



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

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## Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>  
[transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org)

Kevin Harrison, PTP  
Director of  
Transportation  
[kharrison@sarpc.org](mailto:kharrison@sarpc.org)

Tom Piper  
Senior Transportation  
Planner  
[tpiper@sarpc.org](mailto:tpiper@sarpc.org)

Monica Williamson  
Transportation Planner  
[mwilliamson@sarpc.org](mailto:mwilliamson@sarpc.org)

Anthony Johnson  
Transportation Planner  
[ajohnson@sarpc.org](mailto:ajohnson@sarpc.org)

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

The Rebuild Alabama Act is helping improve multiple roads, look out China, and low-income populations in *Legislative Updates*. There are a few less *Funding Opportunities* this week (ATRIP-II ends next week), and *In the News*: traffic plans for US 31 and property for the Beach Express extension may be condemned, voter approval or not. In this week's *Just For Fun*, we go to Montgomery....

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](http://www.mobilempo.org)



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

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

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

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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### New MPO Members

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

- Councilman, City of Prichard 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](#).

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### Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

Project : 100068298 ( FM )

Federal aid number : NH-HSIP 0016 (527)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : RESURFACING AND STEEL BLOCKOUT REPLACEMENT ON SR-16 (US-90) FROM 0.34 MI. EAST OF COCHRANE BRIDGE TO 0.36 MI. WEST OF TENSAW RIVER BRIDGE

Old Engineers Estimate : \$2,656,307.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$2,841,553.65

Project : 100067957 ( FM )

Federal aid number : STPAA 0188 (505)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-188 FROM LAKELAND DRIVE TO THE IRVINGTON BAYOU LA BATRE HIGHWAY

Old Engineers Estimate : \$1,187,113.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$1,023,414.91

Project : 100068521 ( PE )

Federal aid number : BR 0016

County : MOBILE

Project Description : BRIDGE REPLACEMENT (BIN 003691) ON SR-16 (US-90) OVER HALLS MILL CREEK

Old Target start date : November 01, 2020

New Target start date : February 01, 2021

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## South Alabama RPO Updates

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

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

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

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## Projects in Region Let November 6<sup>th</sup>, 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](#)

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## Legislative Updates

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### Rebuild Alabama Act helping improve multiple roads

By Joyanna Love  
The Clanton Advertiser  
October 22, 2020

Much-needed repaving and road improvement projects have increased throughout the state in the past year using funding created by the [Rebuild Alabama Act](#).

The act raised the state gas tax and the funds available for projects at the state and local levels.

The [Alabama Department of Transportation](#) (ALDOT) is responsible for resurfacing state and U.S. highways, no matter the town, city or county in which a road is located. These projects are completely paid for with state revenue and funding received from the federal government. Local governments are responsible for city streets and county roads.

David Kemp, preconstruction engineer for ALDOT's west central region, said ALDOT selects resurfacing projects on an evaluation system, choosing projects where the need is greatest.

Kemp said the west central region includes 13 counties with multiple district offices and a regional office in Tuscaloosa. The region receives "about \$43 million a year for routine maintenance resurfacing" of state and U.S. roads.

Funding for interstate highway improvements is handled by ALDOT's central office maintenance bureau.



Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey is flanked by elected officials to declare the need for a Rebuild Alabama infrastructure plan for the state in February 2019. (Dennis Washington / Alabama NewsCenter)

Gov. Kay Ivey proposed the Rebuild Alabama Act in February 2019 during a press conference in Maplesville, where an old bridge along a road that had been patched many times illustrated the need to improve roads and infrastructure. The Legislature approved the act that increased fuel taxes by 6 cents per gallon in 2019, 2 cents in 2020 and 2 cents in 2021. After 2023, increases will be determined every other year based on how much the cost of construction changes.

Cities and counties receive a portion of the taxes. Chilton County, for example, receives about \$2.5 million each fiscal year from gas taxes, including the new Rebuild Alabama portion.

Repaving roads is a major part of the [Chilton County Road Department](#) budget each year, with road traffic determining funding priorities.

