



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, July 12th, 2019

Volume 31, Number 1

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Contact Us

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Tom Piper

MEETINGS ANNOUNCED- MPO MEETING AUGUST 21. TCC/CAC MEETING JULY 31. See *Mobile MPO Updates*. There is an announcement of available "Transportation Planning Funds" for those that are interested, please see *Funding Opportunities*. Also last week we announced a RFQ for a demand response type transit system feasibility study to tie in with the current fixed route transit system in Mobile County. There is a joint Mobile / Eastern Shore MPO 101 workshop coming up this summer, please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. We're glad to see that Congress is already talking about reauthorizing the FAST Act in *Legislative Updates*. In *The News* Gulf Coast Passenger Rail meeting, also more tolling news, and this week's *Just for Fun* is skippy. 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

MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

There will be a Mobile MPO Policy Board meeting on August 21, 2019 at 10:00 AM in the SARPC Board room on the First Floor of the GMO Building. Prior to that meeting, there will be a Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory (TCC/CAC) meeting on July 31, 2019 at 10:00 AM in the Transportation Dept of SARPC on the second Floor of the GMO Building. There are couple of items on the agenda that include the FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Both of the UPWP and the TIP will be out for public review several weeks prior to the MPO Policy Board Meeting. MPO Staff will send out the first memorandum next week.

Please see our web page for further details www.mobilempo.org

MOBILE AREA DEMAND RESPONSE TRANSIT SYSTEM FEASIBILITY STUDY

Notice is hereby given that the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, 110 Beaugard Street, Suite 207, Mobile, AL 36602 is requesting submittal of the most highly qualified, shortlisted firm interested in performing work outlined in the following scope of work. This will be a (lump sum/cost- plus/unit rate) agreement and approximately three firms will be shortlisted with one firm to be selected.

Click on link below to see the Scope of Work

[Mobile Area Demand Response Transit System Feasibility Study \(6/27/19\)](#)

If you would like to be part of this study, please call Kevin Harrison for details.



SAVE THE DATE!



**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(MPO) 101 Informational Seminar**

Date: August 14, 2019

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Blakeley Hall



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FREIGHT DATA

APM Terminals has provided us with their third quarterly survey report. Just as last quarter, for one day APM Terminals had on-board tablets for drivers to answer a series of questions in terms of where they came from and where they are going. APM Terminals will continue to gather this information quarterly for our benefit of validating truck data for the travel demand forecasting model. This third survey report had 88% of trucker visits answering the survey, the best percentage yet, which helps refine our understanding of container truck trip patterns in the area.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

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

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

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

Stay Up To Date on the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project:

<http://mobileriverbridge.com/>



About the project:

The Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project will reduce congestion on I-10 in South Alabama through the addition of additional capacity: a new six-lane bridge over the Mobile River, full replacement of the existing Bayway with an eight-lane structure, and redevelopment of seven interchanges. The project runs from Virginia Street in Mobile to the US 90/98 interchange in Baldwin County. Information in the project is available at www.MobileRiverBridge.com. Please contact Allison Gregg (251-604-9790) to coordinate site visits

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

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

None this week

Projects in Region Let July 26th, 2019

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Culvert Replacement (Grading, Drainage, Pavement, Bridge, and Traffic Stripe) on SR-13 (US-43) over Steele Creek in Satsuma. Length 0.434 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,965,495 to \$3,624,493 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Bridge Replacement and Approaches on CR-9 over Barner Branch northwest of Magnolia Springs. Length 0.184 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$916,992 to \$1,120,768 ..

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

Legislative Updates

Senators Aim to Produce Five-Year Highway Bill Before August Recess



"It is our shared goal to advance a bill out of committee this summer. Our roads and bridges are in need of a serious investment," Sen. John Barrasso, D-Wyo., told senior transportation officials. (C-SPAN)

[Stay on top of transportation news: [Get TTNews in your inbox.](#)]

WASHINGTON — The first version of what could become the country's next major highway policy bill will be unveiled in the Senate prior to Congress' recess in August, surface transportation policymakers announced July 10.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee intends to consider a five-year highway bill, kicking off reauthorization of the FAST Act, a five-year highway law that expires in October of next year.

