



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, November 13th, 2020

Volume 36, Number 7

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This week in *Legislative Updates* the Senate has proposed a new Transportation Funding Bill that is gaining traction. This week's *Just for Fun* is *When Animals Attack* (because of today's date), and *In the News* there are discussions of the Baldwin County toll and a conflict over a new Mobile County road project.

On another note, SARPC wishes the best for the City Clerk and Building Inspector of the City of Satsuma, as Vicki Miller and Tom Briand will both be retiring at the end of this month. We have really enjoyed working with both of them, and we wish them luck in their new endeavors! 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

New MPO Members

The Mobile MPO will have 6 new members once the new mayors take office. The new members will be:

- Councilman, City of Prichard - Hon. George McCall, Jr.
- Mayor, City of Chickasaw - Hon. Barry Broadhead
- Mayor, City of Satsuma - Hon. Mark Barlow
- Mayor, City of Creola - Hon. Don Nelson
- Mayor, City of Bayou La Batre - Hon. Henry Barnes, Sr.
- Mayor, City of Semmes - Hon. Brandon Vanhook

To Councilman Lorenzo Martin of Prichard, Mayor Byron Pittman of Chickasaw, Mayor Thomas Williams of Satsuma, Mayor William Criswell of Creola, Mayor Terry Downey of Bayou la Batre, and Mayor David Baker of Semmes- Thank you. Thank you for participation in not just the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization, but the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission as well. Your passion for your communities is not unnoticed, and it has been a pleasure to work with each one of you. We are always here if you ever need anything from SARPC.

The MOBILE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM FEASIBILITY STUDY

VIA and its sub-consultant, Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood, have completed The [MOBILE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT](#)

There was a presentation by VIA at the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan public meeting on October 1, and a stakeholder meeting several weeks ago concerning the study. VIA presentation potential types of operators and potential operating budget is [HERE](#). 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.

All documents pertaining to his study are [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 : 100066703 (CN)

Federal aid number : STPMB-HSIP 0016 (525)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : TRAFFIC SIGNAL/ITS UPGRADES ON SR-42 (US-98, GOVERNMENT ST) FROM BROAD ST TO WATER ST, CANAL ST FROM I-10 TO BROAD ST, BROAD ST FROM CANAL ST TO GOVERNMENT ST AND WASHINGTON AVE FROM GOVERNMENT ST TO SPRINGHILL AVE IN THE CITY OF MOBILE

Old Engineers Estimate : \$1,372,714.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$1,271,420.00

Project : 100059789 (RW)

Federal aid number : STPMB 4918 (250)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : NEW ALIGNMENT OF CR-25 (MCFARLAND ROAD) FROM CR-28 (OLD PASCAGOULA ROAD) TO CR-358 (THREE NOTCH ROAD)

Old Target start date : February 01, 2021

New Target start date : April 01, 2021

Project : 100052458 (RW)

Federal aid number : STPMB 7533

County : MOBILE

Project Description : DAUPHIN STREET ADDITIONAL LANES FROM SAGE AVENUE TO WEST OF I-65 AT SPRINGHILL MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

Old Target start date : March 01, 2021

New Target start date : April 01, 2021

South Alabama RPO Updates

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met a several weeks ago using the GoToMeeting app. The agenda included:

- Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting (these will be sent out soon)
- Review and adoption of the **Fiscal Year 2021 Work Program** (available for review online at: <http://mobilempo.org/RPO/RPO%20Documents/2021%20Documents/Draft%20FY%202021%20RPO%20Work%20Program.pdf>)
- Review and adoption of the **Fiscal Years 2020-2023 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan** (available for review online at: <http://mobilempo.org/Documents/Planning/FY2021/2020-2023%20HSCTP%20for%20SARPC.pdf>)

The RPO Transportation Plan Project List (available for review online at <http://www.mobilempo.org/RPODocuments.html>) SARPC Rural Planning Organization

Projects in Region Let December 4th, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Guardrail Steel Blockout Replacement, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from 0.340 mile east of the Cochrane Bridge to 0.360 mile west of the Tensaw River Bridge in Mobile. Length 2.935 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,051,743 to \$2,507,686 .
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-188 from MP 4.640 to the junction of the Bayou La Batre - Irvington Highway in Bayou La Batre. Length 3.845 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$738,956 to \$903,169.

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-182 from the West City Limits of Orange Beach to the Perdido Pass Bridge. Length 3.283 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,476,709 to \$1,804,866.
- For constructing the Micro-Milling, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-180 from a point near the Fort Morgan Historical Site (MP 0.000) to the junction of SR-59 in Gulf Shores. Length 20.779 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,197,622 to \$2,685,982 .