"We have 44 major (road traffic) collectors in the county, and those will handle the vast majority of the traffic on a daily basis," said Tony Wearren, engineer for Chilton County. "So we are looking to get those in the best possible shape, then look at the minor collectors, then come on down to the unclassified rural roads."

This means money is typically spent where it will affect the most people. However, the length of time since a road has been repaved and the overall condition are also factors.

"The county just went through a \$5 million resurfacing program that did 34 miles of roads," Wearren said. "It works out to be \$150,000 a mile to resurface a road."

Paving is costly because asphalt, which is petroleum-based, is expensive, and the projects require large crews. Roads that require more leveling cost even more.

Potholes are often patched until there is enough funding to repave the road.

"Our job is to keep the road safe, and while patching is making the road sometimes bumpy, that is still better than hitting a pothole," Wearren said.

For specific projects, local governments can apply for [Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program \(ATRIP\) II](#) funds and grants created by the Rebuild Alabama Act.

ATRIP-II funds are only for improvements for the intersections of state and local roads. Many of the projects funded for 2020 dealt with adding turn lanes. Continue [HERE](#)

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## We Must Defend U.S. Transportation Leadership to Preserve Our Global Authority

October 20, 2020

China is consolidating control of emerging technologies of immense strategic and economic importance—including electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles, and 5G. Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.) and Admiral Dennis Blair, former director of national intelligence and commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, say ceding leadership in these technologies seriously threatens our national security and privacy, and outline four critical U.S. responses, including bipartisan action in Congress.

Combining cutting-edge software with high-quality, mass-produced machinery, the U.S. automotive industry is the backbone of the country's advanced manufacturing sector. But Covid-19 has revealed a dependence on Chinese supply chains that threatens the future of the high-skilled companies and workers that make American vehicles, from light-duty cars to heavy-duty trucks.

China is consolidating control of emerging technologies of immense strategic and economic importance—including electric vehicles (EVs), autonomous vehicles (AVs) and 5G—subsidizing domestic firms to the point that American companies are competing against the Chinese state, rather than Chinese companies.

Ceding leadership in these technologies seriously threatens our national security and privacy. The U.S. must take urgent steps to counter Beijing's commanding positions in the technologies that will define our economy for decades to come.

Beyond the risks to our auto industry—a sector that forms the advanced manufacturing backbone of the U.S. economy, supporting [nearly 10 million](#) jobs nationwide—is the threat to the industry's ability to support national production surges in moments of crisis: it built tanks, bombers and trucks as the "Arsenal for Democracy" during World War II, and has made ventilators and PPE as the "Arsenal for Health" during the pandemic.

The stakes are high. China [exerts vast control](#) over virtually every aspect of the transportation technology supply chain, including 70% of the world's lithium supply, 83% of the anodes and 61% of the cathodes used in batteries, 75% of the permanent magnet production needed for motors, and ownership of the production of rare earths needed for U.S. weapons systems and EVs.

China is also home to [107 of the 142 lithium-ion battery megafactories](#) already built or under construction worldwide. Just nine will be in the U.S.

Tomorrow's intelligent transportation technologies will be built on 5G connectivity, and Beijing is moving swiftly to lead its worldwide rollout through companies like Huawei—despite U.S. intelligence community cyber-espionage concerns. By late 2020, China is projected to have [more than 500,000 5G sites](#). As of 2018, there were [fewer than 30,000](#) in the U.S.

This dominance has been years in the making. Beijing has [flouted many global trade norms](#) since joining the World Trade Organization in 2000, engaging in forced technology transfer, reverse engineering, generous subsidies, IP theft and tariffs to control supply chains. The country's Made in China 2025 strategy—a blueprint for greater global authority through ownership of critical emerging industries including EVs, artificial intelligence, and 5G—was published for all the world to read.

#### Four Critical Responses

For the sake of U.S. economic and national security, we must respond now both at the congressional level and through international action.

This can be achieved in four critical ways.

First, we must support the advanced fuel vehicle market and domestic manufacturing. The light-duty EV tax credit requires reform, and similar incentives must be established for medium- and heavy-duty EVs.