Details regarding the upcoming legislation's proposals have not been announced. The committee's leadership also left funding questions about the legislation to the congressional tax-writing panels.

The funding authority for a highway account that is backed by dwindling revenue from the federal fuel tax is rolled into the massive highway bill.

"It is our shared goal to advance a bill out of committee this summer," committee Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) told senior transportation officials from around the country at a hearing about the upcoming legislation. "Our roads and bridges are in need of a serious investment. ... If we do not pass a long-term surface transportation bill, and instead pass a series of short-term extensions, we will undermine our states' abilities to plan for these challenges."

"The idea is to get it done by that time, and there's a great spirit of cooperation here. The hard part is, actually as you heard here, how do we pay for this," Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, the panel's top Democrat, told reporters after the hearing.

"What we need to do is to put out a good bill that addresses a bunch of the concerns that others talked about and sets the stage for the work that needs to be done in the Finance committee and Ways and Means committee," Carper added.

Improving freight connectivity, the overall safety of travelers, guidelines for autonomous vehicle technology and access to transit systems are priorities policymakers have expressed an interest in pursuing. [HERE](#)

New law could mean a comeback for electric scooters in Alabama

Last year, electric scooters rolled in – and then quickly out – of some Alabama cities after it became clear they were not street-legal under state law. But a bill approved by the Alabama legislature, and signed by Gov. Kay Ivey, may clear the way for a scooter comeback.

E-scooters from companies such as [Bird](#), [Lime](#) and Uber's [JUMP](#) have wheeled into large cities across the country, from Los Angeles to Chicago. The state of New York is on the verge of legalizing e-scooters. They've invaded European cities, too, along with local competitors such as Sweden's [voi](#) and [Wind](#) in Germany. U.S. scooter startups also are giving it a go, such as Verve in Philadelphia and [Skip](#) in Washington, D.C.

Last summer, Bird swooped in to Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Auburn and Homewood before having its two-wheelers rounded up by local authorities. But now, Alabama has given the green light to “micromobility device systems,” as the recently approved legislation calls them, to be used on Alabama roadways. Greg Cochran, deputy director of the [Alabama League of Municipalities](#), said he is aware of at least 10 cities in the state that are exploring the possibilities around e-scooters. Under the just-approved law, cities have the authority to regulate the devices.

He said the resurgence in downtowns and downtown living are driving interest in expanding ways people can conveniently travel shorter distances around Alabama’s urban centers.

In Birmingham, city boosters are bullish about the prospect. David Fleming, with the nonprofit economic development group [REV Birmingham](#), said e-scooters not only provide an attractive option for people to get around the city’s revitalizing urban core, they also can be a tool for helping recruit millennials and businesses while also supporting local tourism.

For the past four years, REV has operated the [Zyp bikeshare system](#) in downtown and in-town Birmingham neighborhoods. The most popular bikes in the Zyp system are electric-assisted. The [Alabama Power Foundation](#) is among the supporters of Zyp.

“Zyp has proved that Birmingham wants mobility options, and will use them,” Fleming said. He said the new legislation is generating renewed interest from several scooter companies that are eyeing the Birmingham market. Some of those companies also offer bike-sharing systems that potentially could replace Zyp over time.

“We’re excited that multiple operators of bikes, scooters and other modes of transportation now want to bring their vehicles to Birmingham and we’re helping to get them here,” Fleming said. “Bikes and other forms of personal transportation create vibrancy in business districts and support recruitment and retention of businesses and talent. That’s our mission, and we think this is the next step in Birmingham’s evolution.”

Fleming said REV is already working with the city and other potential partners on rules that would allow multiple private operators to coexist. Regulations could be in place in time for scooter and other alternate transportation companies to begin operating in Birmingham next year.

