



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Volume 38, Number 9

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This week the Mobile MPO amended the 25 Year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to include Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project. Please see *Mobile MPO Updates* and *In The News*; [Senator Tuberville mentions the Project](#) this week. In *Legislative Updates*, the Senate Parliamentarian says it may be possible for the Democrats to pass the huge Infrastructure Bill (*majority of bill is social programs and health care reform*) without Republicans. Plus, lots of talk on a new Transportation Bill to replace the FAST ACT. The House Democrats introduce a \$547 Billion version, while the Senate introduces a \$304 Billion Bill. Round-A-bouts duke it out with Traffic Lights in this week's *Transportation Research*. Although this is all very exciting, this week's *Just For Fun* will put you to sleep... Have a good weekend.

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

### Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project are added to LRTP and TIP

The Mobile MPO met this week on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00AM in the SARPC Board Room on the first floor of the GMO Building. Items on the agenda are [HERE](#). Of importance was the Amendment to the Envision 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project which was passed unanimously. This has been advertised since April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, with a Public Meeting held on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The deadline for comments to be included into the draft document was May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The draft Amendment and comments can be found below. There were numerous comments in favor of the project, and there are some comments concerning the potential effects of increased truck traffic on Africatown Blvd.; although, hazardous trucks would no longer be signed to Africatown Blvd. There are also several comments regarding the impact to local trucking companies and several organizations submitted full support of the project. *In The News* below this week has several new articles concerning the meeting.

#### SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

For the project as proposed: 150

Against the project as proposed: 153 (Against a Toll 111, Against/Safety/Congestion 20, Completely Against w/ no reason 22)

Alternate: 39

Other: 13

[HERE](#) is the Amendment with update Section 1.7 that summarizes the public comments.

[HERE](#) is APPENDIX A with all of the comments we received prior to deadline

[HERE](#) is a National Geographic article on Africatown that was presented as information.

## Volkert, Inc. is given Notice To Proceed

Volkert has been given notice to proceed on the Mobile Area Major Road Plan. This is intended to be a complete Major Road Plan with regulatory components, current practices, case studies, and guidance for Mobile County and Municipalities within Mobile County. The Plan will include methods and tools for acquiring and preserving right-of-way in the context of expediting the environmental clearance process and review how corridors are prioritized, designated, and adopted for management or preservation. We are excited to get this project moving.

## 100 % Funding for Resurfacing of Local Roads Through the Mobile MPO with CRRSAA

(April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

In accordance with the Highway Infrastructure Program Funds Pursuant to the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) dated January 15, 2021 from the Federal Highway Administration, the Mobile Transportation Management Area (TMA) through the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is apportioned \$3,193,942 (FY 2021). In consultation with the State of Alabama, it is the intention of the Mobile MPO to use the Mobile TMA apportioned CRRSAA funding (\$3,193,942) for a one time competitive application award program. This funding can be 100% federal funding with no matching requirements; this presents a rare opportunity for the Mobile MPO.

Some of our municipalities in the Mobile MPO, do not have adequate revenue streams to provide the matching requirements when federal funds become available. Further, some of the smaller municipalities in the MPO only have one Federal Aid Route in their municipal limits (US43, SR181). Rarely do these municipalities have the opportunity to spend federal transportation funds

through the MPO. Per the above noted guidance, routine maintenance and preventative maintenance on non-federal aid highways is allowed if Special Authority is given to the MPO by the State.

The State of Alabama has awarded the Mobile MPO the Special Authority to proceed.

The cities of Creola, Satsuma, Saraland, Chickasaw, Prichard, Semmes and Bayou la Batre have provided a prioritized list of roads that need to be resurfaced within their jurisdiction. The CRRSAA Committee is meeting next week to validate the projects and move forward with this program. This is 100 % funding, with no matching requirements. Communication with MPO staff is through the Mayor of each municipality.

Please call Kevin Harrison 706-4635 if there are any questions.

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### **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**

None this week

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## **South Alabama RPO Updates**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met in October 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 May 28th, 2021**

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### **MOBILE COUNTY**

For constructing the Additional Lanes (Grading, Drainage, Pavement, Traffic Signals, and Traffic Stripe) on SR-158 from MP 7.750 to the junction of Spartan Drive in Saraland. Length 0.555 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,941,386 to \$3,595,027 .

### **BALDWIN COUNTY**

None at this time.

### **ESCAMBIA COUNTY**

None at this time.

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

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## **Legislative Updates**

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### **Chairs DeFazio, Norton, and Payne Introduce the INVEST in America Act to Create Millions of Jobs Bringing Our Infrastructure into the Modern Era**

June 04, 2021

**Washington, DC** - Today, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Chair of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit Eleanor Holmes Norton and Chair of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Donald M. Payne, Jr. introduced the "Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America (INVEST in America) Act," a transformational, \$547 billion surface transportation reauthorization bill that the committee will consider during a markup next Wednesday, June 9. Legislative text that includes Member Designated Projects will be released prior to the markup.

The INVEST in America Act offers a new approach to federal transportation policy by emphasizing fixing our existing roads and bridges and making record investments in passenger rail, public transit, cycling and walking infrastructure, and zero-emission options, while creating safer, more connected

communities. Thanks to strong Buy America provisions and labor protections, the work will be fueled by American workers, manufacturing, and ingenuity, with targeted investments in rural and underserved communities.

"The benefits of transformative investments in our infrastructure are far-ranging: we can create and sustain good-paying jobs, many of which don't require a college degree, restore our global competitiveness, tackle climate change head-on, and improve the lives of all Americans through modern infrastructure that emphasizes mobility and access, and spurs our country's long-term economic growth," **Chair DeFazio said.** "The *INVEST in America Act* puts a core piece of President Biden's American Jobs Plan into legislative text—seizing this once-in-a-generation opportunity to move our transportation planning out of the 1950s and toward our clean energy future. Let's get this done."

"As chair of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, I believe the country today requires a new and more comprehensive approach well beyond our prior bills," **Chair Norton said.** "For example, this bill takes on entirely new issues never before considered, such as climate change and multi-modal access in and through cities and towns."

