



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 16th, 2020

Volume 36, Number 3

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET NOVEMBER 6TH, 2020
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

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FTA 5310 Urban deadline for applications is next week, and the REBUILD Alabama ACT Annual Grant Program is announced (*See Funding Opportunities*). License plate readers and masks on buses in *Legislative Updates* and some new MPO members in *Mobile MPO Updates*. This week's *Just For Fun* is gnarly, dude. Baldwin County gets chunk of gasoline tax money, but there are talks of a toll for Baldwin Beach Express *In The News* this week.

The 2020 Census deadline has been extended to October 31st. Please make sure that you and yours respond at [Census.Alabama.gov](https://census.alabama.gov).

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 municipal run-off elections were last week, and the votes have been tallied. The Mobile MPO will have 6 new members once the new mayors take office. The new members will be:

- Councilman, City of Prichard TBD
- Mayor Elect, City of Chickasaw- Mr. Barry Broadhead
- Mayor Elect, City of Satsuma- Mr. Mark Barlow
- Mayor Elect, City of Creola- Mr. Don Nelson
- Mayor Elect, City of Bayou La Batre- Mr. Henry Barnes, Sr.
- Mayor Elect, City of Semmes- Mr. 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

Federal aid number : STPMB 7612 (600)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : MCDONALD ROAD (CR-39) ADDITIONAL LANES FROM NORTH OF I-10 TO OLD PASCAGOULA ROAD.

Old Target start date : January 01, 2021

New Target start date : August 01, 2021

South Alabama RPO Updates

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met a couple of 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%20HSCPT%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 November 6th, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY

None at this time

BALDWIN COUNTY

For the Maintenance Bridge Painting along I-10 on SR-16 (US-98) over I-10 (Site 1); on I-10 over the Fish River (Site 2); on I-10 over Three Mile Creek (Site 3); on I-10 over Cowpen Creek (Site 4); and on I-10 over the Styx River (Site 5). The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,154,733 to \$1,411,340 .

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

Alabama bill addresses use of license plate readers

OCTOBER 15, 2020

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Keith Goble

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One Alabama state lawmaker has filed a bill for consideration during the upcoming regular session that addresses the use of automatic license plate readers. The devices typically are mounted on police vehicles, road signs or traffic lights to track certain drivers' movements.

Background on the technology

High-tech cameras to capture the date, time and location that scanned vehicles passed are used in some capacity by about 600 local and state police departments and other state and federal agencies, according to the American Civil Liberties Union. Private business, such as repossession companies and vehicle insurance companies, also use the technology that can capture about 1,800 images per minute.

The technology of license plate readers is not without flaws. Conditions that include bad weather, poor lighting, dirt on plates, and even background colors can result in false matches.

To date, at least [16 states](#) have enacted rules relating to the use of license plate readers. Among the group, there are six states to place restrictions on government or law enforcement use of the technology. There are eight states that limit how long data can be kept, and four states specify that data is exempt under public records laws.

Arkansas, Maine, and New Hampshire also prohibit private use of readers, with limited exceptions.

Growing concerns about license plate readers

Critics say use of the scanners amounts to warrantless searches.

Additionally, they point out that the technology no longer is limited to law enforcement agencies. Private businesses offer video surveillance software for customers to read license plates.

Rekor Systems Inc., a Maryland-based company, is nearing the release of a [mobile app](#) that will allow users to scan license plates on their smartphone camera.

The company says its software could be used for uses that include installing a camera next to a fuel pump to scan vehicle license plates to streamline transactions.

Supporters say the scanners used by law enforcement agencies are not intended to infringe on peoples' privacy. Others say one of the benefits of private use of the technology is to enhance the "customer experience."

Alabama law

Alabama law does not prohibit the use of license plate readers, or license plate scanners, by law enforcement agencies in the state.

Agencies can use the technology to determine the ownership of a vehicle, the mileage or route traveled by a vehicle, the location or identity of a vehicle, or the identity of the occupants in the vehicle.

The technology recently was used to aid law enforcement in [apprehending](#) a man charged in the shooting death of a 71-year-old Birmingham woman.

Senate Bill 2

Sponsored by Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur, the bill would allow law enforcement to use scanners on public highways for the investigation of a criminal offense or activity initiated by a law enforcement agency.

SB2 would permit law enforcement agencies throughout the state to exchange or share captured data from license plate readers. The bill also establish procedures for data exchanges or sharing.

Captured data destroyed within 30 months of collection, unless the data is related to a toll violation or the subject matter for a law enforcement purpose.

In addition to law enforcement, the bill would also authorize boards of education to have access to the technology.

Private business use of the technology is not covered in the legislation.

SB2 awaits consideration in the Senate Transportation and Energy Committee once the regular session convenes in February.

White House Blocked C.D.C. From Requiring Masks on Public Transportation

The order would have mandated that both passengers and employees wear face coverings on planes, trains, buses and subways and in airports, stations and depots.