Gulf Coast legislators to meet with ALDOT chief

[TOP STORIES](#)

by: [Bill Riales](#)

Posted: Jul 9, 2019 / 01:14 PM CDT / Updated: Jul 10, 2019 / 04:07 AM CDT

MOBILE, Ala. (WKRG) — Alabama Transportation Director John Cooper is expected to meet with Gulf Coast legislators on Wednesday in Spanish Fort for a briefing on the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project. The talk is likely to focus on the decision to toll the roadways to the tune of \$3 to \$6.

That proposal has many concerned, concern made evident during Representative Bradley Byrne’s town hall meeting in Magnolia Springs on Monday.

Magnolia Springs resident Victoria Armstrong summed up the sentiment for many. ” Right now, it just feels like we’re being taken advantage of, I don’t think the public is being heard, we don’t want tolls—I don’t think we should have tolls on that bridge, it hurts a lot of people,” she said.

Byrne addressed efforts to advise state officials on securing federal money for the project, but said the state officials seem convinced the proposed tolls is the only way to fund the \$2.1b project. This type of public-private partnership or ‘P3’ project, is not unprecedented in the U.S., which has been called ‘The world’s largest emerging P3 market.’

But that doesn’t do much to settle the ire of thousands of Gulf Coast residents who are against any sort of tolling. Byrne has said he is against tolling, but as a federal official, he says his hands are tied.

A spokesperson for the project told News 5 last week that ALDOT is seeking some federal funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Infra Grant program. However, that funding would only amount to about \$150m, far short of what is needed.

Funding Opportunities

Transportation Planning Funds Made Available (Deadline August 16th, 2019)

The Alabama Department of Transportation has made funding available for any “transportation Planning” type activity. If you have a transportation planning type project, funding may be available. Please ask Kevin Harrison for details.

The deadline for receipt of applications is Monday, August 5, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. These can be submitted through standard mail or e-mail to Michael Hora at horam@dot.state.al.us, with a subject line of “PL Application Submission”.

It was discussed at the 2019 Transportation Planners Conference in Orange Beach that these funds would be eligible for use by MPO’s through an application process (see attached application). It is acceptable to submit more than one application for multiple projects, but no more than one project can be on an individual application. These projects can have a lead through the MPO or another sponsor, and will need to begin after October 1st, 2019. Projects that are approved will not be required to be part of the UPWP and will have a separate charge number. Projects will be selected, and project sponsors notified by August 16th, 2019.

The type of projects that would be considered are planning in nature, such as feasibility studies, safety studies, intersection improvement studies, access management studies, transit studies, Long Range Transportation Plans, etc. These types of studies may identify environmental impacts (such as: historical districts, visible or known wet lands, etc.) but should not include any official environmental work, as this stage would be considered preliminary engineering (PE).

Please contact Michael Hora at (334) 242-6517 or horam@dot.state.al.us with any questions.

DEP/mh

Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative
Department of Transportation
DOT Federal Highway Administration (new deadline August 5th, 2019)

Description: Up to \$60 million in Federal Funding to provide grants to eligible entities to develop model deployment sites for large scale installation and operation of advanced transportation technologies to improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure return on investment. (23 U.S.C. 503(c)(4)(A)).

Link to Additional Information: [ATCMTD Program](#)

Grantor Contact Information: If you have difficulty accessing the full announcement electronically, please contact:

If you have difficulty accessing the full announcement electronically, please contact:

Ryan J Buck
Agreement Specialist
Phone 202-366-4229

TIFIA Rural Project Initiative (RPI)

The Rural Project Initiative is aimed at helping improve transportation infrastructure in America’s rural communities.

For more information, click [HERE](#)



ALDOT Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program

(August 5th deadline to SARPC).

This Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is for the State of Alabama portion of the FTA 5310. This is not to be confused with the SARPC portion of the FTA 5310 which is for the Mobile Urbanized Area. That NOFO will be release in the next several weeks. [Are you Urban or Rural?](#)

The 5310 program is intended to assist private or designated public nonprofit agencies in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is responsible for the management and administration of the **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program**. The Public Transit Section, through the Section 5310 program, provides funds to eligible entities. Application [HERE](#)

**STATEWIDE COMPETITIVE CAPITAL
AWARD APPLICATION
For Fiscal Year 2020**



<i>Dissemination Date:</i>	<i>June 4, 2019</i>
<i>Due Date to Submit Applications to Regional Planning Councils:</i>	<i>August 5, 2019</i>
<i>Due Date for Regional Planning Councils to Submit Applications That They Prepare to ALDOT:</i>	<i>August 5, 2019</i>
<i>Due Date for Regional Planning Councils to Submit the Endorsed Applications to ALDOT:</i>	<i>August 12, 2019</i>

FY 2020 High Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) Program (August 1st Deadline)

There has been a "Call for Applications" for the FY 2020 High Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) Program, as well as provide guidance for the preparation of HRRR project applications (see attached HRRR Program Application Guidance).

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) has allocated a portion of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to establish a High-Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) Program for FY 2020. The intent of this program is to identify site-specific and programmatic safety improvements in an effort to reduce the statewide fatality rate on rural roads. Therefore, ALDOT is placing a call to all local agencies (counties, cities, etc.) to submit applications in accordance with the HRRR Program Application Guidance (attached).

Any local agency is eligible to apply for these safety funds, as long as the selected project is located on a roadway that is classified as a rural major collector, a rural minor collector, or a rural local road. Projects must also be located outside of an FHWA Census-defined urbanized area. The available federal funding that has been set aside for FY 2020 will be \$4,124,978. HRRR projects have a 10% funding match requirement by the local agency sponsor. Due to the funding authorization constraints, funding will be limited to construction only. Projects may be implemented by contract or through force account work, as approved by ALDOT. [See HERE for Application.](#)

[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

Hop, Skip, and jump

As the triple digits tell us, Summer is well under way. So what is a fun summer activity that involves calculating velocity of a vehicle, the buoyancy properties of a craft, and the aerodynamics of vessel? That's right, skipping rocks. We all know we need a flat rock, but do you throw low to the water? Do you spin it? How heavy is too heavy? What is the science behind skipping rocks? What is the engineering/design process of a perfect rock skipping machine?

It just so happens that we have found that for you, and it is fascinating (*just for fun*). [HERE](#)



In the News

Reviving Passenger Rail Along the Gulf Coast

By Kevin Harrison



Mobile - New Orleans
Proposed Train Schedule

Station	Time	Time	Time	Time
Mobile, AL	Dep 7:00 AM	Arr 11:13 AM	Dep 5:00 PM	Arr 8:58 PM
Pascagoula, MS	7:40 AM	10:17 AM	5:40 PM	8:02 PM
Biloxi, MS	8:04 AM	9:53 AM	6:04 PM	7:38 PM
Gulfport, MS	8:22 AM	9:35 AM	6:22 PM	7:20 PM
Bay St. Louis, MS	8:44 AM	9:13 AM	6:44 PM	6:58 PM
New Orleans, LA	Arr 10:23 AM	Dep 8:00 AM	Arr 8:23 PM	Dep 5:45 PM

This morning, there was a Gulf Coast Passenger Rail informative meeting, that was well attended by numerous legislators and elected officials. Passenger rail service between New Orleans and Mobile, is a reality. The Alabama group was presented with Alabama capital improvement cost shares and the benefits of the service. The benefits of the service would be that it would create 45 new full-time permanent high wage jobs, it would create 50 new full-time jobs, and we would have a newly renovated city to city passenger rail station. It would bring additional visitors to Mobile to enjoy major events like Mardi Gras, the Senior Bowl, and connect with the Mobile Carnival cruises and other Mobile area attractions and events. It would link Alabama residents to Gulf Coast entertainment like casino resorts, collegiate and professional football, and major medical centers colleges and universities.

