Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, June 6th , 2014 Volume 10, Number 10

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET JUNE 27TH, 2014
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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Check out the *Funding Opportunities* section this week for FTA's Ladders of Opportunity and ADEM's Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program. DOT published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register to provide safety performance measures as required by MAP-21. Submit your comments by June 30. Find out what is going toward the next bill, in *Legislative Updates.* Today is D-Day, look at *Just for Fun* for then and now.

Is a beautiful weekend, there is a lot going on at the beach, don't forget to bring a good book to read!

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

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

Mobile MPO Updates

The Mobile MPO met May 21st. The board approved the draft funding schedule for a FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (annual budget) which was submitted to ALDOT for comment today. The full document is being developed and will be made available for public review later this summer. The UPWP will include carryover planning funds that will be used to fund a study for Downtown Mobile that will be in cooperation with and parallel to, the ALDOT Water Street modifications, Bring Back Broad Street Initiative, and various other needed bicycle pedestrian projects downtown.

Carryover Funds

One of the items that was discussed was that the MPO send a letter to ALDOT discussing the recent decrease in our STP Attributable carryover funds. That letter was sent yesterday, and all MPO and TCC/CAC members were copied.

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.

FTA 5310

Although applications were due to us April 30th, the applications are still under review for the FTA 5310 Urban Area funding. As most of you know we are now the Designated Recipient (DR) for the dedicated FTA 5310 funds for the Mobile Urban Area. We had several applications submitted prior to the deadline, and they are currently under review. Awards should be announced shortly. Those that applied, we have been in contact with you, and thank you for your patience.

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Projects Within Region Let June 27th, 2014

MOBILE COUNTY

for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on West Lee Street from Grand Boulevard to Kansas Street in Chickasaw. Length 0.435 mi.

What's Under Construction?

Legislative Updates

U.S. Senate Sets Sights on HTF: Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair of the Senate Budget Committee, this week issued a warning regarding the looming highway trust fund (HTF) shortfall crisis. In a memo to members of the Budget Committee, she emphasized the urgency of finding a solution and the negative consequences of failing to act. Senate Finance Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) – with direct responsibility to find new revenue for the HTF – recently set a goal of developing a plan to solve the short-term HTF insolvency by July, saying, "we're pulling out all the stops to find a funding solution to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent." Passing a more comprehensive long-term solution is unlikely before the HTF faces insolvency in late July or August. It has been reported that Senate Finance is considering ten options to backfill the HTF, including increasing current or developing new user fees, such as a fee paid by oil wholesalers. The House Republican plan to make cuts to the Postal Service is not being considered by the Senate at this time. [HERE] for details

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Senate panel OKs spending bills for Commerce, Justice, Transportation; rolls back House cuts

- Article by: ANDREW TAYLOR , Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A bipartisan coalition on the Senate Appropriations Committee moved Thursday to roll back House GOP-backed cuts to Amtrak, transportation projects and affordable housing projects, but pressures elsewhere in the budget may make the funding levels unsustainable as the massive $108 billion spending bill moves ahead.

The transportation and housing bill was targeted by House Republicans for $1.8 billion in cuts relative to current program levels; the Senate measure is about $2.4 billion above the House measure and more than $600 million above current spending.

The additional money — made available through bookkeeping maneuvers by Senate panel chair Barbara Mikulski, D-Md. — maintains funding for a $550 million transportation grant program that dates to President Barack Obama's 2009 stimulus bill, additional funding for rent vouchers for the poor, and allows for new resources to address the risks of shipping crude oil by rail.

A second, $51 billion bill funding the Commerce and Justice departments and space and science programs also came in above Obama's budget request, including a new program to ease a backlog of untested rape kits and improve the way law enforcement treats sexual assault victims. Additional money for NASA would keep development of a new heavy lift launch vehicle on track for a 2017 launch date.

States' Initiatives Offer Solution to Impending Highway Trust Fund Shortfall

KENNETH ORSKI

Kenneth Orski (korski@verizon.net) is editor and publisher of the Innovation Briefs newsletter. (read full bio)

On June 4 the Heritage Foundation held a Capitol Hill briefing for Congressional staff. Entitled "Which

Way for the Highway Bill?" the well-attended briefing focused on the policy issues facing Congress as it considers the future of the federal surface transportation program. The panel included Emily Goff, Policy Analyst at The Heritage Foundation; Chris Edwards, Director of Tax Policy at Cato Institute; and Ken Orski, Editor and Publisher of Innovation NewsBriefs. The latter's remarks are reproduced below.