Federal programs must be renewed and expanded to help the industry retool for the future. This is not just a battle for the entire supply chain from “minerals to markets”; much of it starts by supporting the U.S. EV market, which trails both China and Europe.

Second, we must develop a more diversified critical minerals supply chain to be less dependent on China, prioritizing stringent environmental and transparency standards in return for reasonable mining and permitting processes, and diversifying supplies of minerals unavailable domestically.

Third, we must advance connected and autonomous transportation technology, modernizing automobile regulations to preserve and strengthen America's global AV leadership. Manufacturers should be able to put up to 100,000 AVs on the road, provided they meet strict federal standards. A regulatory road map must be set to provide greater certainty for their development and deployment. Critical spectrum space must also be preserved for vehicle connectivity.

Finally, we must combat predatory economic practices, in multilateral alliances with our economic and security partners at international institutions. We must lead in defining international standards, so that Beijing does not set the rules of the road in its favor in those institutions.

With U.S. national security, economic sovereignty and industrial base at stake, bipartisan action is imperative to strengthen our nation's automotive and transportation sectors, bolster our energy security and safeguard our economic future.

## Want to Bridge the Inequality Divide? Build Bridges Where Low-Income People Live, Study Says

[DEEPALI SRIVASTAVA](#) OCTOBER 16, 2020

Structural inequality can be, literally, structural. According to a new [study](#) by researchers at the Carnegie Mellon University's College of Engineering, low-income neighborhoods with mostly Black, Hispanic and single-parent families are likely to have fewer bridges. And when those bridges do exist, they often have low clearance heights, obstructing critical transportation like commercial trucks and buses.

By establishing a correlation between socio-economic and demographic data and where bridges are sited, researchers Samuel Jones and Daniel Armanios confirm what most of us know anecdotally: Much of U.S. infrastructure is built to connect affluent communities to business centers and services, bypassing neighborhoods where low-income communities and people of color live. In other words, structural racism is literally built into our cities. People in poor neighborhoods face barriers to physical goods, including food delivery, and greater difficulty in getting to and from work, education, and even critical services like hospitals.

The new study analyzed more than 20,000 bridges in Pennsylvania across 2,500-plus census tracts, using datasets from the [Neighborhood Change Database](#), a commercially available dataset of US Census data. While building new infrastructure on its own won't solve systemic racism, Armanios hopes this work will make it easier for engineers to integrate demographic factors from the census into their analyses for where bridges will be constructed. It could also guide decisions around choosing which outdated bridges to repair by governments facing a fiscal squeeze.

He points out infrastructure planning methods typically take into account user data, for example, average daily traffic. But data about communities which reside near the new infrastructure (but may not use it) has been historically sparse, contributing to systemic biases. “These are long standing practices that bias one group of people over others. We want to try to solve the problem rather than allocate blame,” he says, adding that there is growing consensus among civil engineers about the importance of addressing the impact of infrastructure on equity.

Perhaps it's no coincidence that the study originated in Pittsburgh, where 446 bridges soar over three rivers and countless hills. In the city of bridges, the historic Hill District — nestled between Pittsburgh's economic powerhouses, the Downtown business district and the Oakland university district — stands testament to the consequences of infrastructure on equity. The neighborhood was once the first stop for Italian, Syrian, Greek, Jewish, and other European immigrants as well as a magnet for African Americans who moved from the South for jobs in Pittsburgh's industrial economy. While white immigrants kept leaving the neighborhood as they assimilated, the real blow to the community came with the interstate. The new Interstate I-579 moved white families out to the suburbs while disrupting and displacing Hill District's Black communities.

“The interstate highway isolated the Hill District from Downtown and made it impossible to walk between the neighborhoods. That started the neighborhood's long-term decay — and we have still not recovered,” says Marimba Milliones, President and CEO of Hill District Community Development Corporation.

Now a new bridge to be owned and operated by the city, the [I-579 CAP Urban Connector Project](#), is aiming to remedy this by finally reconnecting the Hill District to the Downtown. The “cap” over I-579 is a planned green space on top of the highway built to give residents safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections to employment opportunities and education services in Downtown Pittsburgh. .