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

Senate Committee Unveils Fiscal 2021 Transportation Funding Bill

Eugene Mulero November 12, 2020

The U.S. Senate committee that oversees funding across the federal government unveiled a plan for fiscal 2021 that will ensure operations continue uninterrupted across agencies, including the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

The bills, which pertain to federal agencies' budget operations, were announced less than a month before current government funding authority expires.

For the FMCSA, which oversees trucking policy, Senate Republicans proposed providing the agency's safety operations and programs account with \$300.8 million for fiscal 2021. For the agency's motor carrier safety grants, the appropriators proposed \$391.1 million.

Regarding FMCSA, the appropriators included a provision in the measure that would prohibit funds from backing the enforcement of the agency's electronic logging device mandate on carriers transporting livestock or insects. The provision would permit such to use paper logs to record duty status. According to FMCSA, drivers transporting agricultural commodities are not required to use an ELD if they stay within a 150 air-mile radius for certain workweek durations.

For other transportation agencies, the fiscal 2021 transportation funding bill would provide \$48.7 billion for the Federal Highway Administration, \$18 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration, \$13 billion for the Federal Transit Administration, and \$2.8 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration.

The Maritime Administration would receive \$1.1 billion. Senators also proposed providing \$1 billion for an infrastructure grants program.

Senate Republicans, who lead the chamber's Appropriations Committee, did not consider funding bills prior to this month's election. Their House counterparts, on the other hand, had proceeded with the appropriations process.

"By and large, these bills are the product of bipartisan cooperation among members of the committee," said Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), chairman of the Appropriations Committee Nov. 10. "As negotiations with the House begin in earnest, I look forward to working with [House] Chairwoman [Nita] Lowey, [Senate] vice chairman [Patrick] Leahy, and [House] ranking member [Kay] Granger to resolve our differences in a bipartisan manner."

"Time after time, we have demonstrated our willingness to work together and get the job done," added Shelby. "We have before us the opportunity to deliver for the American people once again."

Leahy, the senate panel's top Democrat, called on colleagues to prioritize pandemic emergency aid during their consideration of the appropriations measures. As he put it, "It is imperative that we do what is necessary to stop this pandemic from spreading. Whether this takes the form of separate legislation, or additional emergency titles added onto these bills, I remain ready to do what is necessary to help a country in crisis."

Partisan disagreements between Senate and House leadership contributed to a new round of COVID-19 aid not advancing to the president's desk for enactment.

With government funding expiring on Dec. 11, congressional leaders have yet to announce whether they are confident about the chances of passing the fiscal 2021 appropriations bills, or if they would need to settle on a temporary funding bill to avert a shutdown. Additionally, the White House's position on funding negotiations remains unannounced.

Earlier this year, the House approved a transportation bill that would provide FMCSA \$881 million for its operations. The funding allocation was a \$202 million increase from the fiscal 2020-enacted level, and \$179 million more than the president's request.

Sen. Collins' transportation funding bill advances

BY LIZ CAREY | NOVEMBER 12, 2020

The transportation funding bill authored by U.S. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) moved out of committee Tuesday.

Collins, the Chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, was one of the authors of the (FY) 2021 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development funding bill, which has broad, bipartisan input and support.

The bill will now go to Conference Committee before heading to the House and Senate floors for a vote.

Collins said the funding bill includes provisions to move forward on critical infrastructure improvements for her home state.

"Improving Maine infrastructure is essential to moving our economy forward," said Senator Collins. "As the Chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, I have secured more than \$747 million in competitive grants to enhance our transportation network. This legislation would build on those investments by funding projects that will enhance safety and create jobs in communities across the state."

The bill provides \$74.8 billion in new funding, \$561 million more than last year. Included in the bill are \$1 billion for BUILD grants, which provide federal assistance for transportation projects across the country; \$46.4 billion for Federal-aid highways from the Highway Trust Fund, consistent with the recent extension of the FAST Act; \$18 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration with increased funding for aviation safety; and \$2 billion for Amtrak.

Collins became a member of the Appropriations Committee in 2009 and stepped into the role of chairman in 2015. She is also a member of the powerful Defense; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs; Agriculture; Energy and Water; and Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Subcommittees.

AASHTO Transportation Policy Forum Maps Out Post-Election Political Landscape

editor@aaashto.org November 13, 2020

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials provided an overview of the potential post-election shifts in national transportation policies and priorities during its 2020 annual meeting.

During the organization's Transportation Policy Forum virtual summit on November 12, Jim Tymon – AASHTO's executive director – explained that though several elections for seats in the House of Representatives have yet to be called, the Democratic party is expected to retain control of the House albeit with a narrower majority.