"The INVEST in America Act will bring America's aging rail infrastructure into the 21st century," **Chairman Donald M. Payne, Jr. said.** "It provides \$95 billion to upgrade intercity passenger rail systems and fund critical infrastructure projects, such as the Gateway Program. This investment in our nation's future will encourage more Americans to use rail transportation, reduce traffic congestion, lower carbon emissions, and reduce the effects of climate change. I am proud to introduce legislation that implements President Biden's American Jobs Plan and am grateful for Chair DeFazio's leadership on this critical issue."

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## Republicans' Statement on Chair DeFazio's Surface Transportation Bill

June 4, 2021

Washington, D.C.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-MO); Highways and Transit Subcommittee Ranking Member Rodney Davis (R-IL); Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee Ranking Member Rick Crawford (R-AR); and Select Committee on the Climate Crisis and Aviation Subcommittee Ranking Member Garret Graves (R-LA) released the following joint statement in response to today's release of Committee Chair DeFazio's surface transportation reauthorization bill:

"The Majority's new 'My Way or the Highway Bill 2.0' doubles down on the same mandates, restrictive policies, and costly diversions of infrastructure resources that led to last year's failure to provide long-term investments in America's roads and bridges.

"Instead of working with Republicans to find common ground on a bill that could earn strong bipartisan support – something our Senate counterparts did successfully last month – this bill moves even further to the left to appease the most progressive members in the Majority's party.

"Despite a narrower margin of power and the President's call for bipartisanship, the Majority never seriously considered incorporating Republican priorities and reaching a compromise. So we are left with another bill that lets lengthy road and bridge project delays continue eating up precious resources, handcuffs our state and local partners, leaves rural communities behind, and prioritizes the Green New Deal to an extent that cripples the real infrastructure improvements communities across the country need."

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## Surface Transportation Bill Gaining Strong Bipartisan Support

Thursday, June 3rd 2021

**WASHINGTON -**

While President Biden continues to seek Republican backing for his nearly \$2 trillion infrastructure proposal, the American Jobs Plan, a smaller bill focused solely on surface transportation is gaining momentum and strong bipartisan support, including from Oklahoma's senior Senator.

Last week, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, once chaired by Senator Jim Inhofe, unanimously approved the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act (STRA) of 2021.

"That is a very good, very good transportation bill," said Inhofe in an interview the day after the committee sent the measure to the full Senate. Inhofe still sits on the committee, and said the members certainly have their differences.

"In the Environment and Public Works Committee, the Democrats are among the most liberal Democrats and conservatives are among the most conservative," Inhofe said. "But on infrastructure, on transportation, on these things we all get together."

The bill would authorize a baseline of \$304 billion over the next five years for state DOTs to spend on road, bridge and rail improvements. Inhofe said even the fiscal hawks support it.

"When it comes to transportation, they don't want less spending, they want more spending," he said.

Under the bill, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation would get \$840 million in the first year, and a total of \$4.35 billion over five years. Among the highlighted projects, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) would be eligible for additional grant funding, which Inhofe said could lead to improvements allowing for added capacity and economic impact.

Perhaps most significantly, Inhofe said, State Highway 412, under the Act would be designated as a future interstate highway, stretching from the point where it intersects with I-35 in Noble County all the way east through Tulsa into Arkansas.

"So, we'll actually have major new areas opening up for the Tulsa area," Inhofe commented.

It's not clear yet if this legislation will get rolled into the Biden infrastructure plan or stand on its own. Inhofe believes the latter.

"I have every expectation that we're going to be able to get this bill through, because it is so popular," Inhofe said.

The last 5-year surface transportation bill -- the FAST Act -- was passed in 2015. Congress reauthorized it for an additional year last year. It runs out in September.

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## Biden floats infrastructure, tax concessions to GOP

BY [ALEXIS SIMENDINGER](#) AND [AL WEAVER](#) - 06/04/21

The gulf between the White House and Senate Republicans when it comes to roads, bridges and ports — and corporate taxes — appears to be hundreds of billions of dollars wide, even as [President Biden](#) privately floated new concessions this week in search of a bipartisan deal.

On Wednesday, the president broached a significantly lower floor for a compromise on infrastructure, touting \$1 trillion in new spending, signaling to Sen. [Shelley Moore Capito](#) (R-W.Va.) and her GOP colleagues that although he might be willing to trim his plan, they would need to come up from the \$257 billion level they recently proposed for new spending, [The New York Times](#) reported.

The president has staked out some new middle ground during talks with Republicans, suggesting he might be willing to forfeit more than half the total infrastructure and job creation spending included in his original plan. He has not officially moved off his proposal to finance infrastructure investments with higher taxes on wealthy corporations, according to the [Times](#). Republicans have rejected the idea of raising taxes as part of any deal, favoring user fees. The parties may be closer on overall cost structure but are far apart on how to finance the legislation, which is why a bipartisan deal is seen as unlikely. Biden and Capito will speak again on Friday, likely by phone.

[The Washington Post](#) and [The Associated Press](#) reported that Biden privately broached in conversation with the West Virginia senator a fallback to create a new minimum tax rate of 15 percent on corporate profits, plus the possibility of tapping revenues from increased IRS enforcement as a possible compromise revenue stream.

White House press secretary [Jen Psaki](#) said on Thursday that the president had “absolutely not” abandoned a proposed 28 percent corporate tax rate included in his [American Jobs Plan](#), but was trying to give Republicans a path to back infrastructure without violating their red line of keeping corporate tax rates at current levels.

Senate Minority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) (R-Ky.), in close contact with Capito, said the two conferred following the Wednesday meeting at the White House. *“We’re still hoping we can come to an agreement on a fully paid for and significant infrastructure package,”* he said.

