



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, August 20th, 2021

Volume 39, Number 8

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WE HAVE TAP FUNDS AVAILABLE - deadline extended (please see *Funding Opportunities*). There is a Mobile MPO Policy Board meeting on September 1st, and the second ALDOT Bridge Update to the Joint MPOs is scheduled for September 20th at 2:00 PM at Five Rivers Theater; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. ALDOT is updating their Public Involvement Procedures – see RPO Updates and Congress is in summer recess, but the Infrastructure Bill looms in *Legislative Updates*. *In the News* this week is an update to a lot of local projects and *Just For Fun* is back to school... Have a great weekend!

Check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!

www.mobilempo.org



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

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

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

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

Mobile MPO Updates

MOBILE MPO MEETING SEPTEMBER 1ST (IN PERSON)

On the agenda is a discussion concerning the [Alabama Transportation Infrastructure Bank](#) (ATIB). Mr. Louis Cardinal and Alex Jackson from Thronton Farish will be present to discuss the benefits of the ATIB. The ATIB is a program available to every city and county, and could help the MPO out if we get into a "stacked" project situation in 2024, or the next Transportation Improvement Program (2024-2027).

The Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) met on August 18th, and recommended for approval the following changes to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- 100073892 PE SOUTHWEST REGION - Mobile Area Ready Mix Concrete Paving Projects Target Start Date : 8/1/2021 Engineers Estimate : \$250,000.00
- 100074079 CN SOUTHWEST REGION - Mobile Area Ready Mix Concrete Paving Projects intersection improvement at SR 13 and Jackson Road in Satsuma. Removal of deteriorated asphalt using concrete pavement Target Start Date : 8/1/2021 Engineers Estimate : \$400,000.00
- 100068528 (CN) Bridge Replacement (Bin 005712 And Bin 005856) On SR-13 (US-43) Over Cold Creek; Old Target start date : June 30, 2023; New Target start date : January 31, 2025; Total Estimate: \$5,307,600.75
- 100069478 (CN) Bridge Painting On Bridges Along I-65. On I-65 Over AL Gulf Coast RR (10195,10196) On I-65/I-65 NB Off Ramp Over US-43 (10197,10198,10199) On I-65 Over 1-65 NB Off Ramp/Norfolk So. RR (10200,10201) On I-65 Over Gunnison Crk (10202,10203); Old Target start date : November 04, 2022; New Target start date : November 08, 2024; Total Estimate: \$2,949,527.15
- 100068523 (UT) Bridge Replacement on SR-16 (US-90) over Halls Mill Creek; Old Target start date : November 01, 2021 New Target start date : November 01, 2025; Total estimate \$26,803.39 (*recently added to the agenda, requires 2 week public notice*)

Other agenda items include a discussion concerning the STP Attributable Table and an update on the CRRSAA projects.

Physically challenged persons who need special accommodations should contact SARPC in advance so arrangements can be made to meet their needs. Additional information may be obtained from the Transportation Planning Coordinator at the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, (251)433-6541 or transportation@sarpc.org.

Update on Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project on 9/20/21

On July 27th, ALDOT presented to the Mobile MPO and the Eastern Shore MPO an update on Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project at Five Rivers Resource Center in Spanish Fort. This meeting was the first of many updates that ALDOT will provide to both MPOs.

When the Mobile MPO and Eastern Shore MPO both met separately on June 2nd, 2021, both MPOs amended each Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include Phase One of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project. Both MPOs passed the amendments unanimously. Both the Mobile and Eastern Shore LRTPs included funding for Phase One to be a toll on heavy trucks, with the potential for voluntary vehicular tolls. All legacy routes would remain free.

It was recognized by the Mobile MPO and ESMPO Chairman, that there needed to be more communication between the two MPOs concerning this project, and more transparency from all those involved. The next time ALDOT reports an update to the joint MPOs will be September 20th at 2:00PM in the Fiver Rivers Theater; these are public meetings and will be every two months.