"We do not expect to see any major changes in leadership there," Tymon said. "Rep. DeFazio {D-Ore.} will remain chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee while Rep. Sam Graves [R-Mo.] will remain the ranking member."

He noted, however, that control of the Senate is "less certain" with both Georgia senate seats headed for runoff elections in January 2021.

"Right now, Republicans hold 50 seats the Democrats 48 seats, so those two Georgia seats will determine of control of Senate," Tymon said.

"Regardless of what happens in Georgia, it is not unusual to see shifts in committee leadership mainly because of the term limits. So we will likely see some changes if Republicans retain control," he added, with possibly Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., leaving as chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works to take over as chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. That would most likely mean Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., would become the EPW committee's new chair.

If the Democratic party gains control of the Senate, there would also be committee leadership shifts but it is "a little less clear what those changes would look like – we need to wait and see how the runoff elections turn out," he pointed out.

However, regardless of which party is in charge on the Senate side, Tymon said he expects "infrastructure will be a priority, either as part of a larger infrastructure package or within surface transportation reauthorization legislation and we expect Congress will dive into that in early spring."

With AASHTO's [reauthorization principles](#) adopted at its 2019 annual meeting in St. Louis as foundation for policy, Tymon noted that the organization will expand its focus to include "emerging issues" such as infrastructure resilience, electric vehicle infrastructure, the impact of climate change, greenhouse gas emission reductions and autonomous vehicle infrastructure needs.

"Those are issues we've been talking about for a while, but their prominence in Congress increased in importance last year and will likely rise further under President-elect Biden next year," he said.

The next four weeks, however, will be critical as fiscal year 2021 appropriations bills need to be passed. "Current federal funding only gets us through December 11 and Congress needs to find some way to get the federal government funded through September 30, 2021," Tymon noted. "And there is not much time to do that as the legislative calendar is short: the Senate is only in session for 21 days through the rest of this year and the House for only 13 days."

Yet he is hopeful that funding measures will be passed in part because the Senate Committee on Appropriations released all 12 of its FY 2021 funding measures and subcommittee allocations on [November 10](#) – paving the way for negotiations with the House, which released a "minibus" of appropriations bills [on July 31](#).

Finally, Tymon noted that a [COVID-19 relief measure](#) remains "a big priority" for AASHTO and state DOT community. "We continue to have a lot of support from our transportation industry partners," Tymon said. "There is a lot of uncertainty but also a lot of energy and excitement as a new administration comes in with new priorities and ideas. It is an exciting time to see what is going to happen in the future."

Industry Experts Predict Bipartisan Support for Infrastructure in 2021

With Joe Biden projected to win the presidency and Republicans retaining control of the Senate, experts predict infrastructure may be one of the only things a Biden-led White House and a Republican Senate can agree on

Jessica Lombardo November 6, 2020

It's been said over and over that infrastructure is an area where Washington can come together and find common ground. Still our roads and bridges are falling apart because our Congressional leaders have been unable to agree upon a way to fund a robust infrastructure package. That may change however as industry experts believe that 2021 may be a good year for some infrastructure legislation to finally come to fruition.

The extension of the current federal surface transportation authorization law, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, expires on Sept. 30, 2021. In the new year, Congress will need to deliver on a longterm, robust surface transportation reauthorization bill and a permanent fix for the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). Despite our obvious national divide on several topics, transportation infrastructure remains one of the few areas where Congress continues to find bipartisan, common ground.

"Republican and Democrats have said for years that there's no such thing as a Republican road or Democratic bridge," Dave Bauer, president and CEO of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) said during an election impact webinar. "One way or another, the Congress that begins in 2021 will have to deal with a surface reauthorization bill, even if it's another extension."

The hope however, is that Congress can come together to find a longterm funding mechanism that will permanently shore up the HTF and provide states with funding security for years to come.

While the current Congress made some progress on surface transportation reauthorization legislation this year, the new Congress will have to start over next year.

"There's been a lot of work done on this already on this issue so it's not like they're completely starting from scratch in terms of ideas that are out there to fund our infrastructure," Ray Beeman, principal and co-leader at Washington Council Ernst & Young and former House Ways & Means Committee staff said. "You may argue there may not be any other ideas out there that haven't been found yet. So now it may come down to political decisions around what it is that you can actually get done on this particular issue versus continuing to spin our wheels on things that we know don't have a path forward."

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee provided a strong, bipartisan foundation by passing the highway portion of a reauthorization bill with a 21-0 vote in 2019. With key leaders of that committee expected to remain in place, the process should start as soon as possible next year.

How to Pay for Infrastructure

The question always remains: how will we fund a plan that will support our infrastructure projects longterm? We all know the federal gas tax has not been raised since 1993 and we probably won't see it done in 2021. We will however need to find another way to pay for our roadways as gas tax revenues continue to dwindle.

