



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, September 24th, 2021

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This past Monday there was an update from ALDOT to the Joint MPOs at Five Rivers in the Theater; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. The South Alabama Rural Planning Organization met yesterday - See *RPO Updates*. In this week in *Legislative Updates*: The FAST Act is expiring, is there a new Highway Bill in the works? *In The News* this week is all about the bridge. This week's *Just For Fun* is puzzling.... 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

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

Earlier this week, 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 second 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 meeting will likely be in November or early December.

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

On September 1st, 2021, a letter was submitted to ALDOT from both the Eastern Shore MPO and the Mobile MPO, requesting that ALDOT investigate the possibilities of building the project in less than the three phases.

ALDOT has agreed to provide formal updates to both MPO's every two months. The first Update was held July 27th, 2021 at Five Rivers, and the second update was on September 20th, at Five Rivers at 2:00PM in the Theater. The slide presentation can be found [HERE](#). The Mobile MPO will house all of the slide presentations from these ALDOT Updates at www.mobilempo.org.

The next step is that ALDOT will authorize the Preliminary Engineering (PE) that was approved as part of the project, and begin a Toll and Revenue Study to further hone in on potential tolling revenues. These tolling revenues will not be from just trucks, but voluntary vehicles willing to pay the toll as well; all legacy routes will remain free.

Moving forward, at a minimum, we have a way to build a bridge. The federal government, federal legislature, and new administration are currently developing numerous bills that potentially may help us move past this "at a minimum" scenario.

[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 resurfacing program. This funding can be 100% federal funding with no matching requirements; this presents a rare opportunity for the Mobile MPO.

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 PE projects (design projects) have been sent to FHWA for fund authorization. Once authorized, this will provide the Notice To Proceed (NTP) to Neel Shafer to begin design activities for the projects. Neel Shafer and ALDOT have negotiated design fees at this point and are waiting to approve those fees once the NTP is issued.

Shortly after approval, the cities will begin to see activities in terms of some survey work, geotechnical work, etc.. on the streets proposed for resurfacing. Also, Neel Shafer will soon begin the process of reaching out and working with the cities to provide the necessary documents required for the federal funds to be spent. This include documents such as the ROW certification, encroachment notices, etc...

As of now, due to the scope of these projects, the proposed letting date is sometime late spring/early summer in 2022, assuming no issues with the city certifications, etc.

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 MPO

The target start date or project engineers estimated amount has changed for the following :

Project : 100040584 (CN)

Federal aid number : NH 0042 (509)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : SR-42 (US-98) EASTBOUND LANES FROM MISSISSIPPI LINE TO 0.5 MILE EAST OF GLENWOOD ROAD. BASE AND PAVE

Old Engineers Estimate : \$35,350,000.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$38,433,342.00

Project : 100073973 (UT)

Federal aid number : NH 0042 (509)

County : MOBILE

Project Description : SR-42 (US-98) FROM MISSISSIPPI LINE TO 0.5 MILE EAST OF GLENWOOD ROAD.

Old Engineers Estimate : \$176,750.00

New Engineers Estimate : \$195,148.16

Project : 100071917 Federal aid number : STPAA MR22 County : MOBILE Scope : FM

Project Description : RESURFACING ON I-65 SERVICE ROADS FROM SR-16 (US-90) TO SR-17 (US-45)

Urban Area : 067 MOBILE

Target Start Date : 12/3/2021

Engineers Estimate : \$5,175,240.00

Project : 100073448 Federal aid number : IM I065 County : MOBILE Scope : CN

Project Description : BRIDGE RESTRIPIING ON I-65 NORTH BOUND LANE AND SOUTH BOUND LANE (MP. 24.309 TO 30.389) AT MOBILE RIVER DELTA (BINS 012321 AND 012322)

Urban Area : 067 MOBILE

Target Start Date : 12/3/2021

Engineers Estimate : \$3,012,000.00

Project : 100074195 Federal aid number : STPAA 0193 County : MOBILE Scope : CN

Project Description : RAIL AND ROADWAY REPAIR ON SR-193 AT CSX CROSSING # 351-476S, MP 20.5

Urban Area : 067 MOBILE

Target Start Date : 12/15/2021

Engineers Estimate : \$538,248.00

Project : 100073277 (FM)
Federal aid number : NH 0013 (623)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-13 (US-43) FROM JARVIS ROAD TO SHORT STREET
Old Engineers Estimate : \$448,800.00
New Engineers Estimate : \$666,945.16

Project : 100071917 (FM)
Federal aid number : STPAA-HSIP MR22 (900)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : RESURFACING, 2' SAFETY WIDENING, AND STEEL BLOCKOUT REPLACEMENT ON I-65 SERVICE ROADS FROM SR-16 (US-90) TO SR-17 (US-45)
Old Engineers Estimate : \$5,175,240.00
New Engineers Estimate : \$5,782,492.40

South Alabama RPO Updates

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) met yesterday using the GoToMeeting app.