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission has created a web site that will house the Joint MPO updates from ALDOT on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project [HERE](#)

Mobile Area Major Road Plan

The Plan is for better integration and connectivity of land use and transportation planning, to ensure existing and future on-system corridors are managed and/or preserved as part of the long-range comprehensive planning efforts and as development occurs. A complete Major Road Plan to include 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. This will require coordination with all planning jurisdictions in Mobile County.

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

The Mobile MPO met on June 2nd at 10:00AM in the SARPC Board Room on the first floor of the GMO Building. 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 28th, 2021, with a Public Meeting held on May 19th, 2021. The deadline for comments to be included into the draft document was May 26th, 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

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.

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

LINK TO MAP [HERE](#)

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 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.

FY 2020-2023 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

The TIP represents a four year program (2020-2023) for improvements in the various transportation systems located within the Mobile study area as identified in the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the twenty-five year plan for the Mobile Urban area. The LRTP establishes the transportation programs that are needed to meet travel demand by the study year and study area. LRTP projects that become funded are moved into the TIP and submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), where they are programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For MPO projects, TIP project selection is based on priorities established by MPO member governments and the availability of funds through the Surface Transportation Attributable program. For other projects, ALDOT has discretion of project funding based on availability of funds from various types of funding categories. Most often, projects in the TIP are derived from the LRTP. The TIP guides ALDOT in its annual allocation of funds for transportation improvements and becomes a part of the STIP.

ArcGIS Online is now being utilized by MPO staff to map all federally funded surface transportation projects within our area. Check it out [HERE](#).

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

Project : 100052602 (CN)

Federal aid number : STPMB 7508 (600)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : MCGREGOR AVENUE WIDENING FROM AIRPORT BOULEVARD TO DAUPHIN STREET AND INSTALLATION OF A ROUNDABOUT AT DAUPHIN STREET

Old Target start date : March 25, 2022

New Target start date : May 27, 2022

Project : 100052812 (CN)

Federal aid number : NHF 0042 (517)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : CONSTRUCT BRIDGE ON GLENWOOD ROAD OVER SR-42 (US-98) GRADE, DRAIN, BASE AND PAVE, BRIDGE AND RETAINING WALLS

Old Engineers Estimate : \$9,714,469.00

Project : 100040584 (CN)

Federal aid number : NHF 0042 (509)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : US-98 EASTBOUND LANES FROM MISSISSIPPI LINE TO 0.5 MILE EAST OF GLENWOOD ROAD. BASE AND PAVE

Old Engineers Estimate : \$31,082,750.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$35,350,000.00

South Alabama RPO Updates

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATES THEIR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

The South Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) is helping facilitate the public involvement process for the ALDOTS's updated PIP. The Draft PIP is posted here :<https://www.dot.state.al.us/news/publicinvolvement.html>. The website includes the draft plan, online comment form, descriptive narrated Power Point, as well as contact information about the plan.

The 45-day period will conclude on October 4, 2021. ALDOT is utilizing online services only for the announcement and comments.

Rural Transportation Plan

The Rural Planning Organization for the SARPC Region is currently updating the Transportation Plan for the rural areas of Baldwin, Escambia, and Mobile Counties. Each year all RPO member governments are contacted concerning the updating of the RPO Transportation Plan and list of Safety Projects. This includes road and bridge projects, intersection improvements and the like, transit projects and bicycle and pedestrian projects. This is an annual process whereby the rural transportation needs and safety issues in the region are identified and submitted to ALDOT. The current list is available for review online at <http://www.mobilempo.org/RPODocuments.html>.

The RPO will meet in the coming weeks to adopt the updated Transportation Plan and the RPO Work Program for Fiscal Year 2022.