"The gas tax makes a whole lot of sense from a policy standpoint, it's a user pays mechanism," Pat Bousliman, government affairs consultant with Subject Matter and former Senate Finance Committee staff, said. "But there's a reason that hasn't been increased since 1993, it's extremely unpopular."

Yet at the state level, leaders who impose gas tax increases to fund their failing infrastructure are continually reelected as voters realize the need for such funding.

"We've been supporting gas tax increases as long as we've been working on this, probably even longer," Bauer said. "All of our partners have demonstrated the political viability of raising fuels taxes at the state level. From our perspective, we're always going to be more focused on an outcome and that's getting a robust reauthorization bill at a time our country desperately needs it."

Biden has discussed increasing the corporate tax rate to pay for infrastructure and other user-based fees have been floated as a pay-for as well. Many believe that there will need to be a combination of revenue streams in order to provide longterm sustainable funding.

"There's no silver bullet out there that's going to cover everything," Beeman said. "Maybe we have to cobble a number of things together and sort of litigate through the policy merits of all those different options and potentially stitch together something that hopefully is enduring. Something that will not only raise revenue in the near term, but that will also provide a good tax base going forward, which again, the gas tax is not."

At the end of the day, our industry needs to continue to push Congressional leaders to act on infrastructure legislation so states can confidently bid and let the crucial work that needs to be done to fix our crumbling roads, bridges and highways.

"The most important thing is that we move forward, especially before the deadline of the current expiration," Bauer concludes.

Funding Opportunities

Rebuild Alabama Act Annual Grant Program (deadline November 30th, 2020)

[This document](#) contains information regarding the Rebuild Alabama Act (RAA) Annual Grant Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. The RAA Annual Grant Program is administered by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). Prospective project-sponsoring governmental agencies are encouraged to thoroughly review this document, as well as the FY 2021 RAA Annual Grant Program Application and FAQ document, when considering developing a project application.

A. ELIGIBILITY:

- Any political subdivision of the State of Alabama (Municipal and County Governments) is eligible to apply for funding under the RAA Annual Grant Program.
- Project applications may be submitted for improvements to any classified public road or bridge owned and maintained by the applicant that is open to public traffic.

- The final eligibility of applications and proposed project activities will be determined by ALDOT upon evaluation of the application submitted.
- RAA Annual Grant Program funds are awarded through a competitive project selection process.

B. COMPETITIVE SELECTION

- RAA Annual Grant Program funds are awarded through a competitive project selection process.

C. PROJECT FUNDING:

- The RAA Annual Grant Program was established by Legislative Act #2019-2. The program allocates no less than \$10 million annually to eligible projects as identified by ALDOT during a fiscal year.
- The maximum funding provided to any project in FY 2021 will be \$250,000.00.
- RAA Annual Grant program funding is only available for eligible construction activities. No Preliminary Engineering, Right-of-Way, Utility Relocation, Construction Engineering & Inspection or Materials Testing costs will be eligible.
- RAA Annual Grant Program awarded funds will be issued to the sponsoring agency either (1) upon ALDOT's receipt of a Notice of Award from the sponsoring agency to the contractor, or (2) upon ALDOT's receipt of a Purchase Order (PO) from the sponsoring agency issued against a valid, eligible in-place bid contract.
- RAA Annual Grant Program awarded funds cannot be transferred to another project and may only be used to fund improvements consistent with the intent of the original project application.
- RAA Annual Grant Program funds may be combined with other funding sources when approved by ALDOT. In such cases, the more restrictive funding requirements may apply to all funds utilized. Note that RAA Annual Grant funding availability deadlines still apply when combined with other funding sources.
- A sponsoring governmental agency may only submit one project application per application cycle. Each County and Municipality will be viewed as an individual sponsor. Any project submitted by multiple sponsors shall be deemed as the eligible submission for all sponsors.
- Sponsors with an active award may not submit another application until the awarded project has been let to contract or a purchase order utilizing a valid, eligible in-place bid contract has been issued.
- Other funding sources to supplement RAA Annual Grant Program funds are not required, but projects containing a commitment to provide supplemental funding may be given favorable consideration.

D. PROJECT PROGRESS:

- RAA Annual Grant Program funds are available to sponsoring agencies for a period of one (1) year from the notice of award. Funding awarded to a sponsoring agency not either let to contract or a purchase order issued against a valid, eligible in-place bid contract within one year of the notice of award are subject to rescission.
- Any overrun in total project costs above the amount awarded, shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring agency.

E. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS:

- Projects must be let to competitive bid. In-place bids may also be utilized as long as those bids were awarded following all required competitive bid laws for eligibility. No other method of construction, such as force account is allowed.
- Any costs incurred prior to issuance of a Notice of Award or a Purchase Order are not eligible.
- RAA Annual Grant Program funds have reporting requirements. Recipients will be required to furnish any and all requested data to ALDOT or other specified or required entities necessary to satisfy any reporting requirements.

F. APPLICATION SUBMISSION & SELECTION

- All applications must be received by ALDOT prior to close of business on **November 30th, 2020**

FY2021 Effects of Sea Level Rise (ESLR) (deadline 1/8/21)

There is a notice of funding opportunity concerning the effect of sea level rise that has a relatively short time frame to submit a letter of intent. This is the link to the grant program, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=328992>.

NOAA-NOS-NCCOS-2021-2006594

FY21 Effects of Sea Level Rise (ESLR)

Department of Commerce

This solicitation is to improve adaptation and planning in response to regional and local effects of sea level rise and coastal inundation through targeted research on key technologies, natural and nature-based infrastructure, physical and biological processes, and model evaluation. The overall goal of the ESLR Program is to facilitate informed adaptation planning and coastal management decisions through a multidisciplinary research program that results in integrated models of dynamic physical and biological processes capable of evaluating vulnerability and resilience under multiple SLR, inundation, and management scenarios.

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.

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)

2020 has turned out to be not so good, and today is Friday the 13th, in 2020. The Friday the 13th superstition may have arisen in the Middle Ages, "originating from the story of Jesus' last supper and crucifixion" in which there were 13 individuals present in the Upper Room on the 13th of Nisan Maundy Thursday, the night before his death on Good Friday.

Still, it is considered to be an unlucky day. In fact, earlier this week [alligators were on the causeway](#). You don't want to hit an alligator. Do you know the difference between an alligator and a crocodile? An alligator, you will see him later; but a crocodile, you will see him in a while.....



Here is a compilation video of animals attacking cars, only because it is Friday the 13th, in 2020... [HERE](#)



In the News

Council, mayor debate county project design

Posted by [Dale Liesch](#) | Nov 10, 2020

Mobile City Councilwoman Bess Rich lost a vote she was hoping to win Tuesday, but her district will still receive funds for a multimillion-dollar road extension project as a result.

The council voted 5-2 to move forward with a project to extend Nevius Road using county pay-as-you-go funds and \$1.5 million in city money on Mayor Sandy Stimpson's suggestion, despite Rich's objection over the design of the project.

At issue for Rich was the "substandard" design the county would use to complete the project aimed at reducing congestion at the intersection of Hillcrest and Cottage Hill roads, ignoring city streetscape suggestions for curbs, gutters and lighting.

"It won't have a positive result," Rich said of the project during a pre-conference meeting. "It is a major corridor and should follow the city's guidelines for curb and gutter. I never dreamt this road would be built to a rural standard. It's a suburban area."

Rich also questioned why the county would take the lead on a project that's within the city limits.

Instead, Rich had wanted the council to pass an ordinance that would delay the project, but reserve the current funding until additional funding could be found to move forward with a project she felt was better suited for a suburban street. The vote on her ordinance failed by a vote of 2-4, with one abstention. Only Councilman Fred Richardson supported Rich's position. Councilman C.J. Small abstained.

In remarks during the council meeting, Stimpson said the county approached his office about the project and told him it would take the lead on it. Stimpson also argued the road is not ignoring city standards.

"It is being built to city standards," he said. "There are several standards that exist around the city."

Stimpson used examples of streets that were built without curbs, gutters or sidewalks previously, including parts of Government Boulevard, parts of Cody and Howells Ferry roads, as well as Llyods Lane and Paper Mill Road, as well as others.

"It's impossible for the city and county to get approval for a project if it doesn't meet current design standards set by [the Alabama Department of Transportation]," Stimpson said.

The extension would open up more than 700 previously undeveloped acres of land for development, and Stimpson mentioned the project as a way to increase the city's population. Small said he couldn't support Rich because he was an advocate for helping to grow the city from the inside. He also argued he didn't want the money to be earmarked and just sit for years when it could be used to help one of the city's seven districts.

Rich argued the project would have the opposite effect because would-be residents would be turned off by the lack of curbs, gutters and other infrastructure along the roadway. She said residents support new zoning rules and guidelines that the city should follow.

"Why not bring people to the table?" she asked. "We know what they want. Why do we keep ignoring people and then shake our heads when they don't move into the city?"

In other business, the city will delay a vote on further regulations of short-term rentals to at least Tuesday, Jan. 19.

How the toll referendum failed in Baldwin County, and what's next for key project

Updated Nov 12, 8:34 PM; Posted Nov 12, 6:45 AM



Orange Beach businessman Dean Young believes he will have plenty of support in opposing a ballot measure during next month's elections that would create a toll authority in Baldwin County for the construction of a northerly stretch of the Baldwin Beach Express. (John Sharp/jsharp@al.com).