One item on the [agenda](#) was to amend the [Fiscal Year 2021 Work Program](#) to include assisting ALDOT by facilitating the public involvement process for ALDOT's draft Public Involvement Plan for Statewide Transportation Planning.

The purpose of the plan is to implement effective ways for ALDOT to gather information from the public about their transportation needs. The plan is available on ALDOT's website. All comments must be received on or before October 4, 2021.

ALDOT's Draft PIP is posted here:

<https://www.dot.state.al.us/news/publicinvolvement.html>.

Other items on the [agenda](#) included:

- Approve the [minutes of the previous RPO meeting](#)
- Review and Adopt the [Fiscal Year 2022 Work Program](#) which includes a new task of assisting ALDOT by hosting public meetings for the Statewide Long Range Transportation Process
- Amend the [RPO's Public Involvement Procedures](#) to include online virtual meetings when necessary
- Amend the [Annual Transportation Plan List of Projects](#)

We're also building an online interactive map of all of the RPO projects. Once it's complete we will send out a link to all the RPO members and they'll be able to reference it for grant applications and the like.

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 ALDOT'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.

Projects in Region Let September 24th, 2021

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Bridge Replacement over Bennett Creek and Bridge Culvert Removal on SR-17 (US-45) in Citronelle. Length 0.463 mi.
- The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$3,575,219 to \$4,369,712 .
- For constructing the Safety Improvements (Centerline Scoring) on SR-17/SR-57 (US-45) from the SR-158 Interchange in Prichard to the Mississippi State Line. Length 48.214 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$371,150 to \$453,628 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

None at this time

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

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

Legislative Updates

Here's what's in the bipartisan infrastructure bill that the House aims to pass — and how it's paid for

Last Updated: Sept. 24, 2021

By [Katie Marriner & Victor Reklaitis](#)

Monday is the next key date for the bill, as Pelosi has promised a House vote by then — though Clyburn says a delay is possible

The bipartisan infrastructure bill passed the Senate in a 69-30 vote on Aug. 10, with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell among the 19 Republicans who joined with the chamber's 50 Democrats to support the long-awaited measure.

But the bill still hasn't become law, as it needs to pass the House of Representatives and get signed by President Joe Biden, who [announced a bipartisan deal](#) on infrastructure [PAVE, +0.06%](#) back on June 24.

Monday (Sept. 27) is the next key date for the bill, known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. That's the date by when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the California Democrat, has promised a vote on the measure.

But there's "always a possibility that the vote would get delayed," said the No. 3 House Democrat, Rep. Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, in a [CNN interview on Sunday](#). While Clyburn talked about a potential delay, he also said lawmakers will "work to get to our goal for Sept. 27." Pelosi [made her promise](#) in late August to a group of moderate House Democrats to get their support for a procedural vote for a separate spending measure, the party's \$3.5 trillion plan targeting "human infrastructure," climate change and other Democratic priorities. She also faces [pressure from progressive Democrats](#) who say they won't support the bipartisan infrastructure bill unless the \$3.5 trillion package moves ahead as well.

As Pelosi and other Democratic leaders [work on advancing](#) the infrastructure bill and the larger package, below is a visual breakdown for the first measure. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act has an overall price tag of about \$1 trillion, with around \$550 billion in new public-works spending above what already was expected in future federal investments. Click [HERE](#) to see an itemized breakdown of what's in the bill and how it will be paid for.

Study: Senate Infrastructure Bill's Highway-Transit Hikes Boost GDP, Jobs

September 22, 2021 [Tom Ichniowski](#)

The highway and transit portion of the Senate-passed \$1-trillion infrastructure package would provide a significant lift to the U.S. economy and create more than 250,000 jobs, a new [analysis](#) has found.

The study's Sept 22 release comes just days before the Sept. 27 target that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has set for a floor vote on the bill, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, or IJJA.

