



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, August 21st, 2020

Volume 35, Number 6

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Minus a coal ash letter, there are not many *Legislative Updates* this week as they are in August recess. There was a Mobile MPO Policy Board meeting this week; see *Mobile MPO Updates. In The News*, a roundabout on Broad Street, Orange Beach candidates are asked some transportation questions, and Governor Ivey awards some safety funds. This week's *Just For Fun* is an oldie.....

It is with great sadness we lost a committee member; Raphael Maharaj passed away this week. Raphael really was the most interesting man in Mobile; he was a blessing to South Alabama and a blessing to this country.

Also we would like to congratulate Rep. Margie Wilcox. On July 22nd she became Chairperson of the Alabama Joint Transportation Committee.

Have a great weekend.

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

www.mobilempo.org



Check us out on FACEBOOK; SARPC Transportation Video, this is what we do [HERE](#)

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

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

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

Mobile MPO Updates

There was a Mobile MPO Policy meeting this week (virtually).

The agenda included the following:

- Adoption FY 2021 [Unified Planning Work Program](#) (planning budget)
- Modify 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program
 - i. Cost estimate change for 100040584 (CN) US98, EB lanes from MS state line to .5 Mile East of Glenwood Rd, from \$18.2M to \$23.9M, FY 2022
 - ii. Cost estimate change for 100033461 (CN) ADDL lanes on I-10 from CR-39 to Carol Plantation, from \$33.4M to \$41M, FY 2021
 - iii. 100071946; PE; 5 Year Regional Traffic Operations (RTOP) TSMO for 130 Signalized Intersections Along SR-59, SR-16 (US-90), and SR-42 (US-98) Target Start Date : 8/1/2020; \$2,631,200
 - iv. 100073250; PE; Independent Review of Austal's Proposed Road Improvements Over the Wallace Tunnels and Bankhead Tunnel; 9/1/2020; \$170,000
- Review of Demand Response Transit Study
- TAP projects (*the TCC/CAC recommended to increase the maximum to \$400,000 fed*)

The adopted 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is now available for review.

The 2021 UPWP is essentially the budget of the Mobile MPO staff. Typically in June of every year, MPO staff reviews the draft document with MPO Policy Board Members and the subcommittees, prior to submitting the draft UPWP to ALDOT and federal agencies for review. The 2021 UPWP was adopted this week and is available [HERE](#).

The MOBILE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM FEASIBILITY STUDY

There was a stakeholder meeting last week concerning the study. VIA presented [HERE](#) potential types of operators and potential operating budget. A big challenge is going to the local community support and matching funds.

The current health crisis has affected the potential outcome of the study. The intent of the study was to find potential local sponsors to match federal funds to create a transit system to operate throughout Mobile County to connect with WAVE Transit. The sponsors would have provided assistance through subscriptions or contracts for commuter trips. The current price of gasoline, and the threat of contracting virus on buses, may put a strain on ridership of a new system. However, there are still people in need of transportation, and there is some thought that regardless of the price of gasoline, there will be an increased number of distressed people due to the economy, that will need transportation. This may be the perfect time to consider transportation throughout Mobile County.

Please review the Tasks 1, 2 and 3 [HERE](#).

There will be a stakeholder meeting scheduled in the near future to discuss the draft report that came out his week. This will be a GOTO meeting.

The Draft Report is [HERE](#)

ENVISION 2045 IS THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The LRTP is multimodal in scope, and is based on public input, and a travel demand forecast model. In 2019, an online survey was conducted with almost 150 respondents. Questions ranged from where is the worst congestion, what roads need improvements, problems with the transit systems, etc. There were a lot of comments about the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and the potential for tolls. Prior

to the online survey, staff also conducted a South Alabama Freight Forum, which was an opportunity to hear from large manufacturers and trucking companies, to find out what the top issues are concerning the movement of freight in South Alabama. The Bicycle / Pedestrian plan was updated, and the public transit section was authored by the Wave Transit, less the Demand Response Transit Study. The Climate Change element, or Extreme Event Planning, remained almost unchanged from *Destination 2040* LRTP.

The LRTP *Envision 2045* was adopted by the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization on April 22, 2020.