By John Sharp | jsharp@al.com

Voters should trust the leaders of Alabama's fastest-growing county and back a referendum that would help address growth, bolster economic development, and improve the area's overall quality-of-life.

Sound familiar? That was an argument used in 2015 during the "Build Baldwin Now" campaign in support of a referendum to increase property taxes to fund the construction of new school buildings. Voters in the deeply conservative county responded with a [resounding thumbs down](#), triggering a years-long effort by the school system to restore trust and [establish a funding mechanism to pay for a much-needed building expansion](#).

Five years later, voters reacted with another thumbs down to yet another top-down effort to persuade voters on a public initiative aimed at addressing growth. A toll authority referendum was defeated by a 55.7% to 44.3% margin on November 3. And once again, it's back to the drawing board to resolve a public challenge – this time, infrastructure – in a county that is weary about supporting anything that might resemble a tax.

“For years, many people have complained about traffic congestion in Baldwin County,” said Baldwin County Sheriff Huey “Hoss” Mack who was among a coordinated effort involving elected officials throughout the county pushing for the toll authority to oversee the construction of a 24.5-mile stretch of the Baldwin Beach Express. “This was a possible solution to ease traffic flow and provide additional help in times of emergency or disaster.”

Mack, on the future of the road project, said, “I believe the issue is dead. I do not see any movement on the project in the foreseeable future.”

Distrust of tolls, Montgomery

Post-election “Monday morning quarterbacking” has been ongoing by supporters and others who are wondering if their messaging was too milquetoast and not aimed enough at alarming voters over the fact that more congestion, and more tax money from county residents, will be required to alleviate infrastructure that has been stressed by the rapid growth and tourism.

Others believe that a campaign in support of the referendum was overwhelmed by the presidential and Senate contests that were on the ballot.

“I think our downfall was that we didn’t get the message out to enough voters on the full positives of what this amendment was about and the potential of what the toll road would do for the county,” said Tommy Lee, chairman of the Gulf United Metro Business Organization (GUMBO), which backed the initiative.

One overriding argument for the downfall of the referendum, even before the campaign began, was its bad timing.

Slightly more than a year ago, a high-profile clash between Baldwin County elected officials and Alabama state leaders including Gov. Kay Ivey occurred over the fate of the Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project. That \$2 billion project was slated to be the state’s first major public-private partnership and would be financed largely through a user toll.

[The proposed \\$6 one-way toll](#) sparked outrage, especially in Baldwin County where Alabama State Auditor Jim Zeigler of Mobile and tea party representatives like Lou Campomenosi, organized an online opposition against the overall project. The I-10 project, once deemed the state’s No. 1 infrastructure priority, was [declared “dead” by Ivey in August 2019](#). Continue [HERE](#)

Alabama completes 2020 Census with 99.9 percent household response

OCTOBER 16, 2020

MONTGOMERY – Governor Kay Ivey — alongside the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and Alabama Counts! — today announced final participation results of Census 2020 for the state of Alabama. The census officially came to a close nationwide on Thursday, Oct. 15.

Alabama finished with an overall household response rate of 99.9%, on par with 48 other U.S. states. Of this total, 63.5% were self-responding Alabamians – an improvement from the 62.5% self-response rate recorded in 2010. Across the state, 47 counties exceeded their 2010 self-response rate.

In addition to self-response rates recorded by internet, phone or mail, the remaining percentage of responses was gathered by door-to-door Census takers for households who did not participate in self-response.

Governor Ivey has led census efforts in alignment with ADECA and Alabama Counts! since April 2019 to ensure participation numbers statewide reflected a proper Alabama representation. At stake has continued to be adequate federal representation, continued community funding and ongoing economic development opportunities moving forward.

“Over the past several months, Alabamians have come together during these challenging times to complete their 2020 Census, heeding our messages about how vital this count would be to shaping the future of our state,” Governor Ivey said. “We’re hopeful that the spirit of our citizens in this effort will translate into good news for Alabama down the road.”

The response rate includes only the percentage of households accounted for, not the number of people living in those households. The U.S. Census Bureau will release the total statewide population figures for the Alabama and all other states in the coming months, currently scheduled for Dec. 31. These figures will determine congressional reapportionment.

“Though this year has been challenging for everyone, Alabama Counts! is tremendously pleased that we fulfilled our goal of maximum participation among Alabama households in the 2020 Census,” said Kenneth Boswell, chairman of Alabama Counts and director of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. “Alabama Counts! was a group effort of hundreds of people from organizations, governments and businesses throughout the state, and we thank them as well as the census workers for being key to the state reaching such a high participation level.”