Projects in Region Let August 27th, 2021

MOBILE COUNTY

For constructing the Safety Improvements (Curve Warning Sign Installations) on various routes in the Southwest Region (Mobile Area) as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$699,803 to \$855,314 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

For constructing the Safety Improvements (Curve Warning Sign Installations) on various routes in the Southwest Region (Mobile Area) as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$699,803 to \$855,314 .

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

For constructing the Safety Improvements (Curve Warning Sign Installations) on various routes in the Southwest Region (Mobile Area) as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$699,803 to \$855,314 .

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

Legislative Updates

The House and Senate are on summer recess. The House will briefly return for committee work on August 31 and will be back in session on September 20. The Senate will return to session on September 13.

Infrastructure Bill Contains Highway Expansion to Connect 12 Military Bases in Five Southern States

16 Aug 2021 Stars and Stripes | By Rose L. Thayer

A proposed stretch of interstate highway that would connect a dozen military bases between Texas and Georgia made its way into the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill passed by the Senate this week with the expectation it will improve access to bases located in some of the more isolated stretches of the South.

The highway is a "major step in advancing Interstate 14 as a future corridor for handling freight movement, military facility connectivity, coastal evacuation and sparking economic development," said John Thompson, chairman of the Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition, a group of community leaders who advocate for the highway.

If the House passes the sweeping legislation and sends it to President Joe Biden to sign into law, it will expand Interstate Highway 14 from its 25 miles near [Fort Hood](#), Texas, into Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and onto Augusta, Ga. The proposed 1,300-mile route runs between Interstate Highways 10 and 20 and would primarily upgrade already existing roads.

It would better connect tens of thousands of troops and families at bases including [Goodfellow Air Force Base](#), Texas, [Fort Polk](#), La., Camp Shelby and [Keesler Air Force Base](#), Miss., [Maxwell Air Force Base](#), Ala., and [Fort Benning](#), [Robins Air Force Base](#) and [Fort Gordon](#) in Georgia, advocates contend.

By linking to other interstate highways, it could also ease travel as far west as [Fort Bliss](#), Texas, and as far east as [Fort Stewart](#), Ga., and the Port of Savannah, according to a map of the proposed route.

Thompson, a former county judge for Polk County, Texas, where the highway is planned to stretch across, used the phrase "forts to ports" to describe the proposed route.

"It's about moving troops and material, and it creates an ease in the ability to keep our country safe," he said.

Of the Army's 11 armored brigade combat teams, six reside in Texas, said Keith Sledd, a coalition board member.

"Sure, you can go to the Texas ports, but what if something happens like [Hurricane Harvey] in Houston several years ago?" he said.

In 2017, the massive storm closed the Port of Houston for an entire week. The nearby Port of Beaumont, which Sledd said is also used by the military, remained closed to large ships for several weeks after Harvey and suffered eroded shorelines and infrastructure damage that took years to fully repair.

"To get them to another port, that's what this highway offers. It's the ability to move to ports over in Louisiana or Mississippi or Alabama, or vice versa," said Sledd, a retired Army colonel and executive director of the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance. Based outside of Fort Hood in Killeen, the nonprofit is funded by local governments to advocate on issues that benefit the military in central Texas and the surrounding communities.

Fort Stewart is home to three [Army](#) brigades but also experiences hurricanes. The new highway would allow those brigades to get to other ports to the west to deploy, if needed, he said.

"[Hurricanes] often interdict I-10 and it may lead to flooding or sometimes physical damage to the road structure itself or bridges. What this gives you is an ability if there is a contingency going on at the same time you've got one of those extreme weather events going on, you now can bypass it further inland," Sledd said.

Sens. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Raphael Warnock, D-Ga., proposed the amendment to the bill with support from the other eight senators in the five affected states. The House has not released a schedule of when lawmakers might debate the infrastructure bill.

Cruz said passage of the amendment clears the way "begin the necessary work to upgrade this road system and connect strategic military installations across our states."

"This planned route would connect military installations across Georgia and drive economic opportunities to our rural communities," Warnock said.