The annual impact (benefit) of the rail operations, would be almost \$2 million, but the annual impact to tourism to Alabama is over \$220 million. The initial capital cost for Alabama is \$2.2 million, with an additional \$5 million in operations, for a minimum of three years.

More information can be found at www.southernrailcommission.com

Fact-finding session planned in Mobile for coastal Amtrak return

Posted Jul 6, 2019



Mobile City Councilman Joel Daves speaks during the council's meeting Tuesday, July 2, 2019, at Government Plaza in Mobile, Ala. Daves is asking questions about the long-term viability of having Amtrak restarted along the Gulf Coast. (John Sharp/jsharp@al.com).

By John Sharp | jsharp@al.com

A one-way ticket price for riding on a state-supported Amtrak train similar to the one proposed for the Gulf Coast, can run from \$25 to \$45.

Those estimates were provided by the Rail Passengers Association to the Southern Rail Commission (SRC), as part of a fact-finding effort underway ahead of a meeting on Friday in Mobile.

The meeting, which will occur at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center, will take place as several Mobile city officials are asking questions or expressing doubt about the viability of restarting Amtrak service between the city and New Orleans [within the next 24 months](#). We're inviting around 40 leaders and others to listen to the absolute factual information on operational costs, fares, ridership, and everything that will pertain to the New Orleans-to-Mobile route," said Wiley Blankenship, president/CEO of the Coastal Alabama Partnership and an SRC member.

"I can tell you that this (restarted passenger rail route) is happening," Blankenship said. "This is real."

Mobile hesitancy

In recent weeks, [some Mobile city officials have raised concerns over Amtrak's Gulf Coast return negatively affecting the Alabama State Docks and the downtown cruise terminal](#).

Those alarms were stated ahead of a Mobile City Council vote on a resolution urging Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey to commit the around \$2.7 million necessary to return Amtrak to the Gulf Coast.

[Ivey has expressed reservations](#). She has said Amtrak could possibly conflict with freight trains moving in and out of the State Docks. [A similar point has been raised multiple times by Jimmy Lyons, CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority](#). Continue [HERE](#)

ALDOT expands traffic center operations, upgrades ALGO app



MONTGOMERY, Ala. (WSFA) - The Alabama Department of Transportation is expanding its traffic monitoring system and making big upgrades its app, all to make sure your drive to work goes even smoother.

ALDOT opened its Traffic Management Center in Montgomery in October 2016. At that time it was in operation for 12 hours at a time, five days a week. Today, it is manned and operated 24/7/365 days a year.

The goal is to minimize the negative impact traffic can have on your quality of life.

The average motorist loses nearly a full work week, 36 hours, sitting in traffic because of traffic incidents. Traffic incidents account for up to 25 percent of all congestion on the roadways. And then there are secondary incidents which make up 14 to 18 percent of all crashes, and are estimated to cause up to 18 percent of deaths.

The TMC uses technology like traffic cameras and the WAZE app to detect any incidents on the road and alert police or other necessary first responders. It monitors more than 120 cameras along the interstates and major highways around the river region, as north as central Autauga County, as east as Lee and Chambers County, and as south as Dothan.

Those cameras are also accessible on the ALGO App, which has just been updated to include several new features. One of them is the "Drive Mode", which will give you audible alerts about construction zones, crashes, or any other incidents so you can decide if you want to change your course.

You can check traffic, watch traffic cameras, and [download the app here](#).

ALDOT tells people of South Alabama that they will get a toll bridge or there will be no bridge

July 11, 2019



A public hearing was finally held after years without one on the controversial plan to build a massive toll bridge across the Mobile River.

A number of critics raised concerns about the plan that would contract with a private company to build the I-10 bridge connecting Mobile and Baldwin Counties. The company would then collect tolls, from electronic toll towers rather than traditional toll booths, for reportedly as many as the next fifty years in order to recover their investment into this state.

The state legislature just passed the largest gas tax increase in the history of the state passing the legislature just months ago. They also passed legislation enabling ALDOT to make toll agreements and for citizens who refuse to pay their toll bills to lose their vehicle registration privileges. The public was told that building the bridge without toll is not an option.