In classic fashion, McConnell has blessed weeks of discussions with the White House without endorsing any details or specifics. Republicans want to find a way to support a smaller and fully offset infrastructure compromise, he says, while making it clear his party opposes tax hikes as part of any legislative compromise, especially ahead of the 2022 midterms. *“I don’t think that’s gonna appeal to members of my party, and I think it’ll be a hard sell to the Democrats,”* [he added](#) on Thursday.

While Senate Republicans want to shrink Biden’s plan, and the president himself has entertained that possibility, the president’s legislative strategy could wind up bigger, harder and longer.

Senate Parliamentarian [Elizabeth MacDonough](#)’s recent guidance that Senate Democrats can use one rather than two reconciliation packages this year shifts the political calculus for Biden’s agenda if Democrats decide to move ahead without Republicans, as has been anticipated ([The Hill](#)). One enormous bill for infrastructure, jobs and other policies would also need to include Democrats’ favored health care reforms, such as expanding Medicare, and broader tax changes on state and local tax deductions and capital gains. The potential scope under a reconciliation strategy means a measure would be unlikely to pass in July, as Democrats originally hoped, and instead stretch into the fall or even late December.

[The Hill](#): Sen. [Joe Manchin](#) (D-W.Va.) said Thursday he is not ready to support an infrastructure measure passed by Democrats alone: *“We’ve got to work together and that takes a lot of time and energy and patience.”* He anticipates a briefing from Capito next week.

## Funding Opportunities

# Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) GRANTS

(deadline July 12, 2021)

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) today published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to apply for \$1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 discretionary grant funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants. RAISE, formerly known as BUILD and TIGER, has awarded over \$8.935 billion in grants to projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico since 2009.

“In communities across the country, there is tremendous need for transportation projects that create high-quality jobs, improve safety, protect our environment, and generate equitable economic opportunity for all Americans,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. “With RAISE grants, we are making those needed investments in our communities’ future.”

Projects for RAISE funding will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, innovation, and partnership. Within these criteria, the Department will prioritize projects that can demonstrate improvements to racial equity, reduce impacts of climate change and create good-paying jobs.

For this round of RAISE grants, the maximum grant award is \$25 million, and no more than \$100 million can be awarded to a single State, as specified in the appropriations act. Up to \$30 million will be awarded to planning grants, including at least \$10 million to Areas of Persistent Poverty.

To ensure that the benefits of infrastructure investments benefit communities large and small the Department will award an equitable amount, not to exceed half of funding, to projects located in urban and rural areas respectively.

The program is highly competitive with 680 projects funded out of over 9700 applications. It is one of the few DOT discretionary programs for which regional and local governments can directly compete for multimodal transportation funding.

To provide technical assistance to prospective applicants, DOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2021 RAISE grant application process. To register for the webinars visit [www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach](http://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach). The deadline to submit an application is July 12, 2021 at 5pm Eastern.

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## **U.S. Department of Transportation Announces More Than \$10 Million Funding Opportunity for Transit Planning to Address Climate Change and Equity in Communities Nationwide** *(deadline , June 21, 2021)*

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

*Priority will be given to projects that help improve air quality, advance environmental justice, promote housing affordability*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the availability of approximately \$10 million in competitive grant funds through a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for FTA's [Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development \(TOD\) Planning](#). The funds will support comprehensive planning efforts that help connect communities, improve access to public transportation and affordable housing, and support President Biden's call to combat climate change, advance environmental justice, and promote equitable delivery of benefits to underserved communities.

"When people can move safely and easily by public transit, foot, bike, wheelchair, or any other means, it can change a community for the better," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "This type of investment can save residents money and time, and reduce pollution impacting our neighborhoods. We are thrilled to help more local governments plan creatively around transit, so their communities can benefit from the good jobs, affordable housing, and economic revitalization that accompany it."

In support of the President's January 20, 2021 Executive Orders on Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis (EO 13990) and Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (EO 13985), FTA will prioritize projects that will help improve air quality in non-attainment and maintenance areas for certain criteria pollutants under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and promote equitable delivery of benefits and services to underserved communities. This consideration will further the goals of the Executive Orders, including the goal to prioritize environmental justice.

"This announcement comes at an especially fitting time, coinciding with the celebration of Earth Day. Equitable transit-oriented development helps those at the local level respond to climate change and affordable housing challenges, particularly in underserved and overburdened communities," said FTA Deputy Administrator Nuria Fernandez. "The TOD planning program will encourage mixed-use, mixed income development around new transit projects to increase access to opportunities and improve mobility for residents."

FTA's Pilot Program for TOD Planning funds comprehensive planning to increase transit access and to encourage ridership with mixed-use and mixed-income development near public transportation projects. Examples of eligible projects include comprehensive planning studies around station areas for new fixed guideway projects, such as light-rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, or bus rapid transit systems that have a designated right-of-way. Information on previously funded projects can be found [here](#).

In order to apply for program funding, an applicant must be an existing FTA recipient – either a project sponsor of an eligible transit project or an entity with land use planning authority in the project corridor. To ensure that work meets the needs of the local community, transit project sponsors and land use planning authorities must partner to conduct the planning work. The application period will close on Monday, June 21, 2021.

FTA's TOD Pilot Program was established under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and amended by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The program is authorized through Fiscal Year 2021.

RAISE grant application process. To register for the webinars visit [www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach](http://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/outreach). The deadline to submit an application is July 12, 2021 at 5pm Eastern.

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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](#)

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)*

This week, someone decided to take a nap in his car, in traffic, on the Bayway. No one wanted to wake him, because.... he had a gun in his lap. Sleepy head must have been sitting on the Bayway, in traffic, windows down, and dosed off into sweet slumber. We are thankful the car was not moving, and thankful he did not have a dream about a gun fight.



Falling asleep behind the wheel can lead to a serious tragedy, and nothing to make light of. But how far are we from napping to our destination? The vehicles (Tesla) today with their technology, are making it more and more possible. Back in the day, we would have to pull an all nighter to get to nana's house. Now, we can sleep all night and let the Tesla take us there, JUST FOR FUN!!!!