The analysis, conducted by IHS Markit and commissioned by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, says that the IJJA's \$153.7 billion in additional highway and transit funding would generate an estimated \$488 billion toward the U.S. Gross Domestic Product by 2027.

Measured another way, it says that each dollar of the bill's highway, bridge and transit funding increases would produce as much as \$3.60 in increased economic activity.

Unsurprisingly, the construction industry would be a major beneficiary of the IJJA's increased highway-transit funding, the report indicates. It finds that construction would account for 48% of the total estimated jobs created by the bill.

Construction would account for between 25% and 30% of the IJJA highway-transit boosts' estimated total increases in sales, contribution to GDP and labor wages or income.

One cautionary note: the study only looks at aspects of the highway, bridge and transit sections of the IJJA, which also includes funding for a wide range of other infrastructure sectors, including water, the electric grid and broadband, for example.

Alison Premo Black, ARTBA senior vice president and chief economist, also points out that the report only assesses the impacts of the IJJA bill's proposed increases in highway and funding, and not the entire federal highway and transit programs. Nor does the study cover the impact of nonfederal highway and transit funding, she said via email.

Highway and Transit Increases

In all, the IJJA, which the Senate approved on Aug. 10, includes \$550 billion in new federal funding—"new" referring to increases over the current baseline amounts. That includes \$110 billion in new dollars for highways and bridges, \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail and \$39 billion for public transit.

The IHS Markit report estimates that the IJJA would boost highway and bridge funding by \$19 billion in 2022—the bill's initial year—rising to a nearly \$25-billion increase in 2026.

Because of how federal construction funding tends to ramp up over projects' multi-year lives, the annual increases in actual outlays would travel a gradual path, starting at \$3.2 billion in 2022 and climbing to \$20.3 billion in 2026. For transit, outlays would show an increase of \$4.2 billion in 2022, growing to \$8.6 billion in 2026, according to the study.

State-by-State Impacts

ARTBA's Black said in a statement, "The conclusions of the report further quantify the positive economic benefits of federal highway and transit investment."

She adds, "This is a program that impacts every community in America and would provide benefits to every state economy and household."

The report does include a state-by-state breakdown of the IJJA highway-transit hikes' estimated economic impact.

For example, it finds that the states expected to see the largest positive economic impacts—in GDP—from IJJA highway and bridge funding are Texas (\$5.37 billion), California (\$5.06 billion), Florida (\$2.61 billion), New York (\$2.31 billion) and Pennsylvania (\$2.26 billion).

For public transit funding, the states with the largest estimated positive economic impacts are: New York (\$4.41 billion), California (\$3.85 billion), Illinois and New Jersey, (tied at \$1.75 billion) and Texas (\$1.33 billion).

Infrastructure vote suspense prompts worries about highway bill

The law that allows federal highway and transit spending expires on Sept. 30

By [Jessica Wehrman](#) and [Lindsey McPherson](#)

Posted September 23, 2021

Lawmakers are scrambling to come up with a Plan B to allow federal highway and transit spending to continue if the Senate bipartisan infrastructure agreement is not passed by the House before the law authorizing that spending expires Sept. 30.

House Democratic leaders say they still plan to bring the bipartisan infrastructure bill, which includes language reauthorizing federal highway and transit programs, to the floor on Sept. 27.

House Majority Leader [Steny H. Hoyer](#) said the vote could be Monday or Tuesday. But the bill's fate is in question because of a standoff between Democratic moderates and progressives over that bill and the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation measure.

Moderates are threatening to withhold support on the larger bill if they don't get their Sept. 27 vote. Progressives are threatening to vote against the infrastructure plan until that larger measure passes both the House and Senate.

Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#), however, remained bullish late Wednesday. "We are on schedule," she said. "And we're calm and everybody's good and our work's almost done."

Still, the potential that the bipartisan bill might fall short leaves the highway authorization, which is already a one-year extension of the 2015 law, in limbo.

Little GOP help

Republicans aren't expected to provide much help. House Minority Whip [Steve Scalise](#) sent out an alert Wednesday urging Republicans to vote against the measure. Meanwhile, the chairman of the moderate Problem Solvers Caucus, Rep. [Brian Fitzpatrick](#), R-Pa., predicts that a minimum of 10 Republicans will vote for the infrastructure bill, with others considering signing on based on what Democrats do.