"If we don't toll the project there is no project," the Alabama Department of Transportation's Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project public information officer said.

The bridge will be 215 feet tall and the largest cable stay bridge that has ever built in North America. If built, it will dominate the Mobile skyline well into the end of this century.

Supporters say that the \$billion project is necessary to deal with traffic congestion on I-10.

Critics question the mad rush to begin the project, why ALDOT gave up on obtaining federal funding for this project after the denial of a massive grant application last summer, and the wisdom of building such a tall structure in an area that is known for devastating hurricanes.

State Auditor Jim Zeigler (R) has been an outspoken opponent of the project and warns that if this passes new corporate controlled toll bridges and roads will spread to other parts of the state.

"Tolls are the new tax of the future," Zeigler said Wednesday at a major speech to the Guntersville Civitans.

Zeigler says the enabling bill applies to the entire state, and that the Mobile Bay toll is only the first of many across the state.

Critics of the project point out that the census tract that the toll bridge is in has been designated a federal opportunity zone by Alabama Governor Kay Ivey (R). If the toll bridge were approved as a federal opportunity zone project then the companies that build the toll bridge will get tens of millions in potential taxes deferred or declared taxfree. Opportunity zones are designed, in theory, to address pockets of chronic generational poverty; but much of the opportunity zones designated by Kay Ivey appear to be along interstate corridors.

Supporters of the project say that it is necessary to deal with congestion problems on I-10.

Critics of the toll bridge point out that the City of Mobile is in population decline and has been in decline for decades. Mobile was once the second largest city in Alabama; but has fallen to fourth.

According to the latest Census estimate the population of Mobile is only 189,572. That is down from the 2017 number, down from 2010, and down from the City's peak in 1970 of 202,279.

Supporters point to the booming population in Baldwin County which is growing at over two percent a year. The population estimate of Baldwin County is 218,022. Up from 183,110 in 2010 and up from 59,382 in 1970.

The beaches of Baldwin County are also Alabama's largest tourist attraction drawing visitors from all over Alabama, the Southeast, and beyond.

Supporters of the giant toll bridge also say that the project is necessary due to the business coming through the Port of Mobile. The state and federal governments are planning to deepen and widen the shipping channel to the Port in a bid to increase traffic through the Port. Most of those ships being unloaded in the Port will mean more transfer trucks on I-10 and I-65.

ALDOT 's message to drivers: Keep right, except to pass

by Lauren Walsh

Thursday, July 4th 2019

New signs posted across Alabama's interstates are telling drivers to, "Keep right, except to pass."

The message from the Alabama Department of transportation refers to an existing law, but comes at a time when a new law on the issue is about to take effect.

ALDOT says the Anti- Road Rage Act, which is effective September first, both clarifies and strengthens the existing law.

It states that a driver cannot go more than a mile and a half on the left lane of an interstate without passing other cars.

Of course, there are exceptions including weather or road hazards.

Rep. Phil Pettus, the bill's sponsor, tells ABC 33/40 the goal of the new law is to make traffic move better on the interstates so people won't have road rage and try to shoot each other.

Pettus, who worked 25 years as a state trooper, says he wants to keep traffic moving at a safe pace. He says his time as a trooper showed him first hand how dangerous it can be when someone drives in the left lane without passing other cars.

When the law takes effect in September, there will be a 60 day warning period before citations begin.

Drivers we spoke with say the law is needed.

"I think it would definitely prevent some road rage because that's what people start getting angry about-when they're driving on the interstate and someone won't get out of the way," explained Mathew Greer. "You're honking the horn right? So that's how it starts usually, someone getting offended by someone honking their horn at them."

Eric Baswell is another driver who thinks the law will improve safety.

"You've got people doing the speed limit or slightly above the speed limit in the left-hand lane and they come up to a car doing 50, 60 miles per hour on the interstate and they have to slam on their breaks and it just causes a lot of traffic issues," Baswell said.

