



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 2nd, 2020

Volume 36, Number 1

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2020
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>
transportation@sarpc.org

Kevin Harrison, PTP
Director of
Transportation
kharrison@sarpc.org

Tom Piper
Senior Transportation
Planner
tpiper@sarpc.org

Monica Williamson
Transportation Planner
mwilliamson@sarpc.org

Anthony Johnson
Transportation Planner
ajohnson@sarpc.org

South Alabama
Regional Planning
Commission
110 Beauregard St
Mobile, Alabama
36602
(251) 433-6541

There was a Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan public meeting this week; see *Mobile MPO Updates*. No new Highway Bill but a Continuing Resolution until December 11, 2020 has been signed by the President in *Legislative Updates*. This week's *Just For Fun* is a bunch of hot air. [ATRIPII and FTA 5310](#) are in *Funding Opportunities*. Mr. Don Arkle retires from ALDOT, and officials say Alabama gas tax increase is producing results *In The News*. 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

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](#).

Human Services Coordinated Plan Meeting this week

There was a public meeting pertaining to the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan this week via GOTO meeting. The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) has updated the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan which details which projects are eligible for Federal Transit dollars for Elderly and Disabled, Job Access and Reverse Commute projects, or those transit projects that go above and beyond the requirements of ADA. This plan covers all of Baldwin, Escambia, and Mobile Counties.

The adopted Plan is available online at:

<http://mobilempo.org/Documents/Planning/FY2021/2020-2023%20HSCTP%20for%20SARPC.pdf>

Please contact the Transportation Planning Department at SARPC at 251-433-6541 if you have any questions or would like a printed copy of the draft plan mailed to you.

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 : 100069061 (CN)

Federal aid number : IM I065

County : MOBILE

Project Description : RESURFACING ON I-65 FROM 0.56 MILE NORTH OF SR-158 TO 2.39 MILE NORTH OF SR-13(US-43)

Old Target start date : March 26, 2021

New Target start date : January 28, 2022

South Alabama RPO Updates

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met this week 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 September 25th, 2020

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Bridge Replacement on SR-163 over Perch Creek from MP 3.931 to MP 3.983. Length 0.340 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$3,114,592 to \$3,806,724 ..
- For constructing the Facility Upgrade (Generator Replacement) on SR-42 (Bankhead Tunnel) in Mobile. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$844,515 to \$1,032,185 .
- For the Maintenance Bridge Painting on SR-193 (North Bound Lane) over the CSX Railroad. Length 0.107 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$288,336 to \$352,410 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

FAST Act's Yearlong Extension Signed Into Law



McConnell (center), flanked by Sens. Barrasso (left) and John Thune (R-S.D.), speaks during a news conference. (Stefani Reynolds/Bloomberg News)

The law governing the country's transportation operations was extended for a year after President Donald Trump's recent signing of a temporary funding measure that averts a shutdown of the federal government. The stopgap appropriations law funds the government through Dec. 11. Tucked in the funding law is the yearlong extension of the FAST Act highway law, which was set to expire Sept. 30. Transportation policymakers on Capitol Hill argued they simply ran out of time to reauthorize the FAST Act. The yearlong extension, which ensures temporary funding for highway and transit programs, offers a window of opportunity to produce a significant new highway policy bill, lawmakers claimed.

"A full one-year extension of highway funding provides states and communities the certainty required to plan for critical road and bridge projects," Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), chairman of the committee on highways, said Sept. 30. Republican leaders did not put on the Senate floor his committee's bipartisan update of the FAST Act. Barrasso added, "The extension will give Congress more time to finish a long-term, bipartisan highway bill to rebuild our roads and bridges."

"With this one-year extension in place, we can continue work on a long-term, transformational bill that significantly boosts investment in our surface transportation network and moves our transportation systems into the 21st century," said Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), chairman of the House transportation panel.

This summer, House Democrats led the party-line passage of an infrastructure package totaling more than \$1 trillion. The package included a reauthorization of the FAST Act. Senate Republicans did not consider the House-passed bill. Neither the House nor the Senate highway proposals pitched a long-term fix for the looming insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund. The federal highway account funds surface transportation systems around the country via revenue from the fuel tax. The 24.4 cents-per-gallon diesel tax and 18.4 cents-per-gallon gas tax were set in 1993.