House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman [Peter A. DeFazio](#), said Wednesday that his staff is drafting ideas, "but we don't have a clear path" to reauthorization. "Anything we put through the House has to get past the 60-vote hurdle in the Senate," the Oregon Democrat said.

DeFazio's bill to reauthorize spending for surface transportation, as well as drinking water and wastewater projects, passed the House on July 1, but Senate negotiators crafting the bipartisan infrastructure bill largely ignored it, opting instead to fold language approved by the Senate committees of jurisdiction, including the Environment and Public Works Committee, which has jurisdiction over highways.

'A plan afoot'

That committee's chairman, [Thomas R. Carper](#), D-Del., told reporters Wednesday that "there's a plan afoot" to reauthorize the bill but gave little detail on what that plan is.

"The last thing we need is for Oct. 1 to roll around and the surface transportation projects all over the country — roads, highways, bridges — come to a halt, a screeching halt, because the federal government has not extended the authorization for such projects," he said. "So it's critically important that we address that."

DeFazio said that without a reauthorization, the DOT will send out a notice early in October delaying reimbursements to states for projects that have already been completed.

"That would be very detrimental to the economy," he said. "So we can't let that happen."

If the Senate bill fails in the House, that wouldn't necessarily kill the bill, according to Jeff Davis of the Eno Center for Transportation, a think tank. The House could vote again on an identical motion, or a motion to concur with an amendment, the next day, "or anytime, as often as necessary until one passes."

But if Congress doesn't meet the Sept. 30 deadline, Davis wrote in an email, a few things will happen rapidly: There will be no new contract, or budget authority, to pay employees of Department of Transportation agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, so those not deemed essential to the protection of life or property, or those not confirmed by the Senate, will be furloughed.

Davis said that means those who write checks to state transportation departments will be among those furloughed, which means those agencies will lose between \$220 million and \$250 million a day.

Susan Howard, program director for transportation and finance at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, said if the surface transportation law were to expire, it would temporarily halt state highway projects as well as the business that those projects flow to, such as contract work, construction and architecture.

"Everything would kind of freeze," she said.

Fifth House Republican comes out in support of bipartisan infrastructure bill

BY JOSEPH CHOI - 09/23/21

Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) came out in support of the bipartisan infrastructure bill Thursday, becoming the fifth House Republican to do so.

The five Republicans are backing the Senate-passed bill despite the fact that their leadership team is whipping members against it.

"First of all, I think we need hard infrastructure. I worked on this bill from the beginning as part of the Problem Solvers so it's been a half-Republican, half-Democrat effort," Bacon told reporters. "I think it's an area we can show Congress working."

Bacon also said he thought it was wrong for House Minority Leader [Kevin McCarthy](#) (R-Calif.) to "pick this fight." McCarthy criticized the bill as not being bipartisan.

Democrats are scrambling to reach a deal within their House caucus that would ensure the infrastructure bill passes the House next week.

Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#) (D-Calif.) made a commitment to House centrists to vote on the bill by Sept. 27, but progressives in the House want the House to first vote on a larger \$3.5 trillion spending package. Rep. [Pramila Jayapal](#) (D-Wash.), who heads the Congressional Progressive Caucus, has said half of that group could vote against the infrastructure bill if their demands are not met.

Bacon's support gives Democrats a little more wiggle room to lose some Democratic votes, though not nearly enough of progressives vote en masse against the legislation.

GOP Reps. [Brian Fitzpatrick](#) (Pa.), [Adam Kinzinger](#) (Ill.), [Tom Reed](#) (N.Y.) and [Fred Upton](#) (Mich.) have also publicly signaled that they will support the infrastructure bill according to [The Hill's whip list](#).

To pass this legislation, House Democrats can only afford to lose about three votes from their party without any help from Republicans.

Funding Opportunities

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces the Availability of \$2.2 Billion in American Rescue Plan Funding to Help Transit Agencies with Additional Service Needs *DEADLINE November 8, 2021*

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for \$2.2 billion in competitive grant funding for transit systems demonstrating additional pandemic-associated needs. Funding is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021.

[Additional Assistance Funding](#) may be awarded to transit systems demonstrating additional assistance is needed to cover operating expenses related to maintaining day-to-day operations, cleaning and sanitization, combating the spread of pathogens on transit systems and maintaining critical staffing levels.

"As public transit systems continue to recover from the devastating financial and public health impacts of COVID, they must have the resources they need to keep trains and buses running, especially in heavily transit-dependent communities," said U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg. "The funding opportunity we are announcing today will help connect people to jobs, services and opportunities, while supporting crucial health and safety measures for the traveling public and our nation's dedicated transit workforce."