By [Sheila Kaplan](#)

- Oct. 9, 2020



The C.D.C. order would have been the toughest federal mandate to date aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus. Credit...Chang W. Lee/The New York Times

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention drafted a sweeping order last month requiring all passengers and employees to wear masks on all forms of public and commercial transportation in the United States, but it was blocked by the White House, according to two federal health officials.

The order would have been the toughest federal mandate to date aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus, which continues to infect more than 40,000 Americans a day.

The officials said that it was drafted under the agency's "quarantine powers" and that it had the support of the secretary of health and human services, Alex M. Azar II, but the White House Coronavirus Task Force, led by Vice President Mike Pence, declined to even discuss it.

The two officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment, said the order would have required face coverings on airplanes, trains, buses and subways, and in transit hubs such as airports, train stations and bus depots.

A task force official said the decision to require masks should be left up to states and localities. The administration requires the task force to sign off on coronavirus-related policies.

"The approach the task force has taken with any mask mandate is, the response in New York City is different than Montana, or Tuscaloosa, Alabama," said the official who asked not to be identified because he did not have permission to discuss the matter. "Local and state authorities need to determine the best approach for their responsive effort depending on how the coronavirus is impacting their area."

Most public health officials believe that wearing masks is one of the most effective ways to protect against the spread of the virus, particularly in crowded, poorly ventilated public places that attract people from all over, like transportation venues. Many feel that the Trump administration has turned the wearing — or not wearing — of masks into a political expression, as seen most dramatically on Monday evening when President Trump whipped off his surgical mask at the White House door after returning from the hospital where he was treated for Covid-19.

"I think masks are the most powerful weapon we have to confront Covid and we all need to embrace masks and set the example for each other," Dr. Robert R. Redfield, the C.D.C. director, who oversaw the drafting of the order, said in a recent interview.

Dr. Redfield has been publicly at odds with President Trump for promoting mask wearing along with social distancing, and for warning that a vaccine for the virus won't be widely available until next year.

The thwarting of the mask rule is the latest in a number of C.D.C. actions stalled or changed by the White House. Late last month, the coronavirus task force overruled the C.D.C. director's order to keep cruise ships docked until mid-February. That plan was opposed by the tourism industry in Florida, an important swing state in the presidential election.

Political appointees at the White House and the Department of Health and Human Services have also been involved in rewriting the agency's guidelines on reopening schools and testing for the virus, bypassing the agency's scientists.

Editors' Picks

Some other members of the White House Task Force support a mask mandate. But others do not, among them Dr. Scott W. Atlas, a radiologist who has become Mr. Trump's closest adviser on the coronavirus, and Mr. Pence, who runs the panel and sets the agenda.

Representative Peter A. DeFazio, Democrat of Oregon and chairman of the House committee on transportation and infrastructure, criticized Mr. Trump for ignoring public health experts from his own administration on the mask issue.

"It's especially outrageous because the science is so clear: masks save lives," Mr. DeFazio said. "The millions of Americans who work in and use our transportation systems every day — from bus drivers, train conductors and flight attendants, to the frontline workers who rely on public transit — deserve to know their president is relying on experts' best advice and doing everything possible to keep them safe."

The transportation trades department of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., which represents 33 unions with what it describes as "millions" of transportation workers, said that the administration last week rejected its July petition to require passengers to wear masks on public transportation.

Larry Willis, president of the department, said his members were being endangered by a patchwork of rules regarding face coverings on airplanes, trains and buses around the country, as well as in airports, train stations and bus depots.

"Some airports are all in and they require masks when you walk in the door," Mr. Willis said. "Some places where masks have become too politicized, the right mandates are not in place."

"I think it creates an uncertain level of health and safety for workers and passengers," he said. "This is a global pandemic, this is a national emergency. We should have a national standard."

Bill seeks energy efficient transportation project investment

BY [DOUGLAS CLARK](#) | OCTOBER 13, 2020

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) has introduced a new measure designed to enhance the nation's investment in energy efficient transportation and infrastructure modernization projects.

Shaheen maintains the Better Utilizing Innovative Low-Emission Development Strategies (BUILDS) Act would create a competitive infrastructure grant program via the Department of Transportation (DOT) to fund projects promoting energy efficiency while meeting reduction goals combatting harmful pollution and to boost America's competitiveness in the global marketplace.

"It's long past time for bipartisan progress to repair our crumbling roads, rails, and bridges," Shaheen said. "The BUILDS Act is a common-sense proposal that invests in local transportation and infrastructure needs in both rural and urban communities – which would be a boon for projects in every corner of the Granite State – while also reducing our carbon footprint. I urge members on both sides of the aisle to join me in this legislation to help address our aging infrastructure and incentivize our communities to pursue energy efficient solutions to build a safer, more sustainable future."

The legislation authorizes \$300 million annually to create an energy efficiency-focused national infrastructure investment initiative to modernize the nation's transportation infrastructure and reduce GHG emissions.

Additionally, authorities indicated the legislation would expedite the adoption of new and existing energy efficiency technologies for transportation applications; and increase the availability of energy efficient modes of transportation for passengers or freight.

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?oppId=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.

Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program-II (ATRIP-II)

(deadline October 30th, 2020)

The purpose of this program is to rehabilitate and improve transportation infrastructure by funding projects of local interest, proposed by one or more local governments, related to the state-maintained highway system. Projects may include local roads and bridges essential to such projects. The program's goal is to address critical needs projects across the state to rehabilitate and improve the in-place facilities and in some cases provide new facilities at locations throughout the state. The program's focus is an emphasis on the public safety, economic growth, and stability of the state and its roads and bridges.

GENERAL INFORMATION

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

[ATRIP-II Procedural Guidelines](#)

[2021 ATRIP-II Project Application](#)

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Mobile Urban Area)

(deadline October 22nd, 2020)

The Mobile Urban Area FTA 5310 Funds for FY 2021 grant applications is now available. 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 South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) is responsible for the management and administration of the **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program** for the Mobile Urban Area. The application and guidelines for submittal can be found at <http://mobilempo.org/5310.html>

Completed grant applications must be submitted to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission by NOON on October 22nd, 2020

U.S. Department of Transportation Seeks Applicants for Railway-Highway Crossings Grants

(deadline October 26, 2020)

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

FHWA 17-20

Contact: Neil Gaffney

Tel.: (202) 366-0660

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation today published a Notice of Funding Opportunity that provides up to \$50 million in grants for commuter rail agencies working to improve safety at railway-highway crossings. Applications will be accepted until October 26, 2020.

“This \$50 million federal investment in commuter rail grade crossing safety will protect pedestrians, reduce vehicle accidents, and save lives in rural and urban areas across our country,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2020, appropriated \$50 million to be awarded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through the Commuter Authority Rail Safety Improvement (CARSI) Grants Program.

Under CARSI, the FHWA – in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – will provide competitive grants to commuter rail authorities working to eliminate hazards at railway-highway crossings. Eligible projects include those that separate or protect grades at crossings; rebuild existing railroad grade crossing structures; relocate highways to eliminate grade crossings; and eliminate hazards posed by blocked grade crossings due to idling trains.

“Safety is always our top priority at the Department under the leadership of Secretary Chao,” said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason. “These grants will help our state, local and regional transportation partners better protect the lives of those traveling on America’s roads and rails.”

“FRA is always working toward a benchmark of zero fatalities at railway crossings, and such safety improvements to our nation’s infrastructure will go a long way toward that goal,” said Federal Railroad Administrator Ronald Batory.

“Working together with FHWA and FRA, we can improve safety around highway-rail crossings and prevent collisions, injuries and fatalities,” said Federal Transit Administration Deputy Administrator K. Jane Williams. “Rail safety includes encouraging safe behavior around all rail crossings; it’s about making sure the American public is safe near all rail tracks.”

By statute, an eligible commuter authority must have experienced at least one accident investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2018, and for which the NTSB issued an accident report.

The NOFO, and information on how to apply, is available at

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=328801>

ALDOT Rail-Highway Safety Program Grade Crossing Hazard Elimination Application

The Rail-Highway Safety Programs Group of the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) as part of the ALDOT Rail State Action Plan is strategically engaging local agencies, ALDOT Region and Area Offices, railroad companies, and other stakeholders in an effort to improve safety at public grade crossings by eliminating hazards and fulfilling the program’s goal of reducing fatalities and incidents at crossings. Our office is now accepting Grade Crossing Hazard Elimination Applications for funding request. This application process will provide an opportunity for entities to identify and request funds for crossing locations that demonstrate a significant hazard to the traveling public.

Please find attached guidelines and application form. Submission **deadline is Friday, October 16th by 5:00 PM CST**. If this application is not applicable in your respective location, please disregard. This application is currently not available online. Feel free to forward the guidelines and application as needed. For application aldotrail@dot.state.al.us

New CDBG GRANT Program

To Address COVID-19 Impacts (currently no deadline)

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

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

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

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

Please note that applications to the CDBG program must be in the name of a local government as the applicant/grantee. Partnerships and agreements with other agencies/entities, etc. can be developed as necessary. CDBG projects must also benefit primarily low and moderate-income people and this requirement will likely remain for the new funds.

RESOURCES/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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

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

Submit your questions to:

CPDQuestionsAnswered@hud.gov

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

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

EDA CARES ACT RECOVERY ASSISTANCE (currently no deadline)

OVERVIEW

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

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

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

RESOURCES

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

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

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)

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One of the things our City Leaders can say that they got something right, would have to be the skateboard park at Public Safety Memorial Park. What mother would not let her child ride a skateboard at a city park that borders Airport Boulevard named "Public Safety Memorial Park" *in memory of Public Safety*. Flying through the air on a skateboard trying to land it on a guard rail without breaking an ankle is great outdoor exercise, and fun!



The skateboard game just went up several notches. Now, there are huge electric motorized skateboards that can go 100 mph. Trying to “rail”, “grind” or take a “gnarly heel flip” might be difficult, but they are electric skateboards and could be used for convenient and inexpensive way of commuting. [HERE](#)



In the News

Baldwin County gets chunk of gasoline tax money

by James Gordon

Wednesday, October 14th 2020

BALDWIN COUNTY, Ala. (WPMI) — Most may not have noticed, but Alabama’s gasoline tax increased by two cents last week. This is all part of the state’s plan to increase the state gas tax by 10 cents over three years: six cents in 2019, two cents in 2020, and two cents in 2021.