What are industry executives doing to help bring more women into the fold, not only as drivers, but in leadership roles? Host Michael Freeze talks with Ellen Voie of Women In Trucking and Debora Babin Katz of TrucBrush Corp. Hear a snippet, above, and get the full program by going to RoadSigns.TTNews.com. The White House, which has not unveiled a comprehensive infrastructure policy plan this year, opposed the House's infrastructure bill. At the State of the Union address, the president called on Congress to support Barrasso's committee-approved highway measure.

Groups representing freight firms, state agencies, transit operators, the construction sector and unions had pressed members of Congress to agree on a highway bill prior to the Sept. 30 authorizing deadline. Most of these stakeholders have endorsed raising fuel taxes to generate new revenue for highway programs.

Jim Tymon, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, said, "We look forward to working with Congress and committee staff on a reauthorization that will address the challenges facing surface transportation, including the need for a long-term fix for the Highway Trust Fund."

"The [FAST Act] extension provides some stability for states to continue important transportation infrastructure projects for another year, but unfortunately falls short of the long-term reauthorization that we had hoped for," said Terry O'Sullivan, general president of the Laborers' International Union of North America.

Besides advocating for a long-term highway policy bill, key sectors across the transportation networks have urged Congress to approve pandemic-related emergency aid. The airlines, state agencies and transit operators have each called for multi-billion dollar boosts. After top-level negotiations on the next pandemic relief package stalled in Washington, the House is considering an aid measure about \$1 trillion less than a \$3 trillion bill they passed a few months ago. The measure lacks a Senate companion.

"[Treasury] Secretary [Steve] Mnuchin and I had an extensive conversation and we found areas where we are seeking further clarification. Our conversations will continue," said Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) on Sept. 30.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky criticized the Democrats' latest plan. Senate Republicans have sought to advance relief aid focusing on health care providers, school reopenings and the business community. As he put it, "Speaker Pelosi's latest offering still does not include a single cent of new money for the [Small Business Administration's] Paycheck Protection Program, to help small businesses that are going under. It does nothing to help schools, universities, doctors, nurses or employers avoid frivolous lawsuits."

The temporary funding extension adds to Congress' agenda in the post-election lame-duck session.

State gas tax increased by 2 cents Thursday

By [Lydia Nusbaum](#) | September 29, 2020

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (WSFA) - Alabama's gas tax will increase by 2 cents Thursday. That is when the second phase of the Rebuild Alabama Act goes into effect.

Alabama lawmakers passed the Rebuild Alabama Act in 2019. It increased the state gas tax by 10 cents over three years:

- 2019: 6 cents increase
- 2020: 2 cents increase
- 2021: 2 cents increase

The money is supposed to go to road and bridge repairs.

The Elmore County Chief Operations Richie Beyer officer said counties don't always go after the worst roads first.

"It's kind of like with your house, you don't wait for things to be falling apart before you do anything, you do some preventative maintenance on the front end," Beyer said. "There's a lot of times where you can be proactive and catch a road before it starts getting in really bad shape. And you can spend a lot less money to extend the life of that road, versus waiting for it to get in really bad shape."

The 6 cents gas tax has brought in an estimated \$190 million so far, according to the Association of County Commissions of Alabama.

New Bill Aims to Make Communities and Infrastructure More Flood-Ready

House legislation would require federal projects to be more resilient, lowering disaster risks and costs

September 30, 2020 By: [Laura Lightbody](#)

The 2020 hurricane season continues to produce tropical systems at a record rate. With nine named storms having made U.S. landfall already this year, flood risk is a major concern for many vulnerable communities. To help reduce the impacts of these types of events in the future, legislation was introduced today in Congress that would make communities and infrastructure more resilient to flooding. Introduced

by Representative David Price (D-NC) and Representative Lee Zeldin (R-NY), the Flood Resiliency and Taxpayer Savings Act of 2020 would direct federal agencies to plan for future risks, such as those associated with severe weather and rising sea levels, throughout the intended life of projects that use taxpayer dollars to build, improve, or rebuild in flood-prone areas.

The change would be similar to one that Congress recently required the Department of Defense to adopt for major construction of facilities and infrastructure. Rather than designing and building based on what is known about current flood risk, the agency is now considering how flood risk will change over the planned lifetime of facilities. The bill would require that all federal agencies spending taxpayer funds for new construction or major rebuilding projects take similar precautions—a marked improvement from current standards, which are based on historical data and risk factors.