FTA will review applications based on the level of financial need, including projections of future financial need to maintain service as a percentage of the 2018 operating costs. Funding that is requested by an eligible applicant must not have been replaced by funding made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) of 2021, and other ARP funding.

"The Additional Assistance Funding will support transit agencies demonstrating a continuing need for assistance in maintaining daily operations," said FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez. "Public transportation connects people to jobs, education and vital services, and this program will help transit agencies continue to provide critical transit services in communities that need it most."

The NOFO will be placed on public inspection at the Federal Register on Wednesday, September 8, and published on Thursday, September 9. An unpublished version of [the NOFO can be viewed here](#). Applications must be submitted electronically through the [Grants.gov](#) website by 11:59 PM ET November 8, 2021.

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and safety Improvements

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice).

SUMMARY: This notice details the application requirements and procedures to obtain grant funding for eligible projects under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program, and related Trespass Prevention projects. The opportunities described in this notice are made available under Assistance Listings Number 20.325, "Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements."

DATES: Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5:00 p.m. ET, DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. Applications that are incomplete or received after 5:00 p.m. ET on [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] will not be considered for funding. See Section D of this notice for additional information on the application process.

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.

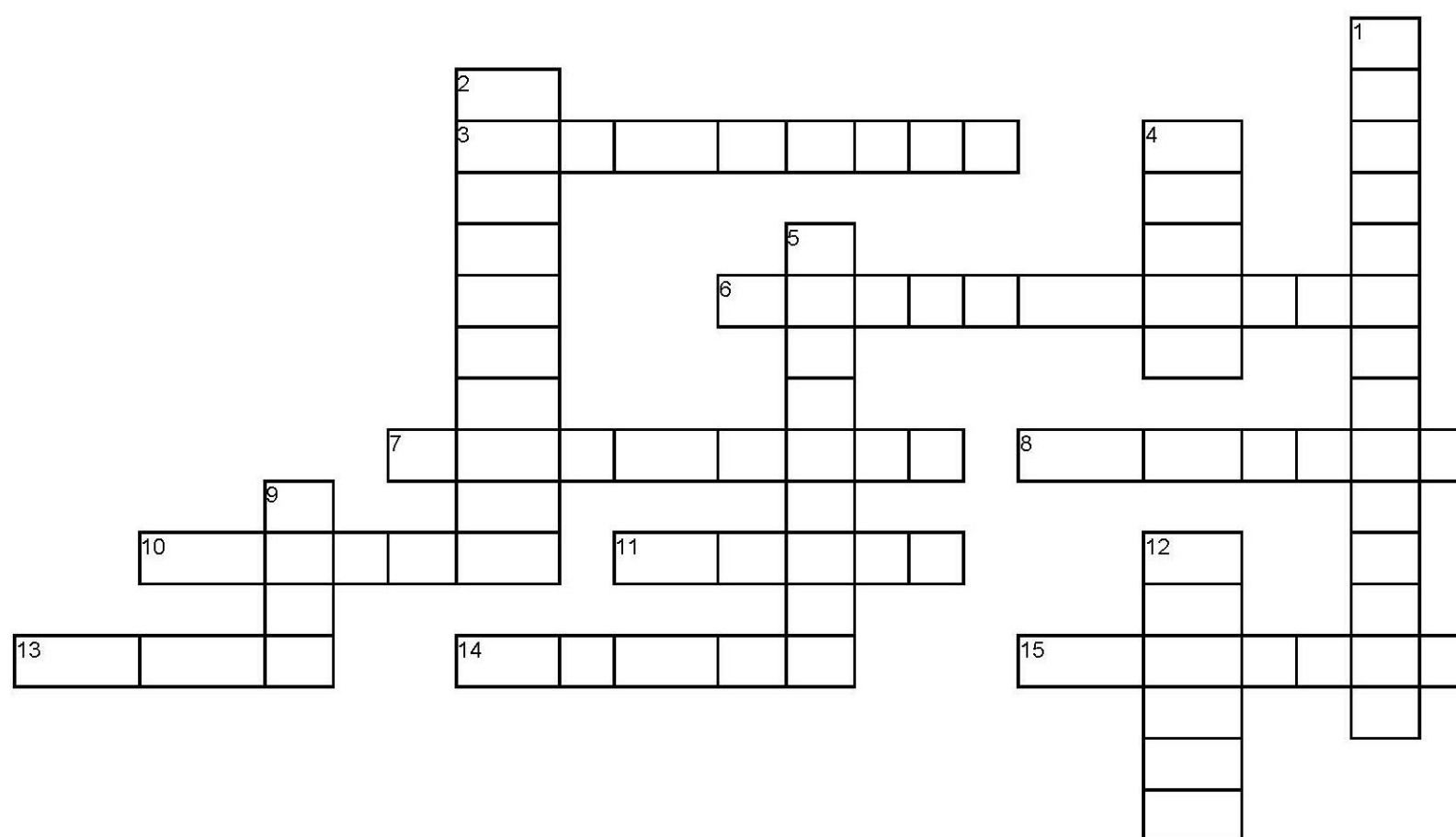
[Section 5307, 5310, and 5311: Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match](#)