So far, the initial six-cent gas tax has brought in an estimated \$190 million to the state. Distribution is based on population and growth, and Baldwin County is now getting the lion’s share of the money.

Right now, the number-one priority is maintaining the roads that we have. Most roads, mainly county roads, have been resurfaced or are on a list to be resurfaced. Heavy trucks along with increased traffic on many of our back roads contribute to the wear and tear.

For example, County Road 9, like many other county roads in rural areas, doesn’t always get attention. Now with the state’s new gasoline tax, those roads do.

"They are cut-throughs to the dump, so you have a lot of commercial trucks going down the road. And it’s a cut-through to County Road 32. The curve up the front at the intersection, the edge of it was kind of dangerous. And they fixed that, so it’s been a good thing," said Judy Callaway, who live near the newly paved road.

Hiring all local contractors as stipulated by the Rebuild Alabama Act, Baldwin County engineers have chosen to spend \$1.6 million in state gas tax money on resurfacing projects for 2021. The county did the same in 2020, spending \$1.2 million.

"We resurfaced about 14 miles in 2020, and we are scheduled to resurface an additional 16 miles in 2021," said Joey Nunnally, Director of the Baldwin County Highway Department.

Over the next three years, Baldwin County is projected to get \$73 million from the gas tax. Larger projects may be included once the State Transportation Improvement Plan is formally adopted later this month.

"We have chosen to use it for maintenance reasons and for maintaining our existing structures, which is where the need was. And it checked all the boxes for transparency - all the reports we have to send back to the legislature showing how we spent this money," said Nunnally.

Cities and municipalities get a much smaller piece of the pie. It may take years of savings to get any large projects done. One way around that is for cities to partner with the county and the state or to seek grant money.

Toll opposition returns to Baldwin County over ballot initiative

Updated Oct 13, 2020; Posted Oct 13, 2020



The Baldwin Beach Express currently runs from Interstate 10 south to the Foley Beach Express and toward Orange Beach. A proposal to build an extension from I-65 to I-10 could move forward if voters endorse Amendment 2 on the November 3, 2020, general election ballot. (John [Sharp/jsharp@al.com](mailto:jsharp@al.com)).

By [John Sharp | jsharp@al.com](mailto:jsharp@al.com)

Opposition emerged Tuesday against a [ballot initiative that would establish a toll authority in Baldwin County](#) to oversee a new \$200 million northbound extension to the Baldwin Beach Express.

Dean Young, a conservative former congressional candidate from Orange Beach, argued that language within the 2019 legislation that supports the creation of the toll authority includes what he claims is a “blank check” that would give the group leeway to spend toll revenues however they see fit.

He also said that the legislation, which was backed by Baldwin County state lawmakers, does not establish a lowest bidder standard for contracts to build the new four-lane expressway. He said the legislation omitted legal language that would have guaranteed the lowest bidders to construct the Beach Express extension would be awarded with the job.

“This is a bad idea,” said Young, during a news conference in downtown Foley. “They can do what they want and that’s ridiculous.”

At least one proponent for the ballot measure – called “Amendment 2,” which will be before Baldwin County voters only on November 3 -- accused Young of “grandstanding,” and pointed to other conservative leaders in Baldwin County who have not come out in public opposition toward the ballot measure. If approved by voters, Amendment 2 would create the new toll authority for the sole purpose of raising revenue to finance the construction of the 24.5-mile roadway called the Baldwin Beach Express II, which would extend the existing Beach Express from Interstate 10 near the Buc-ee’s travel station north toward I-65.

“The folks who historically are going to be very conservative about tolls, when we discussed with them (the proposal) in that there are multiple entrances and exits into the county (aside from the toll road), and that you didn’t have to pay for this toll if you didn’t want to, and that it would be good for long-term growth ... they said they just didn’t see where they had a dog in this fight,” said Tommy Lee, chairman of the Gulf United Metro Business Organization (GUMBO) which backs the amendment.

Indeed, two leading opponents in last year’s I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project say they are not planning to organize any opposition to the ballot measure ahead of the election.

Alabama State Auditor Jim Zeigler, who is the administrator [of a Facebook page that was set up last year to oppose the I-10 project and which still claims over 52,000 followers](#), said he was deferring to Baldwin County residents over how to vote on the ballot measure.

Zeigler is a Mobile resident who led the citizen opposition – [and even wrote a book about it](#) -- against the I-10 project that called for [assessing a \\$6 one-way toll along I-10 between Mobile and Baldwin County to help finance a \\$2 billion overhaul to the Bayway](#).

“This will be decided by the voters,” said Zeigler. “It will not be decided by politicians. I don’t live in Baldwin County, so I won’t get to vote on it.”