**Check out (click the pic) these Tesla slumber parties....**



If you do fall asleep while behind the wheel of an autopilot Tesla, you can still get a ticket for: ["inattentive driving"](#).

## In the News

### I-10 Bridge and Bayway project returns to Mobile's plans

By John Sharp Updated Jun 02, 2021

An Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway improvement project is back in the local plans for the first time since the original \$2.1 billion project was [declared dead in 2019](#).

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization – which consists of local government officials in Mobile County – voted unanimously Wednesday to place an alternative I-10 truck bridge project into their long- and short-range plans. By adding the project into those two plans, it will enable local and state officials to pursue critical federal funding to make the overall project happen.

The Eastern Shore MPO - consisting of local government officials on the Eastern edge of Baldwin County -- is scheduled to meet at 10 a.m. next Wednesday, June 9, at the Daphne Civic Center to consider a similar vote. With approval from both MPOs, the project will then be forwarded to the Alabama Department of Transportation where officials will consider including it into the state's short-range transportation plan.

"The action we took today and the action by the (Eastern Shore) MPO next week will send a message that Southwest Alabama is interested in working together and it sends a message the Federal Highway Administration and the (U.S. Department of Transportation) that it's 'game on' and 'let's get this done,'" said Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson, the MPO's chairman.

#### 'Get process going'

The Mobile MPO's vote places the truck bridge concept into their short-range transportation plan, commonly referred to as the "Transportation Improvement Program" or TIP, that runs from 2020-2023. The bridge is estimated to cost \$44.5 million for preliminary engineering and \$665 million in actual construction.

The bridge would be financed largely by up to a \$15 toll on large semi-tractor trailer trucks as part of Phase 1 of a three-phase construction project. Also included in the first phase would be a proposed restriping of the Bayway from two lanes in each direction to three.

The first phase would prevent large trucks over 46 feet in length from traveling through the George Wallace Tunnel, thus diverting them over the Mobile River via the new bridge.

MPO members said they had concerns about some of the initial features such as a truck-only toll and a restriping of the heavily-traveled Bayway. But they also said they supported the overall concept in order to advance the project forward and to avoid losing any dedicated federal funding. At risk is the potential of losing a \$125 million federal Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant that was secured in 2019, but which needs to be authorized for construction by September 2022.

"I'm not 100 percent happy with the project," said Saraland Mayor Howard Rubenstein. "But doing nothing is not an alternative. Putting our heads in the sand and waiting for this or that, to me, is not an option. It's a reasonable option to get the process going."

Said Mobile County Commissioner Connie Hudson, "I am not satisfied, either. But after we approve this, we can all utilize our influence to move this forward and try to influence the federal government. This is a generational opportunity to identify additional funding."

Aside from the federal INFRA grant, the project has secured \$250 million in state, non-federal subsidies through Alabama's gas tax revenues and \$300 million from a federal loan that would be repaid with through toll revenues.

Mobile officials are hopeful that federal funding will be available either through general transportation-related appropriations or through a massive federal infrastructure program that is under consideration in Washington, D.C. President Joe Biden is pitching a \$1.7 trillion infrastructure package, which has been criticized by Republicans for including expenditures on items unrelated to roads and bridges. The Biden initiative would be financed largely with an increase in corporate taxes.

Congressional Republicans have countered with a \$928 million proposal that would be partially financed by user fees or tolls, and Democratic critics have said the GOP proposal isn't enough.

Stimpson said that by adding the I-10 project back into MPO's plans, it creates an opportunity to secure critical federal funds.

"If we don't have this in the long-range plans, and money becomes available ... and this is not shovel-ready, then you may not be eligible to get that (federal) money," Stimpson said. He said the White House's interest in a transportation bill "is another window of opportunity that didn't exist six months ago."

### **\$2 toll**

The Mobile MPO's long-range transportation plan, called "Envision 2045," suggests that a \$2 toll could be assessed on other vehicles that utilize the truck bridge at some point in the future. However, existing routes across the Mobile River – the Wallace Tunnel, and the Spanish Fort Causeway – will remain toll-free for passenger cars.

The long-range plan said that the Alabama Department of Transportation will perform more in-depth studies on the toll scenarios to "examine the impacts on the traveling public, traffic distribution, and how quickly loans can be paid back." Then, ALDOT will present a final toll plan or plan options at future public meetings.

Stimpson said that ALDOT's prior interest in a public-private partnership to finance the I-10 project is unlikely, adding that it would require approval from both MPO's. In 2019, the previous project crumbled under criticism over ALDOT's toll plan that included private companies involved in the financing and development of the new bridge and Bayway connecting Mobile to Daphne.

At the time, a proposed \$6 one-way toll would have been assessed on all vehicles traveling on the Bayway and through the Wallace Tunnel. That plan was sharply criticized by local politicians and a toll watchdog group led by Alabama Auditor Jim Zeigler and conservative groups like the Common Sense Campaign tea party.

"I'm not saying something isn't possible, but there are hurdles," said Stimpson about the potential of reconsidering a PPP.

The second phase of the project includes the construction of a second span over the Mobile River with improvements to the west entrance to the Wallace Tunnel. According to the long-term plan, that portion would be financed through state and federal funds as well as continuing a toll plan. The estimated cost for the second phase is \$500 million.

Funding for Phase Three, which is the replacement of the 7.5-mile Bayway, will include a mixture of state and federal funds and will require tolling. The I-10 Bayway replacement is has to meet 2008 guidelines established by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) requiring the structure to be elevated "well above" 100-year flood elevation levels, according to the long-term plan. A reconstructed Bayway would need to be [elevated above the current structure to respond to rising sea levels and the effects of climate change that include severe winds, flooding and storm surge](#). The estimated cost for Phase 3 is \$1.2 billion.

The third phase of the project includes a toll plan that goes beyond the 25-year scope of the long-range plan. But Hudson said she's hopeful it can be acted sooner than much later.

She also believes a truck-only bridge isn't the MPO's vision, though the first phase of the project includes strict tolling on large semi-tractor trailers only.