Outside of the military, local communities could also see an economic bump, Sledd and Thompson said.

Where I-10 and I-20 run through some of the largest cities in these five states, proposed I-14 would bring life to some smaller towns, including many where military families live, shop and seek employment.

"All the large corporations, distribution centers or manufacturing companies, they want to locate where their logistics is simplified and it's usually adjacent to an interstate system," Sledd said.

In the existing stretch of I-14 running near Fort Hood, where about 89,000 trucks make deliveries each year, he said they've already seen positive improvements to traffic and new business development. Federalizing the highway also allowed for the road to expand from two lanes to three in each direction.

9 Moderate Democrats Threaten To Derail Pelosi's Infrastructure And Budget Plan

August 13, 2021 BARBARA SPRUNT

Nine moderate House Democrats warned Speaker Nancy Pelosi they won't vote for a budget resolution critical to passing Democrats' [\\$3.5 trillion social policy package](#) unless the House first passes a Senate-approved infrastructure bill, a move that threatens to derail the party's economic agenda.

"Some have suggested that we hold off on considering the Senate infrastructure bill for months — until the reconciliation process is completed. We disagree," the lawmakers wrote Thursday in a [letter](#) to Pelosi. "With the livelihoods of hardworking American families at stake, we simply can't afford months of unnecessary delays and risk squandering this once-in-a-century, bipartisan infrastructure package. It's time to get shovels in the ground and people to work."

The letter is signed by Reps. Josh Gottheimer of New Jersey, Carolyn Bourdeaux of Georgia, Filemon Vela of Texas, Jared Golden of Maine, Henry Cuellar of Texas, Vicente Gonzalez of Texas, Ed Case of Hawaii, Jim Costa of California and Kurt Schrader of Oregon.

The House is scheduled to return the week of Aug. 23 to vote on the budget resolution. Senate committees are beginning work on crafting the legislative details to set up a vote this fall on the final package.

The Biden administration and congressional Democrats have been focused on a two-track effort to pass both the [\\$1 trillion bipartisan legislation](#) aimed at traditional infrastructure, along with a [massive spending package](#) with investments in child care, family leave and climate initiatives. Democrats plan to go it alone on the latter legislative package via a process known as [reconciliation](#), which allows them to proceed without the threat of a Republican filibuster in the Senate.

Pelosi has repeatedly said she intends to wait to bring up a vote on the infrastructure bill until the Senate approves the larger "human infrastructure" package. Because Democrats control the House by a narrow margin, Pelosi can afford to lose only three Democratic votes.

Pelosi is standing firm in her position, telling members on a caucus call this week that she "is not freelancing" and that the two-track solution is the "consensus."

"The votes in the House and Senate depend on us having both bills," she said, according to a source familiar with the call.

The letter from moderate lawmakers highlights the difficulties Pelosi faces in keeping her broad coalition united in achieving policy priorities. Progressive members fear their more moderate colleagues will pull their support for the \$3.5 trillion social policy package if the infrastructure bill is already signed, and have warned they won't support the infrastructure bill until the Senate passes the reconciliation package.

But some moderate members argue the social policy package isn't even guaranteed passage in the Senate, where all Democratic senators have to be on board for it to advance.

Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla., [told](#) NPR's Ailsa Chang on Thursday that she's called for an immediate vote on the Senate-passed infrastructure bill.

"The investment into our infrastructure is so critically important — it needs to happen now," she said. "And I am open to having a conversation about the reconciliation bill and what the contents of that will be. But it's really wrong to tie a bill that has been completed and passed in a bipartisan way out of the Senate with a bill that has just top-line numbers and no details."

Effects of Physical Infrastructure Spending on the Economy and the Budget Under Two Illustrative Scenarios

August 2021

Report

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) examined two illustrative scenarios that would boost federal funding for a mix of types of physical infrastructure by \$500 billion over 10 years. The two scenarios differ in how the additional spending would be financed.