More information on the new plan can be found at <https://www.envision2045.org/>

FY 2020-2023 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

The TIP represents a four year program (2020-2023) for improvements in the various transportation systems located within the Mobile study area as identified in the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the twenty-five year plan for the Mobile Urban area. The LRTP establishes the transportation programs that are needed to meet travel demand by the study year and study area. LRTP projects that become funded are moved into the TIP and submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), where they are programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For MPO projects, TIP project selection is based on priorities established by MPO member governments and the availability of funds through the Surface Transportation Attributable program. For other projects, ALDOT has discretion of project funding based on availability of funds from various types of funding categories. Most often, projects in the TIP are derived from the LRTP. The TIP guides ALDOT in its annual allocation of funds for transportation improvements and becomes a part of the STIP.

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

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

Project : 100071698 (CN)
Federal aid number : STPAA I065
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CCTV CAMERA DEPLOYMENT (TSMO) ON I-65 FROM THE WEST END OF THE DELTA BRIDGE TO THE EAST END OF DELTA BRIDGE
Old Target start date : June 28, 2024
New Target start date : January 31, 2025

Project : 100071697 (PE)
Federal aid number : STPAA I065
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CCTV CAMERA DEPLOYMENT (TSMO) ON I-65 FROM THE WEST END OF THE DELTA BRIDGE TO THE EAST END OF DELTA BRIDGE
Old Engineers Estimate : \$208,380.00
New Engineers Estimate : \$138,920.64

Project : 100071128 Federal aid number : NH 0016 County : MOBILE Scope : FM
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-16 (US-90) FROM ST. LAWRENCE STREET TO WATER STREET AND TELEGRAPH ROAD
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Target Start Date : 1/29/2021
Engineers Estimate : \$658,258.00

Project : 100070126 Federal aid number : STPAA 0016 County : BALDWIN Scope : FM
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-16 (US-90) FROM 0.19 MI. EAST OF TENSAW RIVER BRIDGE TO THE WEST ABUTMENT OF BLAKELY RIVER BRIDGE
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Target Start Date : 1/29/2021

Project : 100068298 Federal aid number : NH 0016 County : MOBILE Scope : FM
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-16 (US-90) FROM 0.61 MI. EAST OF COCHRANE BRIDGE TO 0.36 MI. WEST OF TENSAW RIVER BRIDGE
Urban Area : 067 MOBILE
Target Start Date : 12/4/2020
Engineers Estimate : \$2,656,307.00

South Alabama RPO Updates

DRAFT 2021 RPO Work Program is now available for review.

The RPO work Program is the staff budget for SARPC Rural Planning Organization. This draft is identical to the current work program. The DRAFT 2021 Work Program is available on the RPO Webpage [HERE](#).

Projects in Region Let August 28th, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY

For constructing the Additional Lanes (Grading, Drainage, Pavement, Culvert Extension, Traffic Signals, and Traffic Stripe) on Zeigler Boulevard from the junction of Athey Road to the junction of Forest Hill Drive in Mobile. Length 2.762 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$15,625,639 to \$19,098,003 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

Congress is in August Recess

Chairs DeFazio and Napolitano Press EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler Over Rollback of Coal Ash Safeguards

The recently finalized rule by the Trump EPA would slash protections on the disposal of coal ash from power plants, endangering groundwater and the health of U.S. communities

Washington, D.C. – Today, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Chair of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment Grace F. Napolitano (D-CA) sent a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) criticizing EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler – a former coal lobbyist – on the finalization of a rule that would rollback protections on the disposal of coal ash from coal-fired power plants. The Trump administration’s new proposal would allow these dirty electric utilities to contaminate local water sources, including groundwater, with the toxic residuals of coal, despite significant evidence on the adverse effects of these chemicals on human health and the environment.

The Trump EPA’s rule, which was finalized in July 2020, came in response to a U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruling that the 2015 Coal Ash Rule was too weak and failed to protect human health and the environment as required by statute, and that the EPA must protect against pollution from unlined and inadequately lined ash pits, as well as from legacy coal ash ponds.