It's also intended to be a cultural hub for art and music events to preserve and showcase the Hill District's Black heritage. While some residents remain skeptical of the bridge's benefits, "we will keep a watchful eye as the project unfolds to assure the robust community goals outlined in our community's master plan are met – not just physically, but economically and socially," says Milliones.

Armanios expects empirical studies and methodological frameworks will add momentum to such efforts around urban redevelopment in Black and brown communities, especially now as cities plan their coronavirus recovery. "Governments can save money in the long term if they increase spending now to build their cities' resilience," he argues. The more restricted a community is, for example, the harder it is to socially distance during a pandemic, and the greater is the spending on healthcare and economic relief.

Will our current crisis help to make equity an integral part of cities' infrastructure decisions? "Any government at any level, federal, state or local, that's trying to implement policy at this point without an equity lens is just so far behind the times," says Milliones.

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## Supreme Court Lets Trump Officials End Census Count Early

The U.S. Supreme Court allowed the Trump administration to end the census count more than two weeks early, dealing a blow to civil rights groups that said minorities will be undercounted as a result. The justices blocked a federal trial court ruling that had required the decennial count to continue through the end of October. Justice Sonia Sotomayor dissented. The Census Bureau reported that 99.9% of housing units have been accounted for so far in the 2020 Census, with 33.1% counted by census takers and other field data collection operations, and 66.8% of housing units responding online, by phone or by mail. The administration said it needed to stop counting now so it could meet a Dec. 31 statutory deadline for Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to send a report to the president.

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## 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.

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## Funding Opportunities

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### 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 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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### **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.

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

(deadline October 30<sup>th</sup>, 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](#)

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### **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](mailto: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/](#)
- [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?opId=321695>

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## 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.

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### 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](#)

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To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

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

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### THE ROAD TO MONTGOMERY

Many of us in government (and those that do business with government) have to travel to Montgomery quite often. Sure the coffee at Love's Truck Stops is great, and when you see the Hyundai plant, you know you are almost there, but it can be a long 2.5 hours. HOWEVER, did you know almost 200 years ago was the first successful riverboat trip from Mobile to Montgomery (that's upstream). On October 22, 1821, the [steamboat Harriet](#) reached Montgomery after ten days of travel from Mobile. This was the first successful attempt to navigate so far north on the Alabama River and opened river trade between Montgomery and Mobile.



In 1844, mail was privatized between Montgomery and Mobile. On horseback on the Old Federal Road, one Mr. Fred Tyler with Riddle and Carter Express Mail boasted he made the trip in 12 hours. That is pretty remarkable since a regular mail took 48 hours. A London newspaper "called out" the "express" service, and a wager for \$10,000 was made that Fred Tyler would be able to make the trip in 10 HOURS. \$10,000 in 1845 is equivalent to about \$330,000 today; the London Newspaper did not accept the wager.

*Just for Fun*, how fast have you made it to Montgomery?



## In the News

### ALDOT to conduct traffic shift on US-31 in Spanish Fort

by Kearyon Chestang

Thursday, October 22nd 2020



SPANISH FORT, Ala. (WPML) — The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is conducting a traffic shift on US-31 between Marcella Ave. and State Route 181 beginning Wednesday, October 28 as a part of the ongoing widening project in the area.

Northbound and southbound traffic, each reduced to one lane, will be shifted onto portions of the northbound and southbound sides of US-31 throughout the work zone. Signage will be implemented to guide motorists through the new traffic pattern.

The traffic shift will occur in phases and is anticipated to be complete by then end of the week.

Upon the project's completion, US-31 will be a four-lane divided highway between US-98 and SR-181 with portions of median and designated left turn lanes. The project is anticipated to be completed in early 2021.

### Voter approval or not, property for Beach Express extension may be condemned

Posted by [Gabriel Tynes](#) | Oct 21, 2020

Last year, the owner of an 85-year-old seafood business in downtown Mobile closed its doors after the state condemned the property in preparation for the new Interstate 10 bridge over the Mobile River. In South Baldwin County, a family was forced to vacate their primary residence of more than 30 years as the state planned to build a new, toll-free bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway.