While transportation stakeholders and the Washington press corps are agonizing about the impending Highway Trust Fund shortfall and its impact on the federal transportation program, they are ignoring developments outside the Beltway that go a long way toward mitigating the prospective funding shortage. For in fact, individual states, far from standing idly by, are responding to the fiscal uncertainties in Washington by stepping up and augmenting their transportation budgets.

Some states are increasing local fuel taxes (MD, WY, MA, VT, NH), others are finding new ways to raise revenue such as taxing fuel at wholesale level (e.g. PA), enacting dedicated sales taxes for transportation (e.g. VA, AK) or floating toll revenue bonds (e.g. OH, MA). In the words of Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS), states have become "laboratories for fiscal experimentation." (*For a full listing of state funding initiatives, see Appendix, below.*)

Surveys by the National Council of State Legislatures, American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the American Road and Builders Association (ARTBA) have documented transportation-related revenue initiatives in 26 states. In addition, last November, voters approved four local bond referenda and 12 measures to increase local transportation sales taxes. More such grassroots initiatives are expected this coming November.

These measures are cumulatively generating millions of additional dollars for state and local transportation programs and offer a partial antidote to stagnant federal revenue. Continue [HERE]

Funding Opportunities

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA): Ladders of Opportunity Initiative
Deadline August 4th.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces [HERE] the availability of prior year Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Program discretionary funds for the Ladders of Opportunity Initiative in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014.

FTA will make available approximately $100 million from recoveries from the Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Program authorized by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU), Public Law 109–59 and prior authorizations. Additional recoveries or other unallocated program funding may result in additional funding for proposals submitted under this notice. This notice solicits proposals to compete for funding under the aforementioned program and initiatives, and includes the priorities established by FTA for these discretionary funds, the criteria FTA will use to identify meritorious projects for funding, and the description of how to apply for funding under these discretionary programs. This announcement is available on the FTA Web site at: http://www.fta.dot.gov.

A synopsis of this funding opportunity will be posted in the FIND module of the government-wide electronic grants Web site at http://www.GRANTS.GOV. FTA will announce final selections on the FTA Web site and may also announce selections in the Federal Register.

DATES: Complete proposals are due by 11:59 p.m. EDT on August 4, 2014; all proposals must be submitted
electronically through the GRANTS.GOV APPLY function. Any agency intending to apply should initiate the process of registering on the GRANTS.GOV

2014 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA)
Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program
Approx. Grant Amount: $60,000

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

Walk Friendly Communities Now Taking Applications

CHAPEL HILL, NC — The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) has opened the eighth round of the Walk Friendly Communities (WFC) application process. Communities are able to submit applications to the program by visiting http://www.walkfriendly.org/assessment.

Applications are due by June 16, 2014.

PBIC recently named Boulder, Colo., Denver, Colo. and Lakeland, Fla. as new Walk Friendly Communities and re-designated Charlottesville, Va. as a Gold Level community. Currently, 47 communities nationwide have earned Walk Friendly status.

To assist applicants in collecting and preparing their responses, PBIC offers an interactive version of the application. This text version can be circulated among an application team to facilitate the internal review process prior to submission on June 16. All applications must still be submitted through the online application system by creating an account. To download the text version of the application, please visit http://www.walkfriendly.org/get_started.cfm.

WFC is a national recognition program to encourage towns and cities across the United States to establish or recommit to a high priority for safe walking. Assessing the communities' commitment to improve conditions related to walking, including safety, mobility, access and comfort, PBIC makes designations based on a Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze level, and all communities receive detailed feedback on where and how they can improve. A list of current Walk Friendly Communities is available at www.walkfriendly.org/communities.

Officially launched in October 2010, the WFC program is funded by FedEx Corp. and the Federal Highway Administration. For more information, visit www.walkfriendly.org, or direct your questions to info@walkfriendly.org.