Here are five ways the legislation would benefit taxpayers, communities, and infrastructure:

Saving taxpayer dollars

In the U.S., economic losses and property damage from flood-related disasters have risen by more than \$100 billion every decade since the 1980s, affecting all 50 states. Improving the resilience of the nation’s infrastructure and being smarter when spending taxpayer dollars in at-risk areas can reduce the impacts of flooding and lower disaster recovery costs. Importantly, the bill introduced by Reps. Price and Zeldin would not prohibit projects in flood-prone areas but simply safeguard investments from future damage and losses. These preventive efforts can be cost-effective. The National Institute of Building Sciences found that investments in flood mitigation projects involving roads, bridges and railways, water and wastewater facilities, and electric and telecommunications substations yield positive returns.

Limiting disruptions to communities

With the provision for more flood-resilient infrastructure, the bill would help limit the extent and duration of direct and residual effects of flooding on communities. Otherwise, communities can become paralyzed by disruptions stemming from extended periods of power or clean water outages, closed schools, shuttered businesses, and blocked access to medical facilities. For example, the Texas Medical Center, the world’s largest medical complex, endured more than \$1.5 billion in damage and lost decades’ worth of medical research because of historic rainfall and flooding during Tropical Storm Allison in 2001. The facility was redesigned to include numerous resilience measures, from installing floodgates to improving storm drainage systems. These improvements allowed the medical center to remain operational during Hurricane Harvey in 2017. [HERE](#)

U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao Announces \$574 Million in Emergency Relief for Road and Bridge Repairs

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao announced today that the Trump Administration will provide \$574 million in Emergency Relief (ER) funds to help 39 states and Puerto Rico make repairs to roads and bridges damaged by storms, floods, and other unexpected events.

“This \$574 million in federal funding will help states repair and rebuild roads and bridges damaged from natural disasters,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s ER program, administered by the Federal Highway Administration, reimburses states, territories, federal land management agencies, and tribal governments for eligible expenses associated with damage from natural disasters or other emergency situations. The funds help to pay for the reconstruction or replacement of damaged highways and bridges along with the arrangement of detours and replacement of guardrails or other damaged safety devices.

Some of the reimbursements include:

- More than \$64 million to California, including \$34 million for November 2018 wildfires.
- More than \$46 million to Nebraska for winter storms and flooding in 2019.
- More than \$27 million to Alabama for storms and flooding in 2020.
- More than \$25 million to Michigan for flooding in the central part of the state in 2020.
- More than \$22 million to Florida for Hurricane Michael in 2018.
- More than \$21 million to North Carolina for Hurricane Dorian in 2019.

“These funds will help reimburse states for needed repairs to vital transportation infrastructure that residents rely upon for daily travel,” said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason.

Since January 2017, the Trump Administration has provided nearly \$4.9 billion in ER program funds to repair roads and bridges.

A full list of ER reimbursements can be found here: [ERFA](#) and [ERFO](#).

House Hearing Examines Reauthorization Of USDOT’s DBE Program

editor@aaashto.org September 25, 2020

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise or DBE program plays a critical role in “leveling the playing field” in the transportation industry for individuals, businesses, and communities of race, color, and gender, according to testimony provided during a House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure [hearing](#) on September 23.

“Because of the legacy of inequity in employment and business for minorities within the industry, DBE programs are as relevant today as ever,” explained Sandra Norman, administrator of the civil rights division for the Virginia Department of Transportation in her [testimony](#).

“Our country suffers when talented people who have new ideas and who want to work hard are denied the opportunity to compete because of their ethnic background, race, or gender,” she explained. “This is why there is a continued need for the Disadvantaged Business program to ensure that small business can compete fairly for federal funded transportation related projects.”

Norman noted during the hearing that the DBE program has its roots in the Civil Rights Act of 1964; regulated over the intervening years through a series of legislative initiatives.

She explained that DBE programs apply to airports plus highway and transit transportation projects and were enacted by Congress to address historical discrimination against minority-owned firms in the transportation industry and to ensure that minority and women-owned businesses have a fair opportunity to participate in contracting opportunities made possible by federal financial assistance.

“The majority of employment growth in the United States comes from small businesses,” Norman added. “When small businesses are allowed to do contract work, it is also an opportunity for people who might have been excluded from the relevant workforce to showcase their talents and skills, get trained and work within the transportation industry to have more employment opportunities in the future. Advancing diversity and making money are not conflicting goals; it is good for business and good for society.”

Evalynn Williams – president of Texas-based consulting firm Dikita Enterprises – testified on behalf of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials and noted that it has become almost impossible for DBE firms to compete with large national and international firms in the transportation sector.