"The trucks shouldn't be 100 percent (responsible for the tolls)," said Hudson. "That only alleviates a small portion of the whole congestion (along I-10). We have to look toward the future when building this. The whole point is relieving congestion. This is a starting point."

### **'Equitable' approaches**

The short-range project – the truck bridge – is likely to face some immediate opposition primarily from the Alabama Trucking Association. The group is opposed to the concept of assessing tolls only on large trucks, and a representative implored ALDOT to consider a more "equitable" approach.

"I want you all to know that the truck industry understands the need to construct a bridge over I-10 and explore solutions," said Mark Colson, president and CEO with the state's trucking association. "We are willing to be part of the solution. But a funding solution should be fair and equitable to all of those involved."

Colson said [the truck bridge plan assesses 100 percent of the costs on large trucks that comprise of "10 percent or less" of traffic along I-10 through Mobile](#). At peak traffic times, congestion through the Wallace Tunnel can exceed 100,000 vehicles a day with trucks representing less than 10,000 of that, according to Colson.

He also said that legal questions loom [over whether assessing a toll only on large semi-tractor trailers was a violation of the Constitution's Dormant Commerce Clause](#), a legal doctrine that prohibits states from discriminating against interstate commerce.

Said Colson, "Constitutional challenges or lawsuits ... has the potential to delay or eliminate the prospects of a bridge, which we all agree we need."

A federal lawsuit in Rhode Island argues that truck-only tolls discriminate against out-of-state companies, violating the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. The Rhode Island situation is different from Alabama, according to local officials, because Rhode Island leaders have assessed about a dozen tolls throughout that state on routes utilized by both cars and large trucks.

[An ALDOT official said last week that they reviewed the legal concerns around a truck-only toll bridge and concluded that there should be no barriers to their plan.](#)

Also expressing concerns were conservative activists like Lou Campomenosi, who heads up the tea party organization based in Baldwin County.

Campomenosi said he was worried about the safety of driving along the existing Bayway if an extra lane was added in both directions and the shoulders allowing for emergency vehicles were eliminated.

"It's particularly an issue with fog on the Bayway," said Campomenosi.

But Campomenosi said his group would be supportive with a "small toll," and called a \$2 proposal "reasonable."

"I understand there is a 'No tolls' (movement online) but you'll have that opinion no matter what," Campomenosi said. "Our concern was the \$6 toll, and that drove the whole issue (before). We think you get through this with a lower toll."

Campomenosi also called on ALDOT to be more trustful with the public going forward, saying that a previous "my way or the highway" posture on the \$2.1 billion project "didn't work out."

Stimpson acknowledged the need to be more transparent going forward. He said the MPO will meet in August to get an update from ALDOT officials on where the project stands. He also said that monthly meetings will take place so the project can be discussed.

"There may be nothing for us to vote on, but we want a meeting so a status (update) can take place," said Stimpson. "This point is to be transparent and communicative and we'll be able to move this process along and no one will be surprised by where it stands."

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## Mobile MPO will spend \$3.2 million on fixing roads outside of the city of Mobile

by Justin Moore, Thursday, June 3rd 2021

MOBILE COUNTY, Ala. (WPML) — The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization is using federal funds to fix roads in municipalities across the county, but not in the City of Mobile.

Mobile City Councilman Fred Richardson said some of the money should be spent on roads in Mobile neighborhoods. Mobile MPO passed a resolution to use nearly \$3.2 million of COVID-19 relief funds to resurface roads in smaller municipalities.

### MPO Resolution 21-015:

- City of Bayou La Batre - \$256,233.95
- City of Chickasaw - \$294,410.96
- City of Creola - \$285,074.26
- City of Prichard - \$610,427.63
- City of Saraland - \$517,869.58
- City of Satsuma - \$293,014.04
- City of Semmes - \$356,469.58
- City streets within the Mobile MPO Boundary \$227,260.00

Richardson said the city of Mobile needs the money just as much as any other city does.

"They won't put a dime of that money in the infrastructure east of I-65," Richardson said.

Mobile mayor Sandy Stimpson, who's the chair of the Mobile MPO, said he came up with the idea to use the money to help neighboring cities like Prichard and Saraland. He also understood these communities often times struggle to get funding for infrastructure.

"I definitely understand that we have some rough streets here, but MPO money, if you go back 10 years, the city of Mobile received \$36 million. Going forward, over the next five years we will get \$13 million. Those municipalities, smaller municipalities, will get zero," Stimpson said.

Stimpson said city engineers are fully loaded with projects already in Mobile. It would take years before the city could use the funding.

Stimpson said the city already has enough funding set aside for road resurfacing. Richardson said that funding usually gets used on affluent neighborhoods in West Mobile, but little to none gets used on older infrastructure neighbors with lower income families east of I-65.

Stimpson said the biggest infrastructure complaint he gets is about all the detours in the downtown area caused by road work.

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## For Alabama conservatives, toll opposition creates strange political alliances and disputes

By John Sharp Updated May 30, 2021

Jim Zeigler rattles off the number of followers to his grassroots anti-toll Facebook group like a stock trader can readily recite the number of investors any given day.

The Alabama State Auditor notes the [“Block the Tolls. Support Accountability”](#) page he has administered since 2019 has 51,600 followers. “They don’t trust the government. They don’t trust (the Alabama Department of Transportation). They don’t trust (the governor’s) administration. There is consensus in my people that there is adequate money coming in to pay for the (Interstate 10) fix.”

The grassroots Zeigler is referring to mostly consists of followers from Mobile and Baldwin counties who – like similar grassroots groups in [Texas](#), [Connecticut](#), and [South Florida](#) – are leading the opposition against tolls. Though the groups are defined as non-partisan, there is heavy conservative anti-tax support within some of them and they aren’t afraid to butt heads with Republicans over transportation financing.

#### **Blurred alliances**

Outside regional toll disputes including the one in coastal Alabama, an evolving nationwide debate is emerging over how to pay for roads and bridges. It’s creating some strange bedfellows, straining rigid partisan divides, and blurring predictable alliances Republicans and Democrats have come to rely upon.