Freight opportunity: Off-hours delivery research pilots

The FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations is currently requesting applications to result in the award of a minimum of three cooperative agreements to conduct applied research on the subject of Off-Hours Freight Deliveries. FHWA has partnered with EPA in order to research and demonstrate the efficacy of implementing off hours movements and delivery programs in small to medium size urban areas with emerging or growing congestion problems. The Federal Highway Administration will award up to $450,000 in research pilots and it is expected that recipients collaborate with the European Commission (EC) on similar projects. The solicitation is posted at HERE

and the closing date for applications is June 12, 2014. Please contact Coral Torres at (202) 366-7602 coral.torres@dot.gov if you have any questions.

Please feel free to share this announcement with freight carriers, shippers, or receivers (retailers) who would be interested in participating in the program.

Just For Fun

"Being in a small boat during high seas and storming the beach with 50 caliber German machine guns greeting you", reminds us that Freedom Isn't Free. D-DAY. June 6, 1944.

The Normandy landings, codenamed Operation Neptune, were the landing operations on 6 June 1944 (termed D-Day) of the Allied invasion of Normandy in Operation Overlord during World War II. The largest seaborne invasion in history, the operation began the invasion of German-occupied western Europe, led to the restoration of the French Republic, and contributed to an Allied victory in the war.

Then and Now streets of Normandy

http://time.com/topic/d-day-june-6-1944/

Color Photos of D-Day

http://life.time.com/history/after-d-day-unpublished-color-photos-from-normandy-summer-1944/?iid=lf%7Cmostpop#1

In the News

Don't believe that Godzilla warning: Department of Homeland Security says hackers have infiltrated electronic highway signs

Print

By Leada Gore | lgore@al.com

Email the author | Follow on Twitter
on June 05, 2014 at 10:24 AM

The Department of Homeland Security is warning drivers they may not want to believe everything they read, especially if a strange message comes flashing across an electronic billboard.

In a warning issued yesterday, DHS said a flaw in some electronic freeway billboards could allow hackers to display bogus messages to drivers.

"The vulnerability is a hard-coded password that could allow unauthorized access to the highway sign," DHS officials said. The vulnerability was identified signs using Daktronics Vanguard highway notification software, officials said. It is not clear if all Daktronics highway signs or only certain models are vulnerable.

Daktronics lists the Alabama Department of Transportation among its customers. There has been no indication of signs being hacked in Alabama.

DHS said it has notified the company of the issue and are recommending users "review sign messaging."

Recent sign hacks

The warning comes as high-profile hacks have been reported in two states.

Commuters in California saw a warning saying "Godzilla Attack – Turn Back" during their evening drive last Friday, while others saw a message saying "It's too damn hot."

On the same day, Department of Transportation billboards in North Carolina showed a message saying "Hack by Sun Hacker." DOT officials there said the message was quickly taken down.

General W.K. Wilson Bridge repairs may take months, Satsuma community helping drivers navigate

By Cassie Fambro | cfambro@al.com
May 29, 2014

MOBILE, Alabama-- Travel on the General W.K. Wilson Bridge at northbound Interstate 65 is still limited to one lane after a fiery crash a week ago that left one man dead.

At midday Thursday, traffic flowed smoothly alongside concrete barriers separating traffic from the damaged side of the roadway that is just under a mile past the "Dolly Parton" section of the bridge. The 6-miles-long bridge spans the Mobile, Middle and Tensaw rivers, stretching from Mobile County on the south end to Baldwin County to the north.

Vince Calametti, department of transportation's southwest region engineer, told Alabama Media Group that eight inches of the bridge deck will have to be replaced as a result of both the heat and longevity of the fire from the May 22 accident. The repairs will likely take months to complete. Read the complete story HERE.

Transportation Research

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

The League of American Bicyclists publishes new report of Bicycle Safety

Last week, The League of American Bicyclists released a new report cataloging findings from a year of tracking bicyclist fatalities. For a 12-month period, they set about the grim task of tracking and documenting every fatal traffic crash involving a bicyclist. They also wanted to offer a place to remember the victims and raise the hope that their deaths would at least inform efforts to prevent such tragedies in the future. The result was the Every Bicyclist Counts initiative. Over the course of the project they documented 628 fatal bike crashes. You can read more and find the report HERE.