“They have the capacity and depth within their workforce and can pull from global office locations. And over the last 15 years, they have gotten even larger,” she explained in [her remarks](#). “That [is why] reauthorization of the DBE program is so extremely critical. It provides us with opportunities to join a team as a subcontractor, a prime or joint venture partner, which in turn helps to build financial capacity and workforce resources.”

Williams added that, as the CEO of a second generation African American engineering and architectural firm, “we would never have sustained” had it not been for disparity programs such as the federal DBE program.

“Competition for prime contracts with the USDOT, Federal Aviation Administration and Federal Transit Administration is difficult at best, and out of reach for most minority- and women-owned businesses,” she pointed out.

“The truth is, if not for the DBE program, large corporations would not share the work and would self-perform 100 percent of contract-work. [That’s why] being called ‘disadvantaged’ is not a privilege nor does it sound like a goal that a company would strive to be,” Williams stressed. “The reality is, without the program, we would not have a chance at fair competition. It is necessary for the continuing survival of firms such as mine – to feed our families, educate our youth, and build our communities.”

Funding Opportunities

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.

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>

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

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

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

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

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

Opportunity Zones

EDA's Opportunity Zone Web Page

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

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

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

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

This week, England is testing inflatable safety barriers for work zones [HERE](#)

An inflatable safety barrier, that can be put up in a matter of minutes, is being trialed on workzones to help protect road workers. The new airbag aims to reduce the number of motorists that mistakenly drive into workzones putting the drivers and road workers at risk. Large, bright and very visible, the Vehicle Incursion Airbag sends a clear message to drivers but can also be put in place very quickly – it is inflated in under 10 minutes.



This may work in England, but this is America, we have our own testing inflatables to be installed on our highways...



In the News

Officials say Alabama gas tax increase producing results

Updated Sep 29, 2020; Posted Sep 29, 2020

By [Mike Cason | mcason@al.com](#)

Alabama officials point to five state highway projects and more than 70 local road projects as the practical benefits of an increase in the state gasoline tax, which goes up [another 2 cents](#) on Thursday.

[The Rebuild Alabama Act](#), spearheaded by Gov. Kay Ivey and the Republican-controlled Legislature last year, raised the state tax 6 cents a gallon last year, to 24 cents. It goes up to 26 cents Thursday and will rise again to 28 cents on Oct. 1, 2021.

The total increase, 10 cents a gallon, which also applies to diesel fuel, is projected to raise about \$320 million a year when fully in place.

So far, tax collections on the 6-cent increase are tracking close to that projection. Through August, with one month left in this fiscal year, gas and diesel state tax receipts stood at about \$686 million, up about \$150 million over last year, a 28% increase.

The Alabama Department of Transportation said there was a decline in April caused by the pandemic, but the numbers have rebounded close to projections since then.

The Rebuild Alabama Act directs the money from the added tax into a Rebuild Alabama Fund and restricts its use to road and bridge projects, prohibiting spending on salaries, equipment, and other purposes. ALDOT receives 67% of the money, with 25% going to counties and 8% to municipalities.

The Rebuild Alabama Act was the first increase in the state's fuel taxes since 1992.

Ivey has announced five projects major projects with the funding so far, including some that ALDOT said had been needed for decades. [HERE](#)

Edward Austin appointed chief engineer of ALDOT



StaffPublished 1 hour ago on October 2, 2020By Staff

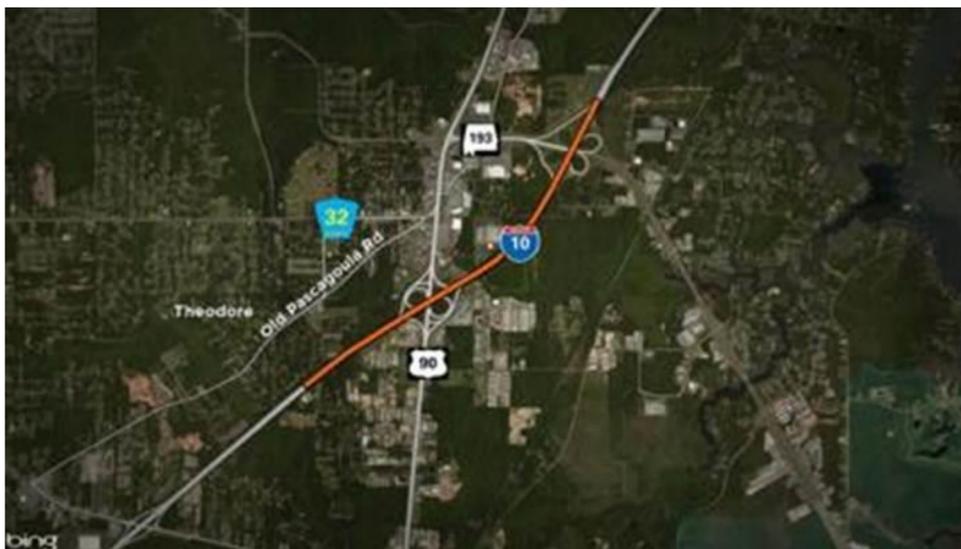
Transportation Director John Cooper has appointed Edward (Ed) Austin as chief engineer of the Alabama Department of Transportation effective Thursday, Oct 1.