Lou Campomenosi, who leads the Common Sense Campaign tea party group in Baldwin County and who also was a leader in last year’s toll opposition, said his group isn’t opposing the measure. He said called comparisons of last year’s toll plan backed by state leaders to finance the I-10 project and this year’s ballot initiative to establish a toll authority to develop a plan to finance the Baldwin Beach Express extension as “apples and oranges.” Continue [HERE](#)

Study: COVID-19 Changing Commuter Traffic Patterns

editor@aaashto.org October 9, 2020

A new study released by analytics firm StreetLight Data indicates that U.S. peak commuting travel is experiencing tremendous change – minimizing and changing rush hour traffic patterns, while not necessarily changing overall traffic volumes.

“As 2020 draws to a close, some transportation indicators like vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are trending back to pre-COVID levels,” the firm noted in its new [22-page report](#). “But ... looking closer, we are seeing a shift to an entire ‘new normal’ for transportation.”

StreetLight based its study on an examination of VMT data from five major U.S. metropolitan areas – New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C., and Chicago. It found that instead of the typical sharp increase in morning travel, followed by a drop and then an afternoon peak, VMT data now indicates weekday traffic builds gradually toward a more sustained afternoon high.

That is in part because “millions of commuters no longer head to a distant office in the morning, so they have new flexibility for mid-day grocery shopping and other in-person errands as more businesses gradually reopen their doors,” the firm said.

It also referenced a PricewaterhouseCoopers [Remote Work Survey](#) that found 77 percent of U.S. office employees are currently working from home at least one day a week, with 55 percent projected to continue doing so once the COVID-19 crisis passes.

Additionally, while major metro areas still have peak evening commutes, those peaks aren’t as pronounced as they used to be. In Washington D.C., for example, the analysis shows a slightly earlier peak for evening travel than during the same period in 2019, but the buildup to that point is a steady increase instead of a sudden jump.

StreetLight also noted the formation of “mini rush hours” in some metro areas, such as that Los Angeles and San Francisco, occurring after lunch and then followed by two evening traffic peaks that feature longer yet light periods of traffic congestion. That evening congestion is beginning earlier, the firm noted, yet ending sooner with freeways returning to normal traffic loads as much as an hour earlier versus the same periods in 2019.

The report also noted that all five metros within the study feature this “peak-spreading” tendency, with more vehicle travel during midday than in 2019. StreetLight added that it validated this behavior shift against permanent counter data from state department of transportation sources, with similar “peak-spreading” changes occurring in the morning.

The study also focused on several long-term trends that may develop from those commuting traffic pattern changes:

□□□□□□□□ The decoupling of VMT and congestion — which will likely persist to some degree after COVID-19 is over — “shakes the foundations” of many models and decision-making tools for transportation infrastructure, investment, funding, modal choice, and more. With uncertain budgets, localities will need to efficiently monitor and prioritize in order to maximize resources.

□□□□□□□□ During shelter-at-home orders, many companies shifted quickly and smoothly to a work-from-home business model. Seattle, for example, could incentivize its larger employers — including Amazon, Microsoft, Starbucks, and T-Mobile — to extend such work-at-home options.

□□□□□□□□

Home offices aren't an option for all sectors of the economy. However, high-tech businesses fit it well and when those businesses are in cities with a high cost of living, where workers tend to live in the more affordable outskirts, limiting commuting can reduce VMT. Yet even keeping high tech employees working two days a week from home once the COVID-19 crisis passes would only impact 3 percent of Seattle's VMT.

State Park Road to close temporarily for repairs to Lakeview Trail

• Updated Oct 13, 2020 | Posted on Oct 13, 2020



GULF SHORES, Ala. (WALA) - Repairs to the trail along State Park Road (formerly Hwy 135) began Monday and will require closure of this road Wednesday through Friday, October 14 – 16, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, officials released on Tuesday.

As an alternate route, drivers are asked to take Hwy 59 to East Beach Blvd (Hwy 182).

They say Hurricane Sally caused damage to Lakeview Trail, eroding the paved bike pathway and making it impassible and unsafe. You are asked to mind the barricades and do not attempt to go around them or move them as they are in place for public safety.

Though Lakeview Trail remains closed, the following trails are open for recreational use: Rattlesnake Ridge, Cotton Bayou, Rosemary Dunes, a portion of Catman Trail, Beach Mouse Bypass, Cross Park Connector, Gopher Tortoise Trail, and Coyote Crossing. All other trails in the park are closed. Visitors found trespassing in other park areas or trails may be subject to a \$300 fine (code of Alabama 220-5-.10(1)).

Some cities shut down streets for pedestrians and other uses during the pandemic. A new study looks at whether people are using them.

By [Luz Lazo](#) Oct. 15, 2020

In the nearly eight months since the [coronavirus](#) pandemic hit the United States, cities across the country have closed roads, extended bike lanes and turned parking spaces into dining spots as a way to give Americans more space to move around safely during the health crisis.

Now, with the pandemic stretching on and many cities considering extending those closures through the winter, new research offers some indication of how the spaces are being used.

The study, by the traffic analytics firm Inrix, looked at five cities: Washington, New York, Minneapolis, Seattle and Oakland, Calif. It found that in general, traffic volumes on the restricted streets — whether pedestrian, bike or car — remained well below pre-pandemic levels, a finding that is not surprising considering that overall traffic is down, as well. As traffic volumes began to increase amid states reopening, so did activity levels on the restricted streets, Inrix found.