Byrne diverts concerns about toll proposal to state officials

Posted by [Gabriel Tynes](#) | Jul 8, 2019 | [Baldwin County](#), [Latest](#) | [0](#) | *(reprinted with permission from the LAGNIAPPE)*

Around 60 people attended at town hall meeting in Magnolia Springs Monday hosted by U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, who was the first Republican candidate to announce his campaign to defeat Democratic Sen. Doug Jones earlier this year. But Byrne deflected an opportunity to talk openly about his Senate campaign, instead focusing on questions from the audience for about 40 minutes.

While a couple of attendees expressed concerns about immigration and health care, which Byrne called two of his "biggest issues" along with veterans' affairs, the majority of questions centered on the most politically divisive issue in South Alabama at the moment: the Alabama Department of Transportation's proposal to toll drivers as much as \$6 each way to cross the proposed I-10 Mobile River Bridge.

With almost every answer, Byrne explained his role in Congress is limited, while he encouraged those concerned about the \$2 billion project's financing scheme to contact state legislators, the governor's office and ALDOT.

"40 percent of the people who cross that bridge are my constituents," Byrne said while recounting a brief history of the project's evolving funding plan, explaining how early expectations with federal money fell through. "We've been talking to the Trump administration since the moment they came in office ... we do not have an infrastructure plan from the president yet. He met with (House Speaker Nancy) Pelosi and (Senate Minority Leader Chuck) Schumer a month or so ago and they are talking about it. In the meantime, my office and I have been working with the Federal Highway Administration and ALDOT to get through holdups we've been having on regulatory approvals. That will be done in the next few weeks and the state will be ready to go at that point. But the state has to decide how do we pay for it. The federal government does not have the manpower to tell them how to do that."

Larissa Goodrich of Spanish Fort joined several other attendees in sharing their concerns with how tolls will affect workers on minimum wage or disabled people who may have medical appointments across the bay.

"I have the power to offer different alternatives and one is the money Alabama gets from GOMESA," Byrne said, speaking of the federal program that allows Gulf Coast states to share the revenues from offshore oil and gas production. "You can take that money and bond it and get a fairly significant amount of money in return. The tolls for people from Alabama can either be zero or brought down significantly from what people from other states pay."

Charles Perry drove from Satsuma to confront Byrne about the challenges a toll will present to the poor and middle class, telling the congressman that if the bridge is funded as planned, it will lead to job loss and put more people on federal welfare programs. Another woman called the toll "discriminatory." Continue [HERE](#)

Transportation Research

TRB TCRP Report on Dialysis Transportation

The Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) has released a pre-publication version of [Research Report 203: Dialysis Transportation: Intersection of Transportation and Healthcare](#). The report responds to major concerns of public transportation agencies about the rising demand and costs to provide kidney dialysis trips and about experiences showing these trips require service more specialized than public transportation is designed to provide.

The report documents the complicated relationship of two different industries—public transportation and healthcare, each with its own perspective and requirements—to highlight problems, identify strategies addressing concerns, and suggest options that may be more appropriate for dialysis transportation.

Accompanying the report are a supplemental report and Excel spreadsheet. The [Supplemental Report](#) includes, along with a literature review and results from the project's surveys, an assessment of the comprehensive data provided by the U.S. Renal Data System. The community data tool is an [Excel forecasting tool](#).

[Learn more and access the reports and tool here.](#)

2018 Benchmarking Report on Biking and Walking from the League of American Bicyclists

WASHINGTON, DC – February 8, 2019: In 1958, Walt Disney imagined the future of transit was a “Magic Highway” where technology and infrastructure combined for fast, uncongested, sedentary travel by car. In 2019, with the rates of chronic diseases like obesity and diabetes rising and roads get deadlier for pedestrians and cyclists, the real solutions for better infrastructure are not found in 1950s futurism – they are found in the Bicycle Friendly Communities and States where more people are biking and walking, and fewer bicyclists and pedestrians are dying.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE 2018 BENCHMARKING REPORT ON BIKING AND WALKING »](#)