“Ninety-two percent of coal ash plants are contaminating groundwater with toxic chemicals above Federal health standards. Specifically, of 187 coal plants with regulated ash ponds and available data, 92 percent have one or more ash ponds leaking above Federal safe levels,” **DeFazio and**

Napolitano wrote in their letter. “Despite findings of nationwide groundwater contamination, the EPA is failing to take action, instead giving industry years to comply with the law and endangering generations of families that live near these facilities.”

In the letter, DeFazio and Napolitano also asked Administrator Wheeler to answer several questions regarding specific steps the Trump EPA is taking to protect vulnerable communities and sensitive environments from serious and widespread groundwater contaminants and satisfy the ruling of the D.C. Circuit Court.

A full copy of the letter can be found below and [here](#):

Funding Opportunities

Federal Highway Administration Makes \$60 Million Available for Advanced Transportation

Technologies Grants DEADLINE AUGUST 31st, 2020

FHWA 12-20

Contact: Nancy Singer

Tel.: (202) 366-0660

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$60 million in Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD) grants to fund new technologies that improve transportation efficiency and safety.

“These grants promote the use of advanced technologies to address critical safety issues and efficiency throughout our nation’s transportation network,” said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason. “This program helps unleash technological potential to improve travel for all Americans.”

Created in the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the ATCMTD program works to improve the performance of U.S. transportation systems, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the safety of the traveling public. Now in its fifth year, the ATCMTD program has provided more than \$206 million for projects in 23 states and the District of Columbia.

The program provides funding to help develop model deployment sites for the large-scale installation and operation of advanced technologies that improve safety, efficiency, and system performance. It has funded innovative projects such as Contra Costa Transportation Authority’s Bay Area Mobility-On-Demand (MOD) Project to reduce traffic congestion on the I-680 Corridor and surrounding communities in California, the Florida Department of Transportation’s Sunstore integrated data system for travelers, and the Texas Department of Transportation’s I-10 Corridor Coalition Truck Parking Availability System.

State departments of transportation, local governments, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and other eligible entities are invited to apply under the program.

The NOFO is available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=327953>

New CDBG GRANT Program

To Address COVID-19 Impacts (currently no deadline)

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is in the process of developing a special Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant program to address COVID-19 impacts.

DETAILS: Currently, no application deadline, grant ceilings or other program details have been finalized.

MORE DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED AT A LATER DATE; however, please download the guide below to get started and identify potential partners as needed.

[CLICK HERE](#) to download the Quick Guide to CDBG Eligible Activities to Support Infectious Disease Response that will assist applicants to begin thinking about possible project needs.

Please note that applications to the CDBG program must be in the name of a local government as the applicant/grantee.

Partnerships and agreements with other agencies/entities, etc. can be developed as necessary. CDBG projects must also benefit primarily low and moderate-income people and this requirement will likely remain for the new funds.

RESOURCES/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Department has technical assistance providers that may be available to assist grantees in their implementation of CDBG Funds for activities to prevent or respond to the spread of infectious disease.

Please contact your local CPD Field Office Director to request technical assistance from HUD staff or a TA provider.

Submit your questions to:

CPDQuestionsAnswered@hud.gov

COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources: <https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus>

CPD Program Guidance and Training: <https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/>

EDA CARES ACT RECOVERY ASSISTANCE (currently no deadline)

OVERVIEW

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, [signed into law](#) by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020, provides the Economic Development Administration (EDA) with \$1.5 billion for economic development assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance, which is being administered under the authority of the bureau's flexible [Economic Adjustment Assistance](#) (EAA) (PDF) program, provides a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

On May 7, 2020, Secretary Wilbur Ross made EDA's CARES Act Recovery Assistance funding available with the announcement that EDA had published an Addendum to its FY 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity. EDA intends to deploy its CARES Act funding as quickly, effectively, and efficiently as possible, and in a manner that meets communities needs.