However, traffic varied based on the designated use of the roadways. In dense cities such as New York and Washington, for example, activity on the “slow streets” or “safe streets” was underwhelming, with usage lagging behind overall city travel.

Cities that created larger and well-connected networks of slow streets, geared toward recreation, such as in Minneapolis, saw higher numbers of people using the facilities, Inrix found.

Protected bike lanes built for commuting in New York didn't attract as many commuters because fewer people were commuting, while there are indications of activity picking up in the open-street restaurants and even more on the recreation-focused streets, said Bob Pishue, an Inrix transportation analyst.

“What we found is that the goal matters. Is it to increase social distancing or increase walking and biking or to reduce car use?” Pishue said.

[Cities, including D.C., are closing streets to make way for restaurants and pedestrians](#)

Inrix collects data anonymously via GPS probes on roads, vehicle navigation systems and other devices. For this study, the firm analyzed trillions of location-based data points in the five cities to understand what impact a variety covid-19 safe-street programs had on mobility trends.

For example, in the nation's capital, use of the restricted streets was at roughly 50 percent compared with pre-pandemic; in Manhattan it was 43 percent.

By eliminating and restricting parking and through-traffic, cities may be discouraging people from frequenting restaurant districts and other city attractions, the report said.

“How is this going to work going into the [winter months with streateries](#) and stuff like that? I think that is still kind of a question,” Pishue said.

The firm's [analysis](#) provides quantitative metrics on the use of the open streets, though it doesn't draw any conclusions on the success of the programs. Even though activity on the slow streets remains well below pre-pandemic levels, researchers say it is possible that the areas saw an increase in use by pedestrians and bicyclists.

[U.S. traffic has rebounded to about 90 percent of pre-pandemic levels, analysts say](#)

“If cars aren't using that street, that will bring down the overall trip number. So even if you see an uptick in walking and biking, that may be swamped by the decrease in cars,” Pishue said.

Through location-based data, researchers were able to evaluate the popularity of the slow streets compared with the rest of the city. Pishue said using such data could help guide cities in monitoring and understanding the impact of the programs as they consider expanding or making them permanent.

The “Open Streets” movement has been embraced by cities around the world in recent years. The programs have various names — open streets, slow streets, safe streets and more — and vary from city to city, but they all have the same goal: restricting vehicle traffic to reduce pollution and promote healthier lifestyles.

The pandemic accelerated the trend, attributed to the need to provide people a place for physical activity while social distancing. Some cities implemented policies to encourage walking, biking and scooter use in neighborhoods and city centers. Some turned busy parkways where commuter traffic had largely disappeared into safe havens for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The District, which embraced slow streets and streateries amid the health crisis, had the lowest utilization of any of the five cities included in the study, but use was on par with low activity citywide.

[Pressure grows on D.C. to close roads to give residents more room for walking, jogging, biking during covid-19 shutdown](#)

The District began putting up signs and barricades to create slow streets during the summer. The concept grew amid [pressure from advocates and residents](#) for more road space to exercise and for recreation while social distancing.

So far the District has a network of 22 miles of slow streets where through-traffic is prohibited and the speed limit is 15 miles per hour, even below the new citywide default speed limit of 20 miles per hour. City transportation officials said they are working to add three more miles this fall and keep them permanently.

Other coronavirus-related road closures by the city and the National Park Service include portions of Beach Drive in Rock Creek Park. Anecdotal evidence suggests the area has been widely popular, supporting the Inrix analysis that indicates recreational routes have been the most in demand.

In Seattle and Minneapolis, long stretches of road designated for recreational use have attracted residents who live outside those communities, the study found. Activity on Seattle’s restricted streets was at 82 percent in August compared with pre-pandemic levels, and 75 percent in Minneapolis.

Minneapolis, where officials designated at least 16 miles of road for walking and biking as part of the city’s “Stay Healthy Streets” initiative, saw the largest increase in activity among the five cities studied, with usage of the restricted roads in July a third higher than pre-pandemic. The city ended the program last month, however, saying it was evaluating how it performed as the response to the coronavirus evolves in the state.

In Oakland, home to one of the earliest and most ambitious slow-streets plans, Inrix’s analysis found that activity along the designated roadways varied significantly by income. Activity was higher on those streets with a highest share of low-income households, while low activity was observed on streets with a greater share of high-income visitors.

While cities such as Oakland and Seattle saw significantly more activity in the restricted areas than New York and Washington, travel lagged overall city activity significantly, according to the report.

The use of restricted streets in New York also lagged behind that in other cities, the data shows. That could partly be the result of the city’s strict social distancing and travel restrictions from the onset of the pandemic, which affected travel activity, according to the report.

The low use of the specially designated streets in New York is weighted heavily on the general lack of activity in Manhattan — where most of the restricted streets are located — due to the shut down, the report said.

More people used the spaces that were completely closed to traffic than those streets partially taken for restaurant use, for example. Full-block programs saw higher levels of activity and had far higher levels of activity compared with protected bike lane streets, Inrix found.