Then, Gov. Kay Ivey famously declared the I-10 bridge project “dead” after the Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organization removed it from their planning documents, as an expression of opposition to the high costs the proposed toll would put on locals. In South Baldwin County, Orange Beach Mayor Tony Kennon recently reported the planned bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway may also be tabled, as negotiations are ongoing with the new owner of the existing toll bridge to expand.

But in both places, property owners have been displaced and regardless of the change in plans, condemnation proceedings continue and trials to determine the land's fair market value — delayed for months by the coronavirus pandemic — are scheduled to continue next month.

Separately, on Nov. 3, Baldwin County voters will consider local Amendment 2, which if passed, will create a toll authority for the 25-mile extension of the Baldwin Beach Express (BBEII). While the proposed route is largely rural agricultural land, at least 42 other property owners may be subject to condemnation proceedings whether or not the funding is approved.

While no cases have been filed yet over the project, Baldwin County Engineer Joey Nunnally said last the right-of-way acquisitions would be funded with separate, federal money.

Attorney Casey Pipes, who represents Ralph Atkins of Southern Fish & Oyster on the I-10 condemnation and several defendants in South Baldwin County over the Intracoastal Waterway project, suggested whether the BBEI measure is approved or not, affected property owners may expect a visit from the state.

“Condemnation cases begin in probate court, where a judge hears challenges from property owners,” he explained last week. “You can call witnesses ... The probate court will appoint three commissioners to hear evidence, determine the value of the property and render a verdict. Either party can appeal that judgment to circuit court and demand a jury trial, and that’s where cases really get resolved or tried.”

Pipes said state law generally favors the condemning agency and in his experience, the state’s appraisals of property targeted for condemnations are generally pretty low. Further, the state’s appraisal reports are not subject to legal discovery, nor is the information contained within.

“The state will appraise it in-house or use a third-party appraiser,” he said. “They will evaluate the property in its current condition and then as if the land has been taken and the road has been built, and whatever the difference is in what they think they owe you. What’s crazy is the state will make you an offer, but won’t give you the appraisal report. They won’t give you any basis to determine whether they got it right. They could give you the report if they wanted to, they just don’t want to.”

But property owners can contest the appraisals in probate court or circuit court, hiring their own appraisers to determine fair market value.

“You can also challenge the project itself or the agency’s power to condemn and if you win, you can recover court costs and attorneys’ fees,” he said. “If you don’t challenge it or the judge rules against you, you have a jury trial on the amount of money they owe.”

In one case in South Baldwin County, the state offered one family \$403,000 for 8.38 acres where they maintained their primary residence and a number of rental houses, but a jury awarded them \$1.2 million. Negotiations for a separate parcel owned by a family trust began at \$737,150 for three acres, but the state eventually agreed to pay \$8.25 million for 140 acres. But money doesn’t always exchange hands.

Pipes, who represented the city of Foley when it sought land for the first leg of the Baldwin Beach Express in the 1990s, said there, much of the land was donated.

“Like the original Baldwin Beach Express route, a lot of land on the proposed extension doesn’t have great road access now, but it will afterward, and sometimes land will be enhanced by a project,” he said. “Once rural agricultural land becomes commercially viable, it increases its value. Where you once had sod farms and timberland, owners donated property for the road and have since sold frontage to a McDonald’s or a gas station.”

But he also suggested property owners should always seek a second opinion.

“Condemnation actions are always under-compensated,” he said, noting juries cannot consider “sentimental value” or award attorneys’ fees. “Other states have made great progress to award attorneys’ fees if there is a substantial increase above the offer that proves the agency was lowballing. You can recover business losses in a lot of states. You can recover a premium on your property’s value if it’s your primary residence. But in Alabama, the instruction appraisers and the jury would get is, ‘What is the fair market value of the property?’ It’s pretty harsh.”

But for the extension, as well as the I-10 and Intracoastal Waterway bridges, once the state begins a condemnation action, it’s unlikely to terminate one.

“Why are we still spending money on a project the governor declared dead a year ago?” Pipes asked. “They are not filing new cases, but their attitude is they are going to finish the cases they started, and they are going to acquire the land. They’ve already kicked tenants out, torn buildings down, relocated people, uprooted businesses that have been there forever. I’m all for roads and progress, the Baldwin Beach Express was always planned to connect to I-10 and one day connect to I-65 and will be a tremendous asset to all of Baldwin County and I still believe it.