Organized anti-tax grassroots groups, consisting of conservative voters, are surfacing as populist opponents to user fees like tolls. But on the other side are the congressional Republicans and governors who view tolls as a true “user fee” viewed as a conservative alternative to raising the fuel tax to pay for highways and bridges.

In recent days, [Congressional Republicans rolled out a \\$928 billion counteroffer](#) to President Joe Biden’s \$1.7 trillion infrastructure plan. [One way the GOP has hinted at paying for it is through user fees, like tolls](#). Biden’s plan doesn’t include tolling, but it does call for an increase to corporate taxes opposed by Republicans.

[Conservative groups like the Heritage Foundation](#) generally embrace tolls as a transportation finance solution. Tolling to pay for America’s highways was once preferred by famed free-market economist Milton Friedman, the economic advisor to President Ronald Reagan. The conservative Alabama Policy Institute, [in a 2019 piece](#), said “one of the most conservative approaches of funding regional infrastructure” is through a user-fee, or toll.

But also in Alabama is the anti-toll drumbeat made by a mostly conservative grassroots group led by Zeigler. Their anti-toll views on social media and beyond place the group at direct odds with the conventional Republican positions on transportation financing, which leans toward a funding solution by those who directly benefit from it.

Zeigler’s mostly conservative anti-toll grassroots opposed Republican Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey’s administration over the \$2.1 billion I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway plan. At times, the issue of tolling I-10 has placed GOP politicians in awkward positions – in 2019, former Republican U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne [was inundated with toll inquiries during a town hall meeting](#), and he was criticized for saying his “hands were tied” on a topic he felt was more of a state matter. One year later, on the eve of the 2020 U.S. Senate primary runoff race, [former Attorney General Jeff Sessions had to clarify his stance about tolls by saying he “strongly” opposed them](#). U.S. Rep. Jerry Carl, R-Mobile, has expressed opposition to Biden’s infrastructure plan, but he is also been opposed to tolling existing routes to finance the I-10 project.

The anti-toll Facebook group also continues to express concerns over an alternative plan – a truck-only bridge – that would cost around \$725 million, and which continues to include a toll. The truck bridge’s proposed toll would be assessed up to \$15 on large semi-tractor trailers only and would finance a new bridge utilized only by trucks over the Mobile River.

The Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Mobile and Baldwin counties will consider adding the truck bridge into their long- and short-term plans during meetings the next two weeks. The Mobile MPO takes it up at 10 a.m. on Wednesday. Continue [HERE](#)

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## **Mobile MPO approves truck bridge plan**

Posted by Dale Liesch | Jun 2, 2021

The Mobile River Bridge project is one step closer to reality after a regional planning board approved the newest version of the plan, which includes a \$15 toll for big trucks.

At a meeting Wednesday morning, the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) unanimously approved adding the project back to both the long-range and short-range transportation plans, which will allow the bridge to receive federal funding.

Members of the board chaired by Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson and including countywide municipal leaders largely felt the need for a solution to the congestion problem in downtown Mobile and the Eastern Shore of Baldwin County outweighed the negative impacts of the plan.

“I’m not 100 percent happy with the project, but doing nothing is not an option,” Saraland Mayor Howard Rubenstein said. “I think this is a reasonable option to get the project started.”

There was a sense among those present and voting at the meeting that getting the project on the short-range plan before President Joe Biden’s infrastructure bill is approved was the best option. Stimpson alluded to that with reporters following the meeting. He said the vote “leaves a window open” for funding that could have been shut otherwise.

“There could be another window open, but it has to be on the (short-range plan),” Stimpson said. “There could be another window open that wasn’t available six months ago.”

The approval included an amendment to the plan that some on the board and some who raised concerns about the project were excited about. The amendment calls for a future study on the impacts a \$2 toll on smaller vehicles could have on the project.

Lou Campomenosi, president of the Common Sense Campaign, told the board that while he was against the planned \$6 toll included in the original project's scope, he would support a more modest \$2 toll.

"I think that's reasonable," he said.

Like Campomenosi, Baldwin County business owner Kevin Spriggs said he supported the project, but had some concerns. Chief among them, he said, was the later phase restriping of the Bayway that would make the long-time passageway across the Mobile Bay three lanes in each direction.

Priced at \$725 million, about half the funding for the project would come from state and federal sources, in the form of Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEEs) bonds, Calametti said. Around \$400 million would come from a fee charged to trucks 46 feet and longer using the bridge. The bridge would "most likely" be designated an I-10 truck route, Calametti said, and smaller vehicles would not be allowed on it.

Existing routes including the Bankhead Tunnel, the Wallace Tunnel, the Bayway and the Causeway will remain toll free.

The timeline for construction for this concept would be 2022 to 2023, as the state would lose out on a \$125 million federal grant if the project is not underway by the third quarter of 2022.

Alabama Trucking Association President Mark Colson said while the lobbying group was not against the relieving of congestion among a very important corridor for commerce, he does feel other solutions should be sought, especially ones that don't involve unfairly targeting truckers and trucking companies.

"Every funding solution should be fair and equitable," he said. "The plan currently places 100 percent of the burden on truckers."

Colson warned that court challenges by the trucking industry could delay the project.

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## ALDOT to resurface portion of US-90 in Mobile

• UPDATED JUN 1, 2021 | POSTED ON JUN 1, 2021

MOBILE, Ala. --The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) anticipates beginning a project to resurface a portion of US-90 (SR-16) from Lawrence St. to Water St. and Telegraph Rd. on Monday, June 7, 2021.

The scope of the project includes 0.67 miles of planning, paving, and striping operations as well as implementing guardrail and curb ramp improvements.

This project also includes a lane reconfiguration (or lane diet) to change the outside lane to a bike lane with a buffer in both directions to provide continuous bike facilities and connect the previous work on the City of Mobile's Water St. Project to the ongoing work on the City of Mobile's Broad St. Project.