RESOURCES

- [EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Scope of Work for EDA Economic Development Districts and EDA Indian Tribe Planning Grant Recipients*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: Economic Development Districts and Indian Tribes*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: Revolving Loan Fund Awards*](#)
- [EDA's CARES Act Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund Award Flexibilities Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Scope of Work for University Center Grantees*](#)
- [Specific Award Conditions: University Centers*](#)
- [EDA regional office contacts](#)
- [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov)
- [coronavirus.gov/smallbusiness/](https://www.coronavirus.gov/smallbusiness/)
- [CDC.gov/COVID19/](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19/)
- [USA.gov/coronavirus/](https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus/)

* As stated in the CARES Act Recovery Assistance Addendum to the PWEAA NOFO, EDA may invite existing grantees, such as Economic Development Districts and Tribes currently in receipt of Partnership Planning awards, operators of existing EDA funded Revolving Loan Funds, and EDA-funded University Centers, to apply for supplemental awards. These standard Scopes of Work and Specific Award Conditions are for use with these supplemental awards only. Existing grantees who are eligible to apply for these awards will be contacted individually for instructions on how to apply. <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=321695>

U.S. Department of Transportation Active Funding Opportunities

FHWA - [Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund \(TTPSF\)](#) (Closing Date - 8/20/2020: [Apply Here](#))

FTA - [Public Transportation on Indian Reservations \(Tribal Transit\)](#) (Closing Date - 8/24/2020: [Apply Here](#))

FHWA - [Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment \(ATCMTD\)](#) (Closing Date - 8/31/2020: [Apply Here](#))

NHTSA - [State Notification to Consumers of Motor Vehicle Recall Status](#) (Closing Date - 9/15/2020: [Apply Here](#))

FHWA - [Accelerated Innovation Deployment \(AID\) Demonstrations](#) (Closing Date - 9/30/2020: [Apply Here](#))

All Federal grants, including transportation grants, can be seen at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). To find transportation related funding opportunities, select "All Department of Transportation" under the "Agency" menu on the left-hand side.

[DOT Funding Opportunities for Rural Projects - HERE](#)

Opportunity Zones

EDA's Opportunity Zone Web Page

EDA now has an [EDA Opportunity Zone Web page](#) for economic development stakeholders and others to use as a resource to further help foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas across the United States.

[Section 5307, 5310, and 5311: Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match](#)

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

To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available visit www.grants.gov.

Just For Fun (THIS IS SATIRE, AND JUST FOR FUN)

Today is an interesting day in history. In 1911 – The Mona Lisa was stolen by Vincenzo Peruggia, a Louvre employee. Also on this day in 1944 during WWII the Dumbarton Oaks Conference was held, which was the formation of the United Nations.

What did South Alabama look like during World War II? *Just For Fun*, look [HERE](#)



In the News

Broad Street to close for roundabout construction

Posted by Dale Liesch | Aug 20, 2020 | Latest, News | 0 | reprinted with permission from the Lagniappe



The intersection of Broad Street and Canal Street will be closed starting Monday, Aug. 24, to construct a roundabout. The project will provide safety improvements, reduce speed and allow better access for pedestrians and bicyclists. The roundabout is anticipated to be completed by February 2021.

- Traffic moving southbound on South Broad Street will be detoured to Government Street, Washington Street and Texas Street.
- South Broad Street will be open to local traffic only between Canal Street and Texas Street.
- Canal Street will be open to local traffic only, from Washington Street to South Broad Street.

Signs and variable message boards will be in place to alert drivers of the closure and alternate Routes.

All activities are weather-dependent and may be delayed or rescheduled in the event of inclement weather. Drivers are reminded to obey the 25-MPH speed limit and use caution, especially at night, when traveling through the work zone. Motorists should also watch for construction workers and equipment entering and exiting the roadway.

The latest City of Mobile Broad Street Redevelopment project information is available online at <https://www.cityofmobile.org/reconnectingmobile/tiger-grant/>. This page is the fastest and easiest way to stay informed about scheduled lane closures and other construction-related impacts.

Orange Beach City Council candidates answer hot button questions

Entire article [HERE](#)

By Melanie LeCroy/melanie@gulfcoastmedia.com

You have questions, they have answers. Two of the five places on the Orange Beach City Council are contested. Annette Mitchell is being challenged for place 1 by Joe Cardwell and Joni Blalock is being challenged for place 5 by Joe Fierro.

We asked the four candidates for their answers to a variety of questions to give voters an opportunity to compare candidates ahead of the election.

The 2020 Orange Beach Municipal Election is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 25. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Registered voters in Orange Beach vote at the Orange Beach Community Center, 27235 Canal Road.