Alabama counties reflecting the highest self-response rates were Shelby County at 77.8%, Madison County at 76.0% and Autauga County at 71.7%. Additionally, Macon County, which took home the title of Alabama Census Bowl Champion in September and \$65,000 for its public-school system, finished at 52.5% for self-response.

For more information on the 2020 Census statewide efforts or to see a complete map of county response rates, please visit <https://alabama2020census.com>.

Alabama Power fined for air emissions at Plant Barry

Posted by [Gabriel Tynes](#) | Nov 12, 2020

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has proposed a consent order with Alabama Power for exceeding statutory limitations of hydrochloric acid emissions from Plant Barry in north Mobile County. In [a notice issued Friday](#), ADEM contends that on April 14, routine tests on one of the plant's power generators measured hydrochloric acid emissions at .0021 pounds per one million British Thermal Units (lb/MMBtu), which is .0001 lb/MMBtu above what is allowed under the utility's air permit. ADEM considers the exceedance to be a "serious violation," but noted it "is not aware of any irreparable harm to the environment resulting from these violations." Further, the department stated Alabama Power performed an investigation and preventative maintenance the day after the violation was reported, while it also has no history of enforcement actions due to exceedances of hydrochloric acid emissions at Plant Barry.

The utility is [currently seeking the renewal of its air permit](#) and two water permits at Plant Barry.

For its part, Alabama Power contends the exceedance was due to "a sudden and unanticipated introduction of moisture into the dry sorbent injection system immediately prior to and during the test" which resulted in "accelerated and unusual plugging of the sorbent injection lances and interfered with the performance of the sorbent injection system."

Asked for clarification about the nature of the violation, Alabama Power spokesperson Elizabeth Weatherford Thomas offered only that "the violation was self-reported and, according to the order, was addressed and did not cause an impact to the environment."

The Environmental Protection Agency describes hydrochloric acid as "corrosive to the eyes, skin, and mucous membranes," where "acute (short-term) inhalation exposure may cause eye, nose, and respiratory tract irritation and inflammation and pulmonary edema in humans."

"We intend to comply with the order from ADEM related to Plant Barry," she added. "We have a strong track record of environmental compliance and Alabama Power will continue to follow state and federal measures while providing the reliable service our customers trust us to deliver."

Alabama Power has agreed to pay ADEM \$35,000 for the violation.

Mobile Baykeeper, which joined the Southern Environmental Law Center last month in submitting comments to ADEM about Plant Barry's renewed air permit, said what appears to be a relatively minor exceedance could in fact be much more significant.

"[\[Toxic Release Inventory\] data](#) for Plant Barry show they released [30,000 pounds of \[hydrochloric acid\]](#) last year through stack emissions," wrote Baykeeper Program Manager Cade Kistler. "These emissions tests for [hydrochloric acid] are only conducted once per quarter. This means that there could have been hundreds of pounds of chlorine released in excess of the permit limit during the quarter even if there was only a slight violation. Without all the data on operating time and load it's impossible to say exactly how much [hydrochloric acid] was emitted in excess of permit limits; hence the need for more frequent testing."

Cade added, "this violation shows specifically how critical it is for ADEM to implement some of the things we asked for in our comments such as more robust monitoring requirements, requiring [Alabama Power] to give more details on emissions and heat input ... and the importance of more frequent inspections by ADEM to ensure compliance.

"Long story short, without monitoring requirements that assure compliance with emission limits, detailed information on emissions limits, and proper oversight the permit is not effective at protecting our air quality," he concluded.

Transportation Research

[New Fact Sheet: Boosting Active Transportation through Regional Transportation Plans](#)

October 29, 2020

The Safe Routes Partnership has released a new *Boosting Active Transportation Through Regional Transportation Plans* [Fact Sheet](#). The fact sheet focuses on helping active transportation advocates and stakeholders understand how regional transportation plans and transportation improvement programs (TIPs) set the foundation for cycling, walking, and health-oriented transportation strategies and projects.

NHTSA Releases Pedestrian Safety Playbook and Active Transportation Data Visualizations

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) released a playbook with social media strategies and resources to support Pedestrian Safety Month activities. It provides information on vehicle speed enforcement and Walk to School Day activities; distracted drivers and impaired pedestrians; illegal school bus passing; and conspicuity/Day Light Saving Time, and older pedestrians. NHTSA also developed two interactive data visualization dashboards displaying pedestrian and bicyclist fatality data between 2010 and 2018. Based on Fatality Analysis Reporting System data, the dashboard allows users to view key data by State, year, month, time of day, age group, and land type. Click [HERE](#) to see the Playbook.

Slow Streets Were a Success. Should Cities Keep Them?