“I’m not opposed to using condemnation to complete that vision. But there is a right way to go about doing it from the agency’s side and the right way to do it from the landowners’ side and I think you have to be fair both ways.”

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## **U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao Announces \$6.5 Million to Seven States and Pawnee Nation for Highway Innovations**

Thursday, October 22, 2020  
FHWA 25-20

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today announced the latest recipients of federal funds to help enhance safety and rebuild infrastructure with cutting-edge innovations that can potentially be replicated nationwide. In this round of awards, Alabama, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, and the Pawnee Nation in Oklahoma will receive a combined \$6.5 million.

“These federal grants will advance innovative transportation solutions to improve safety and mobility on America’s roadways,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

Since 2014, the “Accelerated Innovation Deployment” (AID) Demonstration Program has provided 110 grants, valued at more than \$80 million, to help federal land management agencies, local and tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and state departments of transportation accelerate the use of innovations in transportation.

“These grants help state, local and tribal governments deliver projects sooner and more cost-effectively for the traveling public,” said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason.

Previous recipients used their AID grants to fund more energy-efficient overhead highway lighting, installation of bridge-monitoring sensors, work zone safety technology and “intelligent compaction” technologies which can extend the useful life of pavement.

The AID Demonstration Program builds on the FHWA’s efforts to collaborate with states and localities, federal land management agencies, and tribal governments to accelerate the adoption of innovations and reduce project delivery times.

## FY 2019 Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration Program Grants

Agency	Amount	Project Description
Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)	\$544,000	ALDOT will invest its AID Demonstration funds in fiberglass reinforced geotextile paving fabrics that withstand extreme temperatures and result in fewer cracks, thereby extending the life of pavements and reducing maintenance costs.
Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)	\$1,000,000	ITD will use its AID Demonstration funds to deploy two-dimensional hydraulic modeling and other next-generation hydraulic tools that can help the agency design safer, more cost-effective and resilient structures and streamline environmental, regulatory and engineering activities on 18 projects throughout the state.
Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and Clinton County Secondary Road Department	\$440,000	The Clinton County Secondary Road Department will use its AID Demonstration grant in conjunction with Iowa DOT on a pavement preservation pilot project using Cape Seals that can reduce the severity of cracks and extend the life of a pavement up to eight years.
Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT)	\$1,000,000	MaineDOT will invest AID Demonstration funds in the deployment of Advanced Geotechnical Methods in Exploration (A-GaME), an innovation supported by FHWA under its Every Day Counts (EDC) program that encourages the use of tools, technologies and approaches by state, tribal and local governments, and federal agencies to shorten project delivery, enhance roadway safety, reduce traffic congestion, and integrate automation. MaineDOT will employ A-GaME on the Brewer-Eddington I-395/Route 9 Connector Project in north central Maine to reduce construction delays and uncertainties in subsurface conditions and mitigate design and construction risks.
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	\$1,000,000	MassDOT will use its AID Demonstration grant on Unmanned Aerial Systems, an innovation supported by FHWA under EDC, that can improve the agency's ability to survey terrain before and after emergencies, improve worker safety through remote mapping and accelerate construction.
Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)/City of Fulton	\$984,025	MoDOT and the City of Fulton will invest AID Demonstration funds in Accelerated Bridge Construction and Prefabricated Bridge Elements and Systems, two innovations supported by FHWA under EDC, to accelerate project delivery time, improve work zone safety and reduce traffic impacts on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street Bridge Replacement project over Stinson Creek and Stinson Creek Greenway.
North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)	\$1,000,000	NCDOT's AID Demonstration grant will be used on a bridge replacement project in Carteret County featuring Carbon Fiber Reinforced Polymer Pre-stressing Strand technology that can help create a corrosion-free structure needing less maintenance and rehabilitation.
Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma	\$500,000	The Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma will invest AID Demonstration funds to employ the Construction Manager/General Contractor process, an EDC innovation that will help deliver several projects more cost-effectively.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,468,025</b>	

For more information about these grants, and FHWA's AID demonstration program, visit [www.fhwa.dot.gov/accelerating/grants](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/accelerating/grants).

