 8:30 a.m. ride

WHERE: Starts at Arlington Park,
1814 15th Street South, Mobile, AL

DIRECTIONS: From I-10, south on Broad Street for 0.8
miles, then le into Arlington Park

Notes: No training wheels allowed. T-shirts
are \$20 before the event and \$25 on April 2.

Transportation Research

The FHWA Data-Driven Safety Analysis (DDSA) team is presenting a new session in its free DDSA “How-To” webinar series

The session, entitled “Systemic Safety Analysis Approaches With Limited Roadway Data” will be held on March 29, 2016, from 1:00 - 3:00 EST. Participants in this session will:

- Learn how the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) incorporates risk management data, in addition to crash data, into their safety analysis.
- Hear how the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) promotes using crash data and limited other local data to fund local Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects in Idaho.

This webinar is open to all transportation professionals. Participants must register in advance at

<https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/dot/fhwa/WC/Lists/Seminars/DispForm.aspx?ID=897>, or click the button below. Space is limited, so please register as soon as possible.

Note: Non-USDOT employees must have an FHWA external collaboration account to register. If you do not have an account please visit <https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/FBA/Register.aspx> to request one.

Design-Build Push Button Contract Significantly Reduces the Time It Takes to Implement Safety Improvements

An FHWA Roadway Safety Noteworthy Practices Webinar

Date: February 25, 2016

Time: 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

[Register here.](#)

This webinar is based on this [FDOT roadway safety noteworthy practice](#).

As other States may well have discovered, Florida found that making simple safety improvements to local roads could take as long as 3 to 5 years. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) believes that this is way too long when lives are at stake.

In response, FDOT's District 7 (Tampa Bay, Florida), working closely with the Florida Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), developed a "design-build push button" contract that has reduced the time to deliver simple, low-cost safety improvement projects to roughly 1 year. Transportation agencies in FDOT's District 7--which includes the Tampa metropolitan area (Hillsborough County) and four neighboring counties--now can access Federal funds more easily and roll out safety improvements on local roads more quickly.

FHWA's Roadway Safety Noteworthy Practice webinar series will host a presentation on the FDOT Design-Build Push Button contract. The Design-Build Push Button contract reduces the delivery of simple or low cost safety improvements from 3-5 years to 3-9 months. This innovative process helped FDOT achieve their EDC goals and increased the NPV of Safety projects.

Presenters:

- Matthew Weaver, P.E., District Traffic Safety Program Engineer, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
- In addition to FDOT's presentation, **Kevin E. Burgess, P.E.**, Safety Engineer from the Florida FHWA Division will give a brief presentation about FHWA regulations that permitted the implementation of the Design-Build Push Button contract.

Host:

- Melonie Barrington, Transportation Specialist, FHWA Office of Safety
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