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)

Types of Transportation



Across

3. This transportation also uses hot air but also has an engine.
6. This transportation is used in the army and as an ambulance to fly people to hospital.
7. This transportation has two wheels and children love to ride it.
8. An animal used by People living in the desert for transport.
10. People used animals to pull this type of transportation.
11. This type of transport uses a paddle.
13. People use this transportation if they do not have a motor car.
14. The first kind of water transport.
15. A type of four wheeled transportation that were used by the Voortrekkers in South Africa.

Down

1. It has hot air that lifts you above the ground.
2. Carries large metal boxes full of goods to trade across the world.
4. A type of transport that can take you across the ocean.
5. People use this transportation to go overseas, it also has jet engines.
9. This type of transport is very modern and needs petrol to run.
12. People use this type of transport to travel long distances at a fast speed.

In the News

Officials push to condense I-10 project timeline

Updated: Sep. 20, 2021 By John Sharp

Building the new Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project all at once, rather than in phases, would be less complex and preferable for state officials.

But the costs of doing so is considerably more, with initial estimates for replacing the entire Bayway at \$1.2 billion. And with funding still an unknown, it's unclear how much of the project can be completed at once.

The Alabama Department of Transportation provided an updated Monday into a project that is divided into three construction phases. The state is expected to continue providing routine updates to public officials as the project slowly moves ahead.

"If you talk about the phases spanning 15-plus years, people are asking, 'Do we really have 15-20 years?'" said Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson. "What will gridlock look like every single day?"

Representatives for the Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Mobile and Baldwin counties submitted letters on September 1, requesting ALDOT to examine ways to combine the project's three phases. Part of the concern is the long timeline the divided up project will take, and the impact that increased congestion along the I-10 Bayway will have on the region.

"The letter asks ALDOT if (they) can come up with another way to fund Phases 1 or 2 or all three phases together," said Kevin Harrison, director of transportation with the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, which oversees the Mobile MPO.

Tolling options

Financing for only one phase of the project is identified – the \$675 million eastbound span for a new bridge over the Mobile River and restriping of the entire Bayway from two lanes to three.

The initial phase also includes redeveloping two I-10 interchanges in Mobile County at Broad and Virginia streets into [diverging diamond designs](#) similar to what is at Alabama State Route 181 and I-10 in Baldwin County.

"I like it," said Harrison about the introduction of the diverging diamond concepts into the project. "It seems to be working on 181. It saves time. It reduces congestion."

The I-10 Phase 1 funding includes the following:

- \$125 million from a federal "Infrastructure for Rebuilding America" grant secured by U.S. Senator Richard Shelby in 2019.
- \$225 non-federal state subsidy
- \$300 million from a federal loan/bonds that will be repaid with toll revenue.

The project's toll is expected to be assessed on semi-tractor trailers and on vehicles that utilize the bridge. Existing routes along the Spanish Fort Causeway and through the Wallace Tunnel, will remain toll free.

ALDOT is currently performing in-depth studies on the toll scenarios. The initial plan called for [tolls on trucks only](#), but that has since been expanded to include other vehicles that utilize the new bridge.

The project's second phase is expected to cost \$500 million and will include westbound span for the new bridge.

The third phase will be more expensive and involved because it calls for a complete replacement of the I-10 Bayway with a new six-lane bridge that would be constructed "well above the 100-year flood elevation" to meet federal guidelines. The \$1.2 billion project, according to the MPO's planning document on the project, requires tolling.

Baldwin County Commissioner Joe Davis said he supports moving the project from "Virginia Street to Buc-ee's," in reference to extending the interstate's improvements further east toward the Alabama-Florida state line.