[View Document](#)

[View Document](#)

Summary

Increases in physical infrastructure spending would boost private-sector productivity in the coming decades, contributing to economic growth that could lower the budgetary cost of that spending. To study such increases, the Congressional Budget Office examined two illustrative scenarios that would boost federal funding for a mix of types of physical infrastructure by \$500 billion over 10 years. (Those funds would not all be spent within 10 years.) The same broad mix of physical capital is funded in both scenarios, neither of which corresponds to a specific legislative proposal. CBO compared outcomes under each scenario with those from its projections for the economy and the budget if current laws governing taxes and spending generally remained unchanged.

Budgetary Effects of Macroeconomic Changes

In this dynamic analysis, CBO finds that the effects of macroeconomic changes on the federal budget would depend on how additional infrastructure spending was financed and the time period considered.

...read more [HERE](#)

Funding Opportunities

Mobile Urbanized Area FY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) deadline extended to 9/3/21

The Mobile MPO has extended the deadline for submission of the Fiscal Year 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding.

The maximum amount that can be applied for per project with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$400,000 federal (\$500,000 Total).

Applicants are welcome to submit more than one project.

Applications are due to transportation@sarpc.org no later than 3:00 p.m., Friday, September 3, 2021.

The application and other pertinent information is available on our website at

<https://www.mobilempo.org/TAP.html>

Opportunity Zones

EDA's Opportunity Zone Web Page

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

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

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

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

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

School is back, and it is another round of “When I was your age, I had to walk 10 miles to school, in the snow, backwards, to protect from the pelting blizzards. There were no “snow days” back then, we made igloos for class rooms, in our bare feet.”

HERE is an actual father telling his son, what it was like walking to school...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbOpGn_CrEU

BTW, here is a map the longest walk “on earth” one can take... It is 14,000 miles, or as I like to tell my kids, the morning trip I had to walk to school, in the snow.

(Truth be told, my older brother took us to school in a 1970 Chevelle, with Hurst shifter, Cragar rims, and Holley 4 barrel carburetor.)



In the News

ALDOT Moves Road Money to Admin Fund

Mary Sell, Alabama Daily News, [August 16, 2021](#)



The Alabama Department of Transportation recently moved \$7 million from a road fund to help cover administrative costs for the last three months of the fiscal year.

The department said the move is allowable and typical late in a budget year. The money is coming from ALDOT’s Public Road and Bridge Fund, which consists largely of gas tax receipts and federal funding receipts, but not the 2019 gas tax increase. That account, known as the Rebuild Alabama Fund, is specifically prohibited from being diverted from road and bridge projects for other purposes.

State agencies often transfer Legislature-allocated money between funds throughout a budget year, as allowed by law. The actions have to go through the Department of Finance.

Still, the decrease in road funding and increase in administrative funding first reported by Alabama Daily News Monday gives some lawmakers pause.

Rep. Andrew Sorrell, R-Muscle Shoals, was one of a few lawmakers who voted against the 2019 gas tax increase, despite requirements in the bill that new revenue couldn’t be used for salaries and benefits, new equipment or construction “not integral to the roads and bridges.” It also created a Rebuild Alabama Fund to collect the new tax revenue.

“This kind of thing happens in government all the time,” Sorrell said Monday. “They say, ‘OK, we’re going to put this new property tax on for schools and it’s only going to be used for the construction of new schools.’ OK, great. But then that frees up other money in another bank account that you don’t have to spend on a new school and you can do whatever you want with.”

In June, ALDOT Commissioner John Cooper in a letter to Gov. Kay Ivey said the transfer was needed because of an underestimation in costs to the department’s General Administration Program. That funding is based on previous years’ estimates.

“Currently, the results of the underestimation require additional spending authority to operate administrative functions for the duration of the fiscal year,” he wrote.

The fiscal year ends Sept. 30.