“Designs geared toward commuting in Manhattan . . . seemed to attract fewer people and cyclists than those geared toward recreation,” according to the report.

While the reduction in traffic volumes overall during the pandemic allowed cities to implement these policies with minimal opposition, Inrix said, this may change as traffic volumes return. Traffic levels in the Washington region is at just over 80 percent of pre-pandemic levels, according to Inrix. Nationwide, traffic is at about 90 percent of what would normally be expected at this time of year.

The Inrix analysis found that drivers are largely obeying through-traffic restrictions. That could change when normal traffic volumes return.

“As freeway and arterial streets become more and more congested, drivers will try to find other routes,” Pishue said. “When people are sitting in traffic congestion for a long time, they start questioning whether these programs are good or whether they should be able to cut through a street.”

**TRANSIT MANAGEMENT OF MOBILE, ALABAMA D/b/a
THE WAVE TRANSIT SYSTEM**
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
Project Number: WTS-10A-2020
Professional Architectural and Engineering Services
COST ESTIMATOR, COMPARISON & CONSTRUCTION DESIGN

Transit Management of Mobile D/b/a The Wave Transit System (“The Wave”) is seeking qualifications from qualified consultants to provide Professional Architectural and Engineering Services to develop Cost Estimates, Comparisons and Construction design for the conversion of The Wave Transit Systems Paint & Body Shop located at 1224 West I-65 Service Road, South, Mobile Alabama 36609, into a Multi-Purpose Building.

The selected firm will be expected to start promptly, devote sufficient time, and expedite successful and timely completion of the Project. The award of the consultant contract will be dependent on funding. Once the contract is executed, the work shall begin immediately.

A complete copy of the solicitation is available for download on the website at www.thewavetransit.com.

Also, recognizing COVID-19, bidders may request a copy of the solicitation via email to jmosley@thewavetransit.com. Please reference in the subject line: **RFQ, Project Number: WTS-10A-2020**

Questions concerning this Request for Qualifications should be directed to Mr. Gerald E. Alfred at (251) 338-0100 or galfred@thewavetransit.com. Responses will be received until **3:00 p.m. (CST) on Wednesday, November 4, 2020**. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE's) are encouraged to apply

Submission information may be emailed or provided in hard copy to:

The Wave Transit System
Attn: Mr. Gerald E. Alfred, Manager of Planning & Capital Projects
GM&O Transportation Center
110 Beaugard Street, Suite 104

Transportation Research

New FHWA Safety Planning Tool

As you likely know, approximately 40% of the nation's fatalities occur on locally-owned roads, an average of 12,000 deaths each year. Local Road Safety Plans (LRSPs) are an FHWA [proven safety countermeasure](#) that local agencies can use to identify and address at-risk locations and deploy cost-effective safety solutions ([video](#)). Over the last 10 years, we have been promoting and providing assistance in the development of LRSPs, but with over 23,000 local agencies, a more efficient approach was needed.

To effectively reach all local agencies, I'm pleased to share that Administrator Nason announced the creation of the **Local Road Safety Plan Do-It-Yourself website** during the 3rd National Summit for Rural Road Safety on October 1. Her announcement can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/aEI3154_4Yc.

The site includes resources local agencies and their supporting partners can use to develop these lifesaving plans themselves. The LRSP DIY site begins with an introduction page to orient users and follows with subsequent pages that walk users through the steps of the LRSP process. **The site contains training videos, downloadable templates, "local agency insights" videos where practitioners can learn from their peers, and example plans from other local agencies.** Particularly during this period of limited travel, we believe this site can maintain and even enhance FHWA's connection to America's nearly 3,100 counties and over 20,000 cities and towns.

View the site here: <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/LRSPDIY/> We also encourage you to share it with your local, state, and tribal agency partners. If you have any questions, please contact Hillary Isebrands at hillary.isebrands@dot.gov or Jerry Roche at jerry.roche@dot.gov.

Males in pickup trucks at higher risk for traffic deaths



Did you know that most of the state's traffic fatalities are men? That deadly statistic can be attributed to a lack of seat belt use, particularly among young male pickup truck drivers.

Preliminary 2020 data shows that male drivers account for 77% of the pickup truck fatalities so far this year – 83% percent of those male pickup truck drivers killed were unbuckled.

MoDOT and the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety are stepping up efforts to reach males and those driving pickup trucks with this potentially life-saving information.

Already this year, there have been 717 traffic fatalities - that's 76 more lives lost compared to the same time last year. Unfortunately, 68% of those were unbuckled. If everyone involved in these crashes had been buckled, more than 180 people who were killed might still be alive today. [Read more.](#)

A new video hopes to encourage pickup truck drivers to buckle up - <https://youtu.be/obmulMOYK6g>
[HERE](#)

Transportation Planning to the Extreme for Weather and Climate Change

More intense and more frequent extreme precipitation events are projected in a warming climate. With this risk comes possible detrimental outcomes based on what has happened in the past. Water rises over bridges. Homes, businesses, and roads on steep hills fall away in a landslide. Tornadoes rip through towns. Planes are grounded. Coastal areas are underwater.