There will be two travel lanes in each direction with median turn lanes.

Motorists can expect daytime, weekday lane closures for planning, paving, and striping operations with spot closures for guardrail and curb ramp work.

The curb ramp concrete operations are scheduled to begin Monday, June 7 and are expected to take one to two weeks to complete.

Paving operations will follow and are anticipated to begin near the end of June 2021. Motorists should follow all traffic control signage and use extra caution and reduced speeds in the work zone.

The \$460,000 project was awarded to Mobile Asphalt Company, LLC and is anticipated to be completed in August 2021.

## Transportation Research

### [Roundabouts vs Traffic Lights](#)

Jun 1, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ0pnCx76Nk>  
Hate it when you're the only car stopped at a light?

Roundabouts are a solution to that, and more.

Roundabouts are "safer. They save lives. They cost less!" Carmel, Indiana mayor Jim Brainard explains.

He's replaced nearly every stoplight in his town with a roundabout. His town now accounts for about 2% of all roundabouts in America. Roundabouts are safer.

A study in Wisconsin found that when roundabouts replaced typical intersections, deaths fell 38%. Crashes actually rose 12%, but they were more minor crashes. "Instead of a T-bone, you get a sideswipe," Brainard explains.

Roundabouts pass cars through intersections faster, they look nicer, save tax money, and pollute less. Yet America's politicians have been slow to adopt them. Europe has about 200,000 roundabouts — compared to America's roughly 6,000. Why so slow? I ask Jim Brainard in the video link above.

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## How to Access and Visualize 2020 Census Apportionment Results

The Census Bureau released the 2020 Census resident population count and apportionment results. This Data Gem will teach you how to access and visualize these data, along with historical census counts from 1910 to 2020, using the Historical Apportionment Data Map.

[Watch Now](#)

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## The traffic control bible is getting an update. Here's why you should care.

[Matt Levin](#) May 25, 2021

Some argue the Manual on Traffic Control Devices is too prescriptive when it comes to designing things like crosswalks and bike lanes, and too permissive when it comes to cars.

In the world of social media stars, Vignesh Swaminathan may seem like an unlikely one. He's a civil engineer and CEO of Crossroad Lab, a Northern California company that specializes in feasibility studies and intersection design. He spends his time in storm drains and studies things like the role of structural racism in potholes.

But on TikTok, Swaminathan is [Mr. Barricade](#), crusader for bicycle and pedestrian-friendly streets. Mashing beats from Kid Cudi with some signature dance moves and short lessons on roads and bridges, among other things, he's amassed more than 400,000 followers.

You can see some of his creative handiwork at the corner of Fourth and San Fernando streets in downtown San Jose, California. Swaminathan helped redesign this bustling intersection into a bicyclist's safe space, with bike-only traffic signals, protected bike lanes and inflatable barricades pretty much everywhere.

Like other transportation engineers, Swaminathan begins any project by dutifully consulting the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, known among urban planning nerds as the [MUTCD](#).

And then sometimes, especially when it comes to things like how bicycles and pedestrians are supposed to interact, he has to deviate from it.

"I've read through the MUTCD well. I'll put in additional extra, extra safety elements," said Swaminathan. "And that's how I feel comfortable messing with the MUTCD."

### MUTCD geared for drivers

Pedestrian and bicycle-safety advocates don't want to just mess with the latest edition of the MUTCD, which awaits formal adoption by the Department of Transportation. They want the manual rewritten almost entirely to reduce its heavy bias toward cars, which still rule the road when it comes to the manual.

"By sort of tradition and fiat, [the MUTCD] is mostly geared towards the way drivers use the streets, and it thinks of other users as *other* users," said Zabe Bent, director of design at the National Association of City Transportation Officials.

That "tradition and fiat" dates back to the 1930s, when the MUTCD was first created.

The goal then was fairly basic: Road signs and traffic signals should look the same whether you were driving your Buick Roadster in Boston, California or anywhere in between.

But over the years, the manual has morphed into a sprawling 862-page traffic engineering bible, dictating everything from the width of lane dividers to the proper size and markings for a crosswalk. When the city of Ames, Iowa, [repainted a crosswalk](#) in rainbow colors to celebrate Pride, the Federal Highway Administration chided the city for violating the MUTCD.

Advocates like Bent argue the manual is far too prescriptive when it comes to designing things like crosswalks and bike lanes, and far too permissive when it comes to cars, and especially when it comes to regulating speed.

### 85th percentile rule

The MUTCD says local governments should base speed limits on something called the 85th percentile rule: the speed at or below which 85% of drivers would travel in free-flowing, unfettered traffic.

"The stance has always been that motorists given to their own devices would pick a prudent speed at which to drive," said Steve Oliver, director of streets for the city of Garland, Texas, and part of the team that updated the 2021 version of the MUTCD.

Pedestrian and bicycle safety advocates object to that methodology and say some tweaks to the rule in the latest MUTCD don't go far enough.

City traffic engineers can work around the MUTCD to make design decisions they think make more sense for their communities.

### Engineering safety studies

But there's an expensive reason they often don't: liability. Deviating from the MUTCD may require an engineering safety study to justify any changes.

"The city attorney, for example, will say, 'I won't sign off on that,' or the city engineer will say 'I won't sign off on that,'" Bent said.

Unsafe streets may stay unsafe simply because they comply with the manual. It's just easier and cheaper that way.

What warrants a new crosswalk with a traffic signal is another bone of contention.

#### **Justifying a crosswalk with a stoplight**

While the exact requirements vary by street type and location, the MUTCD requires roughly 100 pedestrians per hour crossing a street, or multiple accidents involving pedestrians, to justify a crosswalk with a stoplight.

Pedestrian safety advocates argue that logic is circularly flawed — you won't get 100 pedestrians an hour crossing an unsafe street. And cities should not have to wait until someone is killed by a car to fix an obviously unsafe intersection.

Oliver, the Texas engineer who worked on the 2021 MUTCD update, said he understands many of these concerns. But he cautions against scrapping the manual entirely.