“It’s not uncommon for state agencies to seek this sort of approval late in a fiscal year,” ALDOT spokesman Tony Harris said Monday in response to questions from Alabama Daily News. “This is a matter of being given spending authority in a specific budget category, not a cash transfer. ALDOT is one of at least seven state agencies that found it necessary to move spending authority from one budget category to another. Budgets for this fiscal year are based on two-year-old projections, so it’s not unusual for these changes to be made entering the final quarter of a fiscal year.”

Sen. Chris Elliott, R-Daphne, said Monday he wanted to know why ALDOT’s administration fund needed additional money to finish the year.

“I’m concerned anytime money that could be used for infrastructure is used for overhead,” Elliott said.

“This is why when we passed Rebuild Alabama, we specifically forbid that (transfers away from road projects).”

The 2021 General Fund budget allocated \$142.1 million to ALDOT’s General Administration Program and \$1.3 billion for the Surface Transportation Improvement and Preservation Program. There was a separate \$160.9 million allocation in the Rebuild Alabama Program.

For fiscal 2021, ALDOT had total appropriations of \$1.6 billion, according to the Legislative Services Agency. Nearly 57% of that money came from state funds. The rest was federal and local.



If you’re traveling through midtown Mobile, you may notice new “No Truck” signs in areas with low-hanging limbs. We do our best to preserve the trees that give midtown its character, and after continuing to see large trucks damaging trees, we’ve recently taken a few steps to remedy the problem.

In addition to trimming and pruning the low-hanging limbs on major thoroughfares like Dauphin and Government Streets, we are no longer allowing large box trucks to use some cut through streets that have lower tree canopies. You’ll currently see these “No Truck” signs along Lafayette and Houston streets. This is one of the ways we help protect our trees for residents, visitors and future Mobilians.



County Road 65 bridge open a week early

Posted Friday, August 20, 2021 10:33 am

FOLEY, Alabama -- A bridge construction project on County Road 65 south of Foley is now open, one week earlier than the proposed timeframe, according to a release issued Friday by the Baldwin County Commission's Public Affairs Office.

The bridge on County Road 65, closed the evening of July 14, was reopened on Thursday, Aug. 19 after the Baldwin County Commission Highway Department completed the bridge construction project over Turkey Branch following five weeks of closure.

This is the first of two Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration Grant bridge deck replacement projects that are underway.

"The goal of this project and AID Grant funding was to leverage innovative technologies and accelerated construction techniques to replace aging infrastructure while minimizing impacts on the traveling public," according to the release.

The second AID project, located on Doc McDuffie Road over Wolf Creek in Foley, is well underway with new deck panels set and roadway approach work progressing. The goal is to reopen this bridge mid-September.

Baldwin County shows massive population growth during 2020 Census

BASENAME	Population 2010	Population 2020 P0010001	Growth 2010-2020
Bay Minette	8044	8107	0.8%
Daphne	21570	27462	27.3%
Elberta	1498	1974	31.8%
Fairhope	15326	22477	46.7%
Foley	14618	20335	39.1%
Gulf Shores	9741	15014	54.1%
Loxley	1632	3710	127.3%
Magnolia Springs	723	811	12.2%
Orange Beach	5441	8095	48.8%
Perdido Beach	581	555	-4.5%
Robertsdale	5276	6708	27.1%
Silverhill	706	768	8.8%
Spanish Fort	6798	10049	47.8%
Summerdale	862	1468	70.3%

Posted Friday, August 20, 2021 12:00 am

By Jessica Vaughn

If you ask any Baldwin County local, they'll tell you that the area has experienced massive growth over the last few years. Results from the 2020 Census concur. In fact, Baldwin natives can now say with confidence that the county is the fastest-growing county in Alabama.

Over the last decade, Baldwin County welcomed 49,502 new residents to the area, growing from a population of 182,265 in 2010 to 231,767 in 2020. These numbers show a 27.16 percent population increase over the course of ten years.