Some people in the community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?

Place 1

Annette Mitchell (incumbent) – Traffic is a constant challenge in Orange Beach. Our years long initiative to five lane Canal Road has been achieved and will be enhanced by our three lane project of Canal Road East and the bypass of the Canal Road/Highway 161 intersection project for two southbound lanes. A roundabout will be constructed at the Arts Center to improve traffic flow at that pinch point.

Joe Cardwell – Yes, we do have a traffic problem. Having met the Canal Road Project Director, I am convinced the project is in good hands. The first thing I would do is make myself available to assist or help in any way toward the completion of this project. We need to help Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and Director Cooper get over any hurdles they encounter. The 6.5 million annual visitors to Baldwin County do not come to Orange Beach to drive down Canal Road on a hot July day. Of course, they come to go to the beach. Therefore, a more permanent solution to our traffic problems would be for myself and a delegation go to Montgomery to visit with the Governor, ALDOT, State Park officials and appropriate legislators. I think we should ask once more, face-to-face, for approval and permit of an above park Powerline Road that would connect the Beach Express to the beach road. If we get positive answers, we should follow up and set timelines. I am also in favor of enhancing golf cart and bicycle pathways and sidewalks. The more people we get off the road helps make our traffic faster and safer.

Place 5

Joni Blalock (incumbent) – In the summer months, heavy traffic is one of the challenges we as beach dwellers unfortunately face, and I know that it can sometimes present frustrations for our citizens who are trying to live their “normal” lives and get from place to place. During my time on the council, I have constantly looked at the issue of traffic and sought out the best solutions that were available. That includes the current widening of Canal Road. Recently, the council has turned our attention to the proposed bypass from Canal Road to Highway 161, and it presents great potential for alleviating one of our more congested areas. We are also seeking to widen Canal Road East to continue to offer a smoother flow of traffic to our citizens. These ongoing projects require diligence and continued good relationships with the State of Alabama since they control most of our roadways. I am pleased to say that we have that cooperative relationship at this time. I will always be open to hearing ideas about ways to mitigate traffic, and when solutions are identified, I will support them if they are to the benefit of our citizens and city.

Joe Fierro - Given our growth coupled with what has become a year-round increase in visitation we are definitely experiencing growing pains, particularly on our roads. I believe we need to first focus on both short term and long-term goals to improve roadways within Orange Beach. This requires reexamination of the Powerline Road proposal, the Florida Avenue bypass (next to Pep Boys) and the creation of plans with ALDOT and as needed the city of Gulf Shores. With council and mayor, I would seek to foster an improved relationship with ALDOT to gain both short and long-term commitments. Furthermore, I believe a citizens committee for traffic issues would be very helpful. We have citizens with years of experience in related fields that can bring innovative ideas to the table that may benefit the entire community.

Infrastructure: Unsafe roads, bridges, railways across the US, conditions by state

Samuel Stebbins, Michael B. Sauter and Evan Comen24/7 Wall Street



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, motorists each day drove about 8.8 billion miles on American roadways, while the U.S. railroad system carried 85,000 passengers and 5 million tons of freight. Though travel habits have shifted since the coronavirus outbreak, transportation infrastructure remains vital to the health of the U.S. economy.

Despite the importance of a reliable transportation network, upkeep of critical infrastructure is being neglected across the country as roads, bridges, and railroads age. Nationwide, 21.8% of roads are in poor condition, 7.6% of bridges are in need of replacement or repair, and there have been 4.8 derailments for every 100 miles of train track from 2015 to 2019, the most common cause of which are broken rails or welds. In some states, these figures are far worse, indicating a threat to not only the economy, but to public health and safety as well.