Austin replaces retiring chief engineer Don Arkle. Arkle served as chief engineer since January 2016 and worked at ALDOT for 43 years.

The position of chief engineer is appointed by the transportation director, with duties that include coordinating the general mathematical, physical and engineering sciences as applied to the planning, design, construction, maintenance and repair of Alabama's state, U.S. and interstate highway network.

ALDOT to resurface portion of I-10 from Carol Plantation Road Overpass to SR-193 Overpass in Mobile

- Updated 16 hrs ago | Posted on Oct 1, 2020



MOBILE, Ala- The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) anticipates beginning a resurfacing project on Interstate 10 on Sunday, October 4.

The scope of the project includes performing roughly four miles of milling, paving, and striping operations on I-10 from just west of the Carol Plantation Rd. Overpass in Theodore to just east of the SR-193 overpass in Mobile.

Motorists can expect weekly nighttime, alternating lane closures, Sunday through Thursday, from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Drivers are required to always maintain a safe, reasonable and prudent distance when trailing other vehicles, and to obey work zone speed limits.

The \$3.4 million-dollar project was awarded to H.O. Weaver and Sons Inc. and is anticipated to be complete by the end of the year, weather permitting.

FTA Announces Final Report of the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) to Improve Access to Transportation

Thursday, October 1, 2020

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the release of a [Final Report of the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility \(CCAM\)](#), which coordinates federal programs to improve access to jobs, schools, healthcare, and other opportunities. The report identifies challenges and barriers to improving access to transportation for people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income. The report also outlines activities the CCAM has undertaken to improve coordination across federally-funded transportation services for these populations.

"Thanks to Secretary Chao's leadership, the CCAM has successfully completed a number of activities to improve access to transportation services," said FTA Deputy Administrator K. Jane Williams. "We are committed to continuing to coordinate closely with our federal partners to ensure reliable transportation options are available to connect people to their jobs, educational opportunities, medical appointments, and other vital community services."

The CCAM was established in 2004, when President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13330: Human Service Transportation Coordination. The CCAM was charged with improving coordination across federally-funded transportation services with the goal of increasing access and efficiency of transportation for these targeted populations.

To improve coordination, the CCAM issues policy recommendations and implements activities that increase the efficiency, accessibility, and availability of federal programs that fund transportation services. The Secretary of Transportation chairs the CCAM, and 10 additional federal agency leaders form the remainder of the CCAM's membership.

The successful execution of CCAM activities relied heavily on interagency coordination led by the U.S. Department of Transportation. CCAM members participated in a variety of workgroups to develop required work products. This culminated on October 29, 2019 with the first official CCAM meeting since 2008 when the CCAM published the Strategic Plan.

Subsequent to the CCAM meeting, the CCAM has focused on completing the final report to the President of the United States.

US traffic deaths fell 2% in 2019; 3rd straight yearly drop

The government's road safety agency says U.S. traffic deaths fell for the third straight year in 2019

By **The Associated Press** October 1, 2020

DETROIT -- Traffic deaths in the U.S. fell for the third consecutive year in 2019, the government's road safety agency reported.

The downward trend is continuing into this year with people driving fewer miles due to the pandemic, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Thursday.

The agency says deaths fell 2% last year, to 36,096. That's 739 fewer than the 36,835 fatalities reported to the agency in 2019.

The decrease came even though vehicle miles traveled increased by nearly 1%, reducing the fatality rate to 1.1 per 100 million miles traveled. That was the lowest since 2014.

The agency says pedestrian deaths fell 2.7%, bicyclist fatalities dropped 2.9% and motorcycle deaths dropped 0.5%. Deaths in passenger vehicles fell 2.8%.