Davis said he supports having a tolled system assessing fees on motorists as long as "locals have a free option."

The previous \$2.1 billion I-10 plan [crumbled in 2019 under criticism from local officials over the lack of free options for Mobile and Baldwin county motorists](#). The previous plan did not assess a toll on utilizing the Causeway, but it did assess a toll on the Wallace Tunnel and the new bridge, which meant anyone driving along I-10 would be assessed a toll.

Community conversation

The meeting on Monday was part of ALDOT's efforts to provide frequent updates on the revised project that was [added back into the long- and short-term plans by each MPO in June](#).

Related content: [Plan to add lanes to I-10 Bayway raises safety concerns](#)

The update also comes one day ahead of a panel discussion about the I-10 project. Hosted by Coastal Conversations – a program through the Coastal Alabama Partnership – the panel discussion will include updates on how to build the bridge, who will benefit it and timelines for its construction.

The panel discussion will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the History Museum of Mobile and will be broadcast on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). The panel will be moderated by Jimmy Shumock, the local project coordinator. Panelists include Harrison, Matt Ericksen with ALDOT, and Missi Shumer with Shumer Consulting.

Michael Chambers, executive director of Coastal Conversations, said the panel discussion is "the perfect example" of an opportunity to provide an update on the facts about the project.

"The program we designed was to give everyone an update to lay out critical facts and timelines for the bridge and discuss what needs to be done now to get it done," said Chambers. "The clock is ticking."

The program is expected to last 1-1/2 hour.

He added, "I think this will be a good opportunity for the public to get an update and to get back up to speed on what we need to do to get it done."

ALDOT willing to study single-phase bridge proposal

Posted by Gabriel Tynes | Sep 19, 2021

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) held a joint meeting with the Mobile and Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) Monday and, contrary to its existing "phase approach" for the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project, announced it would consider recent requests to study options for a concurrent project.

Both MPOs voted to include the state's phased proposal in their planning documents earlier this year, but on Sept. 1, Chairmen Sandy Stimpson of Mobile and Jack Burrell of Fairhope [wrote ALDOT Director John Cooper](#) urging him to study the financial feasibility of a single-phase project.

"We have been continuing to look at those options, and once we put those together, we will meet with both MPOs and have public meetings to share options and results," ALDOT Project Manager Edwin Perry said Monday. "But as of right now, it's a phased project."

In the second of near-monthly meetings between the MPOs and ALDOT for updates on the project, Perry said the state has hired a contractor to gather new traffic data and complete traffic modeling, which will allow fine-tuning of design specifications and financial projections, to get a credit rating for loans and bonds needed to build the project.

Also, ALDOT is continuing to work on right of way acquisition and rights of entry, which will allow the agency to conduct archaeological studies on 15 suspected cultural sites, an effort expected to take one and a half years to complete. Perry said separate efforts are ongoing to form a steering committee for planned mitigation in Africatown.

"The next steps are to develop additional study options as requested by the MPOs," Perry said. "The results will be submitted back to the MPOs and if the options are supported and adopted, they will need to amend their [transportation planning documents]. ALDOT will then be able to update documentation and reports, make environmental updates and begin working on procurement to start building the project."

Mobile MPO Coordinator Kevin Harrison noted the process would include additional public hearings.

ALDOT's phased approach included the building of a single bridge span and its west approach in the first phase for \$725 million, and open the improvements to trucks only for a \$15 toll. A second phase would add a second span and improvements to tunnel and downtown interchanges, while only the third phase would rebuild the entire Bayway and improve turn lanes on the Eastern Shore.

In their letter, Stimpson and Burrell expressed concerns about safety, time and expenses involved with a multiphase project. On Monday, Perry acknowledged a single-phase project would indeed cost less.

"Nothing gets cheaper as you wait," he said. "This project would be a lot of concrete work and steel work, and being able to keep those contractors and efficiencies would definitely make it cheaper."

Harrison said the parties expect to meet for another update in late November or early December.

Redistricting Alabama: How South Alabama could be split up due to Baldwin County's growth

Published: Sep. 20, 2021, By John Sharp

For decades, Mobile and Baldwin County residents were represented by different congressmen. That ended in the early 1980s, as the two counties were joined together within Alabama's 1st congressional district.