The county's population growth isn't just substantial within the confines of the state. Baldwin County ranks as the seventh fastest-growing metropolitan area in the country, according to 2020 Census data.

Larger cities in Baldwin became privy to their data first, while smaller municipalities received results by Tuesday, Aug. 17. The results are more proof of the county's decade of growth.

Five Baldwin cities are among the fastest growing municipalities, with three listed in the top five.

The fastest growing city in Alabama is Gulf Shores. Ten years ago, Gulf Shores boasted a population of 9,741. The 2020 Census now lists that population at 15,014, meaning the city grew by 54 percent over the decade. This also makes Gulf Shores the only Alabama city with at least 10,000 people to top 50 percent growth during the past ten years.

Second on the list of fastest growing cities in Alabama is Spanish Fort, which saw a population increase from 6,798 in 2010 to 10,049 in 2020, a 48 percent growth rate.

Fourth on the list is Fairhope, with a population of 22,477 in 2020, increasing from 15,326 in 2010. Foley ranked seventh with a population increase of 14,618 in 2010 to 20,335 as of the 2020 Census.

Daphne ranked eleventh with a population of 27,462 in 2020, up from 21,570 in 2010.

Among all Baldwin municipalities, including those within the top 11, Loxley experienced the largest percentage of growth, rising from 1,632 in 2010 to 3,710 in 2020, a population growth rate of 127.3 percent.

The only municipality to decline in population was Perdido Beach, dropping from 581 in 2010 to 555 in 2020, or -4.5 percent.

Bay Minette grew to a population of 8,107 in 2020, up from 8,044 in 2010. In Elberta, the population grew from 1,498 in 2010 to 1,974 in 2020.

Magnolia Springs saw an increase from 723 in 2010 to 811 in 2020.

Orange Beach now boasts a population of 8,095 in 2020, up from 5,441 in 2010, slightly under a 50 percent growth rate.

Robertsdale went from 5,276 in 2010 to 6,708 in 2020, while Silverhill experienced slight growth from 706 in 2010 to 768 in 2020.

Finally, Summerdale witnessed a growth rate of 70.3 percent, increasing from a population of 862 in 2010 to 1,468 in 2020.

Information gained from the Census is crucial to the development of counties and municipalities around the nation. Population data gathered is used to determine how federal grant dollars are distributed throughout the U.S. during the following ten years, funds that affect everything from education, healthcare, law enforcement agencies and highway infrastructure. Data also determines the number of seats a state will have in the United States House of Representatives. Earlier this year, data revealed that Alabama would neither add nor lose a seat in the House. Alabama currently has seven representatives.

For more information on the 2020 Census data results and redistricting, visit www.census.gov.

In unusual move, county plans to remove Coden bridge

Posted by [Gabriel Tynes](#) | Aug 18, 2021

Some residents of Coden in South Mobile County are upset about a plan from the Mobile County Commission to remove a bridge providing access to their neighborhood, claiming the remaining route is longer, slower and less reliable. Ashley Waters, who had lived on St. Michael Street for the past three years, said she only recently learned of the county's plan to remove a small bridge on Riva Road, which provides paved access to State Route 188.

Claiming the bridge is too costly to repair or replace, the commission notified residents last month it would be removed, leaving the only ingress and egress to their neighborhood on the unpaved St. Michael Street. Waters said the street is flood prone and eliminating one of two accesses to the neighborhood could be problematic for first responders and residents.

"We had a couple feet of water through here during [Hurricane] Zeta last year, and there are a lot of older and poor people back here without any way to get around," she said.

Waters also claimed a culvert on St. Michael Street is prone to "washing out," while a small forest fire there recently also emphasized the need for a second access.

On Aug. 9, Bayou La Batre Mayor Henry Barnes wrote a letter to County Commissioner Randall Dueitt encouraging the county to keep the bridge open. Riva Road is outside Bayou La Batre corporate limits, but within its police jurisdiction and fire department service territory. "The Bayou La Batre City Council would like to strongly request that the County consider repairing the Riva Road Bridge in Coden and not to remove this bridge due [to] safety concerns from the Bayou La Batre Fire Department and Bayou La Batre Police Department," Barnes wrote.