But deaths in crashes involving heavy trucks fell by just one, from 5,006 in 2018 to 5,005 last year.

Estimates by the agency show that traffic deaths in the first half of this year fell 2% from the same period in 2019, to 16,550. But traffic volumes fell more than the number of fatal crashes, increasing the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled to 1.25. That's up from 1.06 for the first half of 2019.

James Owens, NHTSA's deputy administrator, said the agency is encouraged by the overall declines, but concerned because of a trend since April of increased fatality rates.

"Now more than ever we should be watching ourselves for safe driving practices and encouraging others to do the same," Owens said in a statement.

The increased fatality rate brought criticism of NHTSA from safety advocates who said there is proven technology such as automatic emergency braking, blind spot warning and lane departure warnings that should be required on vehicles to make roads safer.

"The U.S. Department of Transportation continues to rely on ineffective voluntary agreements," Cathy Chase, president of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, said in a statement.

NHTSA issued a report saying that during the height of the coronavirus restrictions with less traffic on the roads, drivers took more risks including speeding, failing to wear seat belts, and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Average speeds increased, and incidents with people caught driving at extreme speeds rose, NHTSA said.

A study of people injured or killed in crashes who were treated at five large trauma centers found that from mid-March to mid-July, almost two-thirds of drivers tested positive for at least one drug, including marijuana, alcohol or opioids. NHTSA said the number of drivers testing positive for opioids nearly doubled after mid-March, compared with the previous six months. Marijuana use was up 50%.

The Governors Highway Safety Association, a group of state highway safety officials, said speeding is a factor in nearly one-third of traffic deaths. But association members reported that during the height of the pandemic, states and communities reduced [health](#) risks to police officers by limiting traffic stops.

“This may have led some motorists to believe they could get away with dangerous and aggressive driving, despite the threat to themselves and everyone on the road,” the association said in a statement.

NHTSA said it is holding workshops with state and local officials to address the safety concerns.

U.S. Department of Transportation Designates October as National Pedestrian Safety Month

Each week highlights important safety measures to protect pedestrians

September 29, 2020 | Washington, DC

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has designated October as the first-ever national Pedestrian Safety Month. The agency is making pedestrian safety the focus of October as part of its continuing efforts to improve safety for vulnerable road users.

“With this designation of October as Pedestrian Safety Month, the Department is affirming its commitment to working closely with our state and local partners to make our roads safer for pedestrians,” [said](#) U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

“At some point in the day, we are all pedestrians – especially right now, when everyone wants to get outside for some fresh air,” said NHTSA Deputy Administrator James Owens. “Everyone has a role to play in ensuring pedestrian safety. We must keep working to reduce pedestrian deaths from traffic crashes and this first-ever Pedestrian Safety Month will help save lives in communities across the country.” “At FHWA, we partner with states and local communities to implement innovations in pedestrian safety by promoting proven safety countermeasures,” said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason. “Collaboration will be key as we all work toward the shared goal of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. We must work together to make our roads safer for our most vulnerable road users – pedestrians.”

Each week of the month, NHTSA will highlight dangerous driving behaviors that put pedestrians at risk, as well as ways to improve pedestrian safety. NHTSA has developed resources to help states and local communities identify, address, and improve pedestrian safety, including a data visualization tool, safety tips, and social media graphics and messaging. Please [click here](#) for a pedestrian safety resources and safety tips.

NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration also held a [live webinar](#) today to discuss Pedestrian Safety Month, along with representatives from the Governors Highway Safety Association, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Michigan State Police, and America Walks. To visit the webinar’s virtual Pedestrian Safety Booth, please [click here](#).

Earlier this summer, the Department brought together safety advocates and stakeholders for the USDOT Summit on Pedestrian Safety, a multi-event series focused on reducing pedestrian fatalities and improving pedestrian access.

NHTSA will soon be conducting its third National Survey on Bicyclist and Pedestrian Attitudes and Behaviors, which will help inform and guide future policy and countermeasure decisions. This survey studies how much people are walking and biking, and their understanding of and opinions on traffic laws, infrastructure, and safety.

Transportation Research

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.

Value Capture Strategies: Tax Incremental Finance Districts & Transportation Reinvestment Zones

September 24, 2020 1:00pm-3:00pm ET

<https://bit.ly/2vMB216>

<https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/dot/fhwa/WC/Lists/Seminars/DispForm.aspx?ID=2288>

'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.