Could another split be in the works? It's a concern, according to some public officials. But thanks to Alabama maintaining its seven congressional seats, the scenario remains less likely than it did earlier in the year when the state's stagnate growth almost led to the loss of one of its congressional districts.

Proposed congressional and legislative maps will be released next month, when the Alabama Legislature is expected to be called into Montgomery for a special session focused on redistricting.

"Mobile and Baldwin counties need to be kept together," said Bradley Byrne, who retired from Congress in January after representing the 1st district for seven years. "They need to be kept whole."

Said State Rep. Adline Clarke, D-Mobile: "I consider Mobile and Baldwin counties one political subdivision and would prefer that these two Gulf Coast counties remain in the same congressional district because government, business and industry in the two counties work well together -- with our congressman -- for the common good of the two counties."

Officials were worried that had Alabama lost a congressional district, Mobile County would merge with a large swath of western Alabama as part of the state's majority-minority congressional district that includes the counties in Alabama's Black Belt.

Baldwin County would have likely merged within the 2nd congressional district that currently includes rural Southeast Alabama, and portions of Montgomery, Autauga and Elmore counties.

The timing would have been problematic. The two counties, and their respective Metropolitan Planning Organizations, remain focused on a new Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project that will require federal funding and support in Washington, D. C.

"It would be counterproductive on what we need," said state Rep. Matt Simpson, R-Daphne, said about a potential split. "Mobile and Baldwin counties work good together as a region."

Complicating redistricting matters in coastal Alabama is Baldwin County's rapid growth rate – at over 27%, it was Alabama's fastest-growing county since 2010.

The growth is certain to affect how state legislative districts will be redrawn for the next decade. Mobile County had grown at a smaller growth rate, and the city of [Mobile experienced a 4.1% decline in population](#). Baldwin County's growth has created a different dynamic in coastal Alabama than what existed for most of the last century, when coastal Alabama was represented by two different congressmen. In 1940, for instance, Baldwin County was smaller than rural counties

like Barbour and Covington counties. Eighty years later, the county is more than three times larger than Barbour and Covington combined.

“It was a sparsely populated, agricultural county,” said Steve Flowers, a former Alabama state lawmaker and political commentator. “Mobile was a metropolitan port district, and they had a kinship to the counties above them.

Flowers said he could see the 1st congressional district becoming a “Mobile and Baldwin counties only” district, which would mean that rural counties – Washington, Escambia, Monroe, and parts of Clarke County – would be absorbed elsewhere.

Alabama’s 7th congressional district is the state’s only minority-majority district and is represented by Democratic Rep. Terri Sewell, but it has seen a drop of more than 13,000 residents since 2010. The district will have to be drawn to pick up more than 53,000 residents, some of which could come from the northern portions of the 1st congressional district that can afford a slight drop in population.

Mapmakers also have a tricky test to ensure that district maintains its minority-majority status, a requirement of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

“The question now is ‘How do you deal with majority-minority districts in the Black Belt and the Montgomery area and how does that interplay affect everything else?’” said state Senator Chris Elliott, R-Daphne. “That will affect congressional district 1, and what its neighboring districts have to do to accommodate population changes.”

Byrne, who made his comments during a public hearing on redistricting in Fairhope on Thursday, said he would hate to see the district lose some of its current geographic boundary, but understands that “there is enough growth in Baldwin” for there to be changes forthcoming.

A spokesman for U.S. Rep. Jerry Carl, R-Mobile, who was sworn in as the district’s congressman in January, said the congressman is “engaged with the redistricting process” and has “full confidence the process will be done accurately and fairly.”

To read this entire story click [HERE](#).

Transportation Research

ASDC Fall Data Conference

The Alabama State Data Center (ASDC), housed in the University of Alabama’s CBER, is hosting a second Census data conference this fall on Thursday, October 7 from noon to 4:00 p.m. The virtual conference will include presentations on how to access the latest 2020 decennial Census results from [Data.Census.gov](#), the innovative Census Pulse Survey, the Count Question Resolution (CQR) program, and the economic products available from the U.S. Census Bureau. Registration is free and all are welcome to attend. To register, click [here](#).

2020 Census Redistricting Easier-to-Use Data Release

The U.S. Census Bureau will be releasing the 2020 Census Redistricting data in a much more accessible format on September 16, 2021. These data will consist of the same 2020 Census population counts by race, Hispanic origin and voting age, as well as housing unit data for counties, places, census tracts and blocks, but it will be already formatted and easily searchable. Click [here](#) for more information.

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.