Congress first authorized federal funding to improve infrastructure projects intended for bicyclists and pedestrians in 1991. In 25 years, the United States has made significant investments in infrastructure, but a review of data and official documents by the League of American Bicyclists for *Bicycling & Walking in the United States: 2018 Benchmarking Report* shows that more federal and state leadership is needed to make improvements in infrastructure. While forward-thinking advocates and city leaders have made progress for bicyclist and pedestrian safety at the local level, further leadership at the federal and state level is necessary to coordinate the design and implementation of cohesive, connected, and safe environments for bicycling and walking in America.

“The way we’re investing in infrastructure isn’t working,” said Ken McLeod, policy director with the League of American Bicyclists, and lead author of the 2018 Benchmarking Report. “There is a crisis in traffic safety and we have the tools to reduce the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed on our roads every year—we need leaders at the national and state levels to take action: adopt Complete Streets policies, draft and implement bike and pedestrian master plans, and build protected infrastructure.”

The 2018 Benchmarking Report is the sixth edition of the report, the first published by the League of American Bicyclists. By combining data analysis with the League’s research and data collection, the 2018 Benchmarking Report offers the most comprehensive look at national and regional statistics on bicycling and walking alongside an examination of the policies and plans, or lack thereof, to improve infrastructure for people biking and walking. In investigating the relationship between states with Complete Streets policies and/or bicycling and walking master plans, the League found that states with long-term and multiple actions on both had more growth in active transportation.

“The Benchmarking Report should be a wake-up call,” said Bill Nesper, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists. “While the state and safety of bicycling and walking may seem dire, it’s not all bad news. The data shows there are places like Oregon, Minneapolis, and Washington, DC, where officials are working with advocates on the ground to create communities that are more welcoming for bicyclists and pedestrians. Local bike advocates are working to meet their communities’ needs and make biking better—it’s time for state and federal leaders to empower local efforts.”

Produced with support from groups such as AARP and Toole Design Group, the 2018 Benchmarking Report demonstrates the urgency to create bikeable and walkable communities to not only save lives on the roadway, but also encourage healthy living options. Just 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, of moderate to vigorous physical activity for adults can help prevent eight types of cancer, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and depression. Even small amounts of physical activity each day have health benefits. Building Bicycle Friendly Communities and ones that enable even short trips to work, school, or the doctor’s office encourage healthier outcomes for everyone.

The 2018 Benchmarking Report contains state and city-level data charting the increases and declines in bicyclist and pedestrian safety, federal funding for active transportation infrastructure, policies and plans for biking and walking, and much more. A few noteworthy findings include:

- Mississippi was the deadliest state for bicyclists with the highest average fatality rate per 10k bicycle commuters from 2012-2016. Mississippi also had the lowest percent of commuters biking to work in 2016 at .1 percent of the population.
- Cities where the rate of biking to work is highest, like Portland, Oregon, and Washington, DC, have the lowest rate of bicyclist fatalities.
- 71 percent of bicyclist deaths occurred in an urban area, with 61 percent occurring on principal or minor arterial roadways, which only make up 10 percent of the national roadway system.
- 39 percent of biking trips and 35 percent of walking trips in 2017 were for social and/or recreational purposes.
- 20 percent of biking trips in 2017 were to earn a living.
- Women are underrepresented among people who bike to work, but there have been modest participation increases in recent years.
- For people with an income below \$25,000 per year, biking in an increasingly common method for taking trips.

A new initiative from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Active People, Healthy NationSM](#) aims to get 27 million Americans more active by 2027. This initiative supports proven strategies to promote physical activity, including creating bikeable and walkable communities.

The nearly 400-page 2018 Benchmarking Report contains graphs, maps, and tables touching nearly every topic related to bicycling and walking in the United States. Please contact communications@bikeleague.org to ask about specific cities or states, speak to an expert, or learn more about how your state and community can become more bicycle friendly.

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.