"If you reframe and rewrite, it's almost kind of throwing out the baby with the bathwater, and you're starting all over," he said.

The Department of Transportation is reviewing the updated manual. Secretary Pete Buttigieg hasn't weighed in yet. It might be something for him to think about while he bikes into work.

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## **FHWA to host series of Value Capture Strategies webinars**

FHWA is hosting a series of Value Capture Strategies webinars beginning in March, 2021. The webinar series will detail the Value Capture techniques promoted in the Federal Highway Administration's Every Day Counts initiative. This year's series focuses on the intersection of Innovative Finance and Innovative Project Delivery Tools. These webinars will detail more Value Capture best practices collected from throughout the nation. They will also highlight FHWA's recently completed Value Capture Primer series of technical documents.

Value Capture is a set of powerful techniques that recover a portion of land value created by public infrastructure investments, and can:

- Address funding gaps;
- leverage and optimize Federal and State resources;
- accelerate project delivery;
- meet and improve system performance goals;
- maintain transportation infrastructure assets in good repair; and,
- save time and money.

The program features subject matter experts and peers who successfully utilized Value Capture in tandem with innovative finance and project delivery techniques to advance new and modernized infrastructure projects. Registration is free but is limited. Certificates of Completion and Confirmation of Attendance are available! [Register now!](#)

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE**

This webinar is intended for professionals from States, cities, counties, Tribes, and metropolitan and rural transportation agencies looking for innovative funding and financial strategies to pay for transportation projects. This would include professionals involved with directing and managing aspects of highway-related programs and projects, such as planning, environment, project development, design, construction, operations, maintenance, and finance.

#### **For additional information, please contact:**

Thay Bishop, FHWA Center Innovative Finance Support, 770-650-5894, [thay.bishop@dot.gov](mailto:thay.bishop@dot.gov)

Stefan Natzke, FHWA National Systems and Economic Development, 202-366-5010, [Stefan.Natzke@dot.gov](mailto:Stefan.Natzke@dot.gov)

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## **BTS Releases Spring 2021 Updates to National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD)**

04/29/2021

### *National Transportation Atlas Database Spring 2021 Includes New Pipeline Dataset, 8 Other Updates*

The Spring 2021 update to the [National Transportation Atlas Database \(NTAD\)](#) was released today with the new pipeline intermodal freight facility layer and eight updated datasets.

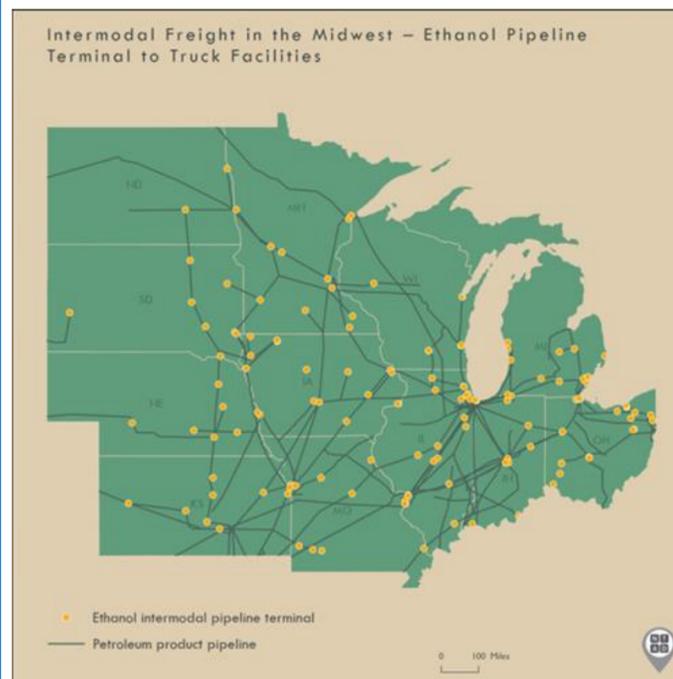
The pipeline addition brings to 89 the total number of geospatial datasets in the NTAD collection representing the nation's transportation infrastructure, containing roadways, railways, waterways, and airports. An additional 27 ancillary data tables can be used in this Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) compilation.

The updates in this release include:

- National Bridge Inventory with 2020 characteristics;
- National Tunnel Inventory with 2020 characteristics;
- Alternative Fueling Stations including electric vehicle charging stations;
- National Parks;
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundaries;
- Military Bases;
- Marine Highways; and
- Strategic Ports.

The pipeline intermodal freight facility layer includes information on the mode (truck, rail, and/or waterway) a pipeline terminal connects to, what commodity the facility can manage (crude oil, refined petroleum products, petroleum chemicals, natural gas liquids, gasoline, biodiesel, jet fuel, and ethanol), and its storage capacity.

The map below shows the location of the ethanol intermodal pipeline terminals in the Midwest, specifically those that connect to truck facilities. The highest number of ethanol intermodal pipeline terminals in the U.S., 164 out of 463, are in the Midwest, the region with the top 10 corn producing states. In the U.S., ethanol is largely produced from the starch in corn grain.



NTAD is available for download in comma separated values (CSV), Keyhole Markup Language (KML), and shapefile formats through the [BTS Geospatial Data Catalog](#). Additionally, Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) standard [Web Feature Services \(WFS\)](#) (including Web Mapping Services (WMS)) are available for all NTAD datasets. Also available are optimized services that allow for fast rendering of full NTAD datasets, and vector tile services for 13 of the largest NTAD datasets. These full NTAD datasets and their respective [faster services](#) are designated by service names ending in “DS” for each layer, and the vector tiles service names ending in “VT”.

BTS now uses a dynamic NTAD publication cycle, making updated data available throughout the year when they become available from their respective government agencies. Follow [@TransportStats](#) on Twitter for announcements of additional dataset releases throughout the year. Contacts: Press: Dave Smullen: (202) 366-5568. For technical information and questions: Dominic Menegus: (202) 366-8717, or email [ntad@dot.gov](mailto:ntad@dot.gov).

## 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.