A recent study examined projects to reduce car use and increase walking and biking on neighborhood streets in five cities, offering a look into how transportation data can be used to craft similar future projects.

SKIP DESCANT, GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY | OCTOBER 29, 2020

The modification of miles of local streets in cities across the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic cleared the way for bikers and walkers, and allowed neighborhoods to see their streets in all new ways.

New data indicates these moves were largely successful, with residents enjoying the extra space to bike and walk safely with lots of room to properly social distance. In cities like Seattle and Minneapolis, car use on the selected streets plummeted, while other users happily selected these routes.

“We saw a substantial dip in the number of vehicles on them, and we saw a pretty significant uptick in people biking and walking on them,” said Dawn Schellenberg, public affairs manager for the Seattle Department of Transportation. “They seemed to be successful,” she added.

Seattle and Minneapolis, along with three other cities, were part of a review of a modified streets study by INRIX, a transportation analysis firm. Seattle and Minneapolis experienced some of the largest levels of increased activity out of the five cities surveyed in the report: *Utilization of COVID-19 Street Programs in 5 U.S. Cities*. Seattle transitioned some 26 miles of neighborhood streets to its new Stay Healthy Streets program. They were selected, in part, because these corridors were already designated as “neighborhood greenways,” for their friendly walking and biking potential.

In Minneapolis, three routes totaling 11 miles were identified and the city placed traffic control devices to signal to motorists the changed nature of the streets. Like in Seattle, these routes had already been identified as streets suitable for walking and biking, in some cases known as “bicycle boulevards.” In both cities, and many others, the streets were not entirely closed to vehicles, and could be accessed by residents, delivery drivers and other vehicles.

“We didn’t fully close the streets... but we used the traffic control devices to essentially slow down cars, and make it clear that there would be people walking and biking in the streets,” explained Matthew Dyrdaahl, a transportation planner and bicycle and pedestrian coordinator in Minneapolis.

The project in Minneapolis and has been discontinued and the streets have returned to their normal operation. However, the experiment served as a pilot project and a data baseline as the city considers similar biking and walking modifications to right-of-way infrastructure in the future, said Dyrdaahl.

“We consider the Stay Healthy Streets a success,” he added. “And we will consider how the Stay Healthy Streets, or other new ideas, maybe restarted or modified in the future. But it may not look the same.”

The INRIX study, which also examined slow streets programs in Washington, D.C., New York City and Oakland, Calif., presented its findings as a big-data analysis showing how car traffic declined sharply on these streets while other uses expanded.

Non-car activity on restricted streets in New York City saw little change compared to the rest of the city, according to the INRIX study, likely due to the loss of commuter and other activity in the city. Activity on restricted streets in Minneapolis was 133 percent of normal in July, while activity citywide was only at 85 percent.

Transportation data, say INRIX officials, can and should offer a wealth of insights into how transportation infrastructure decisions are made.

“In the past, we had to rely on physical, in-person counts, in-ground loop detectors or video analysis to count the utilization of slow or restricted streets,” said Bob Pishue, a transportation analyst and author of the INRIX report. “Yet, today there are ways to provide data at a fraction of the cost and offer a high degree of accuracy.”

The data and analysis also points down a path of more data-based decision-making because the kind of approaches to restrict car access on one street may not be the best solution in another neighborhood.

“[City transportation officials] could use data to remove, change or make these projects more permanent,” said Pishue. “But the key is also making these projects a better fit from the beginning.”

“Street restrictions are put in place for a number of reasons: to stop cut-thru traffic, allow families to walk and bike in their neighborhood, social distancing, etc.,” he added. “Yet not all street designs and locations are good for all purposes. Data allows transportation officials the ability to implement the best project for that specific need and measure against those goals.”

In Seattle, transportation officials are beginning the process of resident engagement and outreach to learn more from the community about what Stay Healthy Streets solutions worked, or didn’t, and how they could be modified as the city plans to make permanent some 20 miles of restricted car streets in the future.

“We did some really quick back-of-the-napkin analysis to figure out where they might be most beneficial, but let’s go out now and talk to people who have experienced them,” Schellenberg offered. “Would these be a benefit to your neighborhood?”

A community survey seeking input on the project yielded lots of interest, with 9,000 participating in the survey offering some 30,000 “open-ended responses.”

In Minneapolis, the project offered an opportunity to test out various traffic-calming solutions, gather data, and determine how to move efforts like these forward, said Dyrdaahl, adding that a larger mission is to use the momentum generated by these projects to encourage more non-motorized mobility in the future to change behavior and achieve actual mode-shift.

“We use a wide variety of data to determine where we’ll invest in transportation, including walking and biking. We have an evaluation program that looks at sort of before data, and after a project is built,” he added.

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.