Using data from the U.S. Department of Transportation, 24/7 Wall St. created an index to identify the states that are falling apart. The index comprises three measures: the share of roadway in poor condition, the share of bridges considered to be structurally deficient, and the number of train derailments between 2015 and 2019 adjusted per mile of railroad track. One state, Iowa, was not ranked, due to a lack of sufficient data. Continue [HERE](#)

Gov. Ivey awards funds for highway safety enforcement campaigns

Michele Forehand Aug 19, 2020 Updated Aug 19, 2020

MONTGOMERY – Gov. Kay Ivey awards \$4.9 million in grants in support of making Alabama roads safer by preventing injuries and fatalities. The state's four regional traffic safety offices will use the funds to cover overtime for local police and sheriff deputies conducting extra patrols and checkpoints during peak travel times which will target speeding, seat belt violations and drunk driving. A portion of the funds will also be utilized to cover extra patrol during the annual "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign from Aug. 19-Sept. 7, and "Click It or Ticket" from May 24-June 6, 2021.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) will administer the grants from funds made available to the state by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"Drivers who chose to drive impaired or disobey traffic laws are a danger to every other motorist on the road," Ivey said. "These grants will support the police officers and sheriffs' deputies who work long hours to enforce the law and provide a clear message to drive safely and responsibly in Alabama.

The Southeast Alabama Regional Highway Safety Office at Enterprise State Community College, which serves Autauga, Barbour, Bibb, Bullock, Butler, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lowndes, Montgomery, Pike, Russell and Tuscaloosa counties will receive \$1.01 million to assist law enforcement in making Alabama roads safer.

ADECA manages a wide array of programs that support law enforcement and traffic safety, workforce development, energy conservation, water resource management, economic development and recreation.

"ADECA is proud to work with Gov. Ivey, the four highway safety offices and local law enforcement agencies to help make Alabama roads safer for everyone traveling the state," ADECA Director Kenneth Boswell said.

The following additional regional traffic safety offices will receive funding:

- \$1.36 million to the Franklin County Commission for the North Central Alabama Highway Safety Office. The office serves Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Fayette, Franklin, Lamar, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Jackson, Madison, Marshall, Marion, Morgan, Pickens, Walker and Winston counties.
- \$1.57 million to the city of Opelika for the East Central Alabama Highway Safety Office which serves Blount, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Chilton, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Elmore, Etowah, Jefferson, Lee, Macon, Randolph, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega and Tallapoosa counties.
- \$970,672 to the Mobile County Commission for the Southwest Regional Highway Safety Office which serves Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Escambia, Greene, Hale, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington and Wilcox counties.

Transportation Research

'Walk and Bike Safely' roadway safety video teaches kids new safety habits

by Danielle Moody Wednesday, August 5th 2020

SAN ANTONIO– Vision Zero San Antonio has created an important new learning tool for area children through a child-friendly, animated video that teaches children critical roadway safety lessons.

“Creating an animated video that teaches roadway safety can arm parents, teachers, and with an easy way to save lives,” said Bianca Thorpe, Capital Programs Manager, Transportation Planning & Programming for Public Works. “Teaching children how to cross the street is a good start, but we can’t stop there when preparing them for how to interact with a dynamic transportation system. Through this video, we were able to capture so much of what children need to know in a simple but engaging way.”

The concern for safety is at an all-time high right now during the warmer months when children are riding their bikes and playing outdoors. In the fall, many children will walk or ride the bus to school.

Walk and Bike Safely, the fifteen minute video, was created with Safe Kids San Antonio and University Health System. It is designed to help children learn important safety habits.

Just some of the lessons your child will learn through the video are:

- Making eye contact with drivers – never assuming a driver sees you
- Always staying alert when on or near a roadway
- The safest place to walk when there is no sidewalk
- The safest place to cross the road
- How to use a pedestrian signal crossing
- How to safely cross the street in front of a parked bus
- Increasing visibility when near or on a road after dark
- Bicycle safety rules and best practices
- How to inspect a bicycle to ensure it is roadway ready
- Hand signals for riding bicycles on roadways
- Safe practices for railroad crossings

You can watch the video by [CLICKING HERE](#).

DOT Unveils Applicant Toolkit for Rural Communities

Eleanor Lamb July 28, 2020

The U.S. Department of Transportation created a toolkit intended to help those interested in participating in the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success program.

Known as ROUTES, the program was created in October 2019, and it is meant to help connectivity in rural communities. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao on July 27 unveiled the toolkit, which provides information and resources. Its purpose is to help rural applicants understand and navigate DOT’s discretionary grant funding opportunities.

Specifically, the toolkit outlines applicant requirements and sorts grant programs by applicant type and eligible project activities. The toolkit was designed for applicants with varying levels of experience.