This week, Barnes said Dueitt called him and "thanked me for my concern," but said the decision was set in motion years ago. "I don't know if there is anything to be done to stop it now," he said.

Waters believes a property owner south of the Riva Road bridge encouraged the county to remove the bridge, because Riva Road bisects his waterfront property. The county didn't provide much detail when asked additional questions, including providing additional information about the alleged prohibitive cost of repairing or replacing the bridge. Barnes said he was told it was about \$1 million. Mobile County's voter-approved Pay As You Go Program provides nearly \$60 million for road and bridge repairs annually.

"The county communicated with adjacent property owners about acquiring needed right-of-way," County spokeswoman Dena Pollard offered in response to questions. "There have not been any communications with adjacent property owners about abandoning or vacating the right-of-way."

Pollard claims the county "has initiated a project to pave the unpaved portion of Saint Michael Street" and other smaller streets in the neighborhood, but the process could take "about three years or more."

Barnes said he is still hopeful the county may reconsider.

"I don't know if they are eligible for money from the federal infrastructure program or somewhere else, but maybe they can find it," he said. "If not, I hope they at least inform 911 there is only one way in and out of that neighborhood."

Transportation Research



The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides a strong foundation of resources for transportation practitioners researching or seeking technical assistance on Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL). In addition to the [FHWA website](#) covered in an earlier [RuralTransportation.org post](#), research institutions and technical assistance centers offer resources, state of the practice data and case studies. This post takes a look at two national resources for environment-related transportation issues: the [Transportation Research Board](#) (TRB) and the [AASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence](#).

Transportation Research Board Snap Searches

TRB offers [Snap Searches](#) that are information sheets on a variety of transportation topics including *Environmental Process*, *Environment and Sustainability* (includes wildlife considerations), and *Natural Resources*. Each **Snap Search** lists research, recent publications, current and upcoming projects, committees and panels, and upcoming events. Research is categorized by the Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP), National Highway Cooperative Research Program (NCHRP), Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), and Special Reports. Here are a few **Snap Search** highlights:

Environmental Process: A current research project scheduled for August 2021 completion is [NCHRP 10-99: Guidebook for Implementing Constructability Across the Entire Project Development Process: NEPA to Final Design](#).

Environment and Sustainability: Current research underway includes [NCHRP 20-06/Topic 25-07 Review of Statutory and Case Law on Planning and Environmental Linkages](#). The research aims to produce a digest that answers the questions:

What is the litigation history behind judicial review of purpose and need statements and PEL?

How are the various approaches to PEL different from each other and what deference do courts provide for each?

What legal risks are associated with each approach?

Natural Resources: Research underway includes [NCHRP 08-124 Quantifying the Impacts of Corridor Management](#) which will address building a framework that incorporates the range of measures required to evaluate impacts of corridor management, will define what constitutes corridor management, and identify factors that need to be considered to develop an analytical methodology for impact measurement.

Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO

The [AASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence](#) was developed in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration. The Center provides technical assistance, partnership-building, training, and resources with a website covering 20 different environmental topics including the NEPA process, air quality, and cultural resources.

In addition to a website, the Center offers a peer exchange, communities of practice, handbooks, and webinars, as well as a library with environment and transportation case law. The Center also connects with Transportation Research Board research and committees through [NCHRP Project 25-25](#). This quick-response research program, which ran through 2020, examined analytical methods, decision-support tools, procedures, and techniques employed by environmental practitioners in environmental streamlining, environmental stewardship, transportation planning, program delivery, and project development. Copies of reports developed under NCHRP 25-25 are available at both the [TRB website](#) and at the Center for Environmental Excellence [website](#).

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.