## Do You Live in a “15-Minute Neighborhood”? There’s an App to Help You Find Out

SANDY SMITH OCTOBER 21, 2020

In case you haven't been paying attention, one of the main goals of the foot soldiers fighting for “the attrition of cars by cities” is to promote walking as essential transportation. The foot is the basic building block of mobility, and a good city neighborhood should make it possible for you to meet all your basic needs on foot. But most of us don't live in those so-called “15-minute neighborhoods” where one can take care of everything within a 15-minute walk. A mapping software company has developed an app that can help you determine whether your own neighborhood is one of them.

But if the “15-minute neighborhood” is the urbanists' Holy Grail, even residents of such neighborhoods will no doubt find themselves having to travel beyond them for various reasons. Here, the urbanists' aim is to minimize the number of such trips that take place behind the steering wheel of a single-occupant car. Tesla Motors founder Elon Musk says he too wants to get people out of “soul-crushing traffic,” but the solution his Boring Company proposed — tunnels for Teslas — raised eyebrows among skeptics who pointed out that cars weren't capable of carrying as many people as would be needed to reduce traffic on the highway. We now have proof of the error of Musk's ways from Las Vegas, whose convention center bought Musk's sales pitch only to find out that those Tesla tunnels couldn't carry the 4,400 people per hour center officials wanted.

Meanwhile, up on the surface, passenger vehicles, like houses, continue to expand in size, thanks largely to growing consumer preference for SUVs and crossovers. One automaker, Ford, has all but given up on building passenger cars, and most of the others have poured money into producing more and more luxurious car/truck hybrids. One automotive writer recently climbed into the driver's seat of one of the largest and most luxurious SUVs around, and when he got out, he pronounced it a menace to society — or at least that portion of society that gets around on foot.

### Mapping Your “15-Minute Neighborhood” on Your Web Browser

How much can you do by walking for no more than 15 minutes from your front door? Can you do your grocery shopping? Pick up your prescriptions from the drugstore? See your doctor? Find a decent cup of coffee and something good to eat? Go to a train station or bus stop to travel beyond your neighborhood easily?

Functions like these, taken together, define the “15-minute neighborhood.” And Streetsblog USA [reports](#) that there's now a tool that can help you learn whether or not you live in one. Developed by Here Technologies, the “[15-minute city app](#)” tells you how many places that fall into one of six categories — culture, education, groceries, leisure, medical and transit — are within a 15-minute walk, 20-minute walk or 15-minute drive of a given location.

Streetsblog's article points out that the app could serve as a tool to promote more equitable urban development by calling people's attention to what others might need or want to do within a 15- or 20-minute walk of their homes. “The average college student, for instance, may get by just fine on foot in a neighborhood populated with trendy restaurants, bars, and a few grocery stores, but the single mom next door might be drowning under the costs of maintaining a car that she needs to get her kid to the closest elementary school miles away,” author Kea Wilson writes. “A low-vision person on the same block, meanwhile, might struggle to access a simple park without the help of a sighted driver to take them a few miles down the road, while a twenty-something with 20/20 vision is happy to ride her bike to the same park.”

Here Technologies' Jordan Stark makes the same point, calling the app “the starting basis for new map tools and data to lay bare gaps in mobility, equity and access.”

Wilson also points out, and Stark acknowledges, that the app needs further refining. For instance, it can't yet tell you whether you can get to those nearby amenities safely and comfortably on foot. But as both a conversation-starter and a consciousness-raising tool for city dwellers and city planners alike, it already performs a valuable service.

## Transportation Research

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### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> National Summit for Rural Road Safety on October 1. Her announcement can be viewed here: [https://youtu.be/aEI3154\\_4Yc](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](mailto:hillary.isebrands@dot.gov) or Jerry Roche at [jerry.roche@dot.gov](mailto:jerry.roche@dot.gov).

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### 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](#)

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### 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.

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## **'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](#).

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## **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.

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## **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.