“This toolkit will help both the beginner and the experienced better understand, identify and navigate discretionary grant funding opportunities for rural transportation projects,” Chao said during a video announcement. “There are a lot of rural communities who just don’t have the resources to hire an army of dedicated staff and contractors to compete for these federal funds.

“We hope that this toolkit will be a reference and a road map to opportunities and resources at the U.S. Department of Transportation that will benefit your community and our country.”

Rural roads make up 70% of America’s road miles, according to DOT. Maintaining these roadways can be a challenge for rural communities that have thin financial resources. Although geographically sprawling, rural communities generally have low population densities, meaning fewer people to support investment.

Chao noted that infrastructure upgrades can improve safety, which also can be a challenge in rural areas. She said that although 19% of the population lives in rural areas, 45% of highway fatalities occur in rural areas.

In terms of economic activity, Chao said rural communities play an important role. According to Chao, two-thirds of freight moving by rail comes from rural areas, and nearly half the distance traveled by trucks takes place on rural roads.

“Rural transportation is important to our economy and our way of life,” Chao said. “Manufactured goods, raw materials and agricultural products travel through rural areas on their way to global markets.”

The ROUTES initiative’s steering council includes representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration.

DOT has placed an emphasis on rural community needs through some of its popular grant programs. For example, the Infrastructure For Rebuilding America grant program directs a certain amount of funds toward rural projects. In the latest round of INFRA grants, announced June 18, 53% of the funding was devoted to projects in rural areas.

In the latest round of Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grants, issued in November 2019, half of the \$900 million in funding was awarded to projects in rural areas.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Chao Releases Pathways to the Future of Transportation

Thursday, July 23, 2020

WASHINGTON – One year after announcing the launch of the Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology (NETT) Council, U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao today released *Pathways to the Future of Transportation* – a policy document that is intended to serve as a roadmap for innovators of new cross modal technologies to engage with the Department.

“Pathways to the Future of Transportation guidance on new, cross-modal technologies will help address legitimate public concerns about safety, security and privacy without hampering innovation,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

This policy document is the U.S. Department of Transportation’s first step in providing a clear path for innovators of new cross modal technologies to engage with the Department. It lays out a process for innovators and stakeholders to approach the Department with their plans and proposals for emerging technologies.

Secretary Chao announced the creation of the NETT Council last year as an internal deliberative body to identify and resolve jurisdictional and regulatory gaps that may impede the deployment of new technologies, such as potential advances in tunneling technology and hyperloop. Pathways to the Future of Transportation intends to help private sector innovators understand the purpose, structure, and function of the NETT Council; lay out the principles guiding the Department’s policies and posture toward transformative technologies; and deliver a high-level overview of the federal framework for supporting non-traditional and emerging technologies.

DOT will publish a Request for Comment on Pathways to the Future of Transportation, which will allow the public to comment and provide feedback on the document. More information on the NETT Council’s work can be found at <https://www.transportation.gov/nettcouncil>.

Opportunity Zones

The Department of Transportation has identified transportation assets that fall within Opportunity Zones with the goal of driving investment of all types to these important areas.

Despite the growing national economy, economically distressed communities are located in every corner of the United States and its territories. These communities have high levels of poverty, failing schools, job scarcity, and a lack of investment. A new tax incentive—Opportunity Zones—was created to spur economic development and job creation by encouraging long-term investment in low-income communities nationwide.

Read about our partner’s roles in Opportunity Zones:

- [Housing and Urban Development: Implementation Plan for The White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council](#)
- [The IRS: Tax reform creates opportunity zone tax incentive](#)
- [Treasury Department Community Development Financial Institutions Fund](#)

The Opportunity Zone designation encourages investment in communities by granting investors extensive Federal tax advantages for using their capital gains to finance new projects and enterprises. There are more than [8,700 designated Qualified Opportunity Zones located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and five United States territories](#). Of the Qualified Opportunity Zones 40 percent are in rural census tracts, 38 percent are in urban tracts, and 22 percent are in suburban tracts.

South Alabama Opportunity Zones



<https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/subdoc/906/build-fact-sheet2019.pdf>

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.