The U.S. Gulf Region is dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Laura and California is beginning to get a handle on wildfires that have been raging for weeks. This fall TRB is offering webinars to help strengthen the transportation industry's resilience to these events. On October 6, TRB hosts A Resilient Path Forward for the Marine Transportation System and on October 7, Weathering the Storm - Climate Resilience at Airports.

State departments of transportation (DOTs) are also taking changing climate and extreme weather into account when making infrastructure decisions, but they are not always using a formal set of tools for cost-benefit analysis to address climate resilience. A TRB National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) guidebook was developed to fill the gaps in the routine use of cost-benefit analysis and other decisions-making tools in light of extreme weather.

Extremes are not rare

It's become common to hear that "one-in-a-hundred-year events" are occurring in five-, 10-, and 15-year periods. Scientists identify these extreme weather events based on the historical record of weather in a particular region. A "return time" is a commonly used metric of probability; for example, a 100-year return time means that in any given year, there is a 1-in-100 chance of the threshold being reached.

Eight cases of diverse weather events in the U.S. from 2007-2012 highlighted the broad and evolving nature of keeping up with transportation infrastructure. NCHRP's Response to Extreme Weather Impacts on Transportation Systems offers in-depth lessons learned and effective practices for addressing this specific challenge.

Research leadership from TRB

In April 2020, TRB offered webinars on environmentally sustainable funding and financing at the intersection of federal surface transportation authorization and realignment of state transportation spending. Going further in preventative measures, an April 30 webinar explored the role of ecology in sustainable transportation.

TRB has provided practitioners with research findings of potential impacts of climate change and extreme weather on the U.S. Highway system for years. The 2014 Strategic Issues Facing Transportation research showed the need for a solid foundation to plan for the impacts of climate change through 2050. The increasing demands for highway reconstruction and rehabilitation happening now provide an opportunity to incorporate climate adaptation strategies.

Speakers at a 2018 TRB conference on freight analytics impacts on the Marine Transportation System addressed the role of sea level rise on the field. One presenter specifically spoke on using the expert elicitation of port authorities to assess the vulnerability and the adaptive capacity of ports to the rising threats of extreme weather and sea level rise.

Professionals in the aviation industry are also keeping a step ahead of preparations for extreme weather events and climate change. TRB's Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) provides Climate Resilience and Benefit-Cost Analysis: A Handbook for Airports to assess the benefits, costs, and financial feasibility of infrastructure projects designed to improve resilience. Case studies of airports in Phoenix, Boston, New Orleans, and Little Rock explore how extreme weather events can affect small and large airports. In summary, evaluating climate resilience at airports may be wisely considered part of the overall risk management processes.

ACRP also offers Integrating Sustainability Planning and the Environmental Review Process as a manual for planners who are integrating the environmental review and sustainability planning processes at airports. The fields of sustainability planning and environmental review share overlap, providing another opportunity for planning and infrastructure enhancement in transportation.

Extreme weather effects reach from the sky to deep underground, requiring preparations that are unique to each aspect of transportation. TRB's Transit Cooperative Research Project (TCRP) offers a series of reports on Improving the Resilience of Transit Systems Threatened by Natural Disasters with practices for all sizes of transit systems to absorb the impacts of disaster, recover quickly, and return rapidly to providing the services that customers rely on to meet their travel needs. It notes resilienttransit.org as a resource to identify tools to help plan for natural disasters.

Escalating preparations from basic to extreme

At TRB's Marine Board Spring Meeting, Suzanne Lemieux of the American Petroleum Institute mentioned the lessons learned from Harvey in terms of resilience, working from home, and managing systems for dealing with the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The 2020 hurricane season started unseasonably early, so the industry was already preparing for facing the dual threats of hurricanes and COVID-19 as early as May.

TRB continues to look to the future to better incorporate extreme event and climate change into transportation planning. An active NCHRP project aims to provide guidelines for response planning, assessment, and rapid restoration of service of bridges in extreme events.

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

by Danielle Moody Wednesday, August 5th 2020

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DOT Unveils Applicant Toolkit for Rural Communities

Eleanor Lamb July 28, 2020

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thursday, July 23, 2020

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

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

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

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

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

Opportunity Zones

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

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

Read about our partner’s roles in Opportunity Zones:

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

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

South Alabama Opportunity Zones



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

Transportation Dictionary

The USDOT released a searchable online dictionary that includes over 9,000 transportation terms and acronyms. The terms were collected from a variety of public and private transportation publications and databases. This dictionary presents over 9,000 terms and acronyms related to transportation. The terms and acronyms were obtained from various transportation publications and databases which exist within the federal government, private organizations, Canada and Mexico.

Search Tips

- Sources are listed in parenthesis after the definition.
- None of the searches are case sensitive. Searching for PEDESTRIAN will produce the same results as searching for pedestrian.



· The Dictionary searches for the word, phrase or acronym as it is entered and returns all records that match or contain that word, phrase or acronym. For example, searching for pedestrian will return records for pedestrian and pedestrian walkway. Click [HERE](#) for the search engine.