



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, July 1, 2016

Volume 18, Number 14

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South Alabama Regional

Before you travel this weekend, check the traffic with www.algotraffic.com. THERE MIGHT BE DELAYS DUE TO CONGESTION....(see *Just For Fun*). The Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory Committee met this week and there is a Mobile MPO on July 13th; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. Today was the deadline for the second round of Mobile TAP Urban Funds, and July 15th is the deadline for all FTA 5310 applications.

Finally, we are excited to announce that the Executive Committee of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission has selected Mr. John F. Rhodes (Rickey) to be the new Executive Director of SARPC. Rickey is certainly experienced in local governments, as he was the Mayor of Bay Minette from 1980-2000, has been employed with SARPC for 15 years in the Economic Development Department, and is the current director of that department. In his capacity as Mayor, Rickey was on the SARPC Board, the SARPC Executive Committee as well as the Personnel Committee. We look forward to working with Rickey, and are excited for the future of SARPC. There is full board meeting of SARPC scheduled for July 6th at 10:00AM.

Have a great weekend!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

MPO MEETING JULY 13th

There was a Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting this week and the Mobile MPO Policy Board will meet on July 13th; please plan on attending. There are several items on the agenda, including bridge work on I-65 at Cottage Hill Rd and recent TAP and FTA 5310 awards. The UPWP will have some slight changes since it was reviewed at the last MPO and TCC/CAC meeting. We have included a line item to purchase truck Origin-Destination data from Inrix. This will be extremely useful in our travel demand forecast model, and corridor studies.

FTA 5310 FUNDING

The Mobile MPO is the Designated Recipient of the FTA 5310 Urban Area funding. Available this fiscal year was \$110,042 (federal) for operating and \$387,964 (federal) for capital. We had \$342,500 applied for operating, although we only had available \$110,042. We only had \$32,000 applied for capital, which leaves a balance of almost \$356,000 available this year! Please see *Funding Opportunities* below if you are interested in FTA 5310 URBAN capital as we have announced a second round of funding. The deadline is the same deadline as ALDOT's 5310 application, July 15th, please see *Funding Opportunities*. Congratulations to the applicants that were awarded operating funds; Independent Living Center, City of Satsuma, and the Mobile ARC.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) FUNDING

The Mobile MPO is also the Designated Recipient of Urban Area TAP funds. We had available this fiscal year \$551,000 (federal) and the deadline was June 3rd with two applications submitted and awarded. Congratulations to Mobile County for their ADA Compliance TAP Project, and the City of Mobile for Sidewalks along Bit and Spur form Old Shell Rd to University Blvd. Having only two applications submitted leaves a balance of \$192,095 (federal). We are opening a second round of funding for that amount, and all 9 local governments are eligible to apply. **The deadline is today, July 1st**, please see *Funding Opportunities*.

ADA TRANSITION PLANS

The FHWA has required that every city and county in the state have an ADA Transition Plan, and Urban Areas will have a one year deadline (July 20th, 2016). Each City in the Mobile MPO Study Area and Mobile County now has an appointed ADA Coordinator which creates a nine member ADA Subcommittee of the MPO.

The inventory is complete for all urban local governments within the Mobile MPO, and each City and Mobile County should have their draft ADA Transition Plan for Public ROW. We are on schedule and I want to thank everyone for getting these plans adopted as fast as you have been. There are several plans already adopted, and it looks like everyone else has either had a public meeting, or one is scheduled. The deadline for Mobile County and the cities within the Mobile MPO to have an adopted ADA Transition Plan for public ROW, is this July. If you have any questions, please call Kevin Harrison.

RPO Updates

Earlier in the month, SARPC hosted an Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Workshop. As you may be aware, the Federal Highway Administration has ramped up enforcement of ADA laws as they pertain to federal funding for road, bridge, sidewalks, and the like. Many of our member governments have been coming to us with ADA questions. There was a lot of good discussion that helped clear up what is expected in order to receive federal funding. One of the speakers was Mr. Graham Sisson, the Executive Director of GOOD, (Governor's Office on Disability). He will be speaking on the city/county responsibilities of municipal/county buildings, properties, etc. There were presentations on the ADA requirements of public ROW (sidewalks) and vertical, or buildings side of it as well.

Projects Within Region Let June 24th, 2016

Mobile County

For constructing the Bridge Replacement and Approaches on CR-63 (Wilmer-Georgetown Road) over Big Creek north of Wilmer. Length 0.672 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$3,063,774 to \$3,744,613.

For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-42 (US-98) from the junction of Stimpson Lane to the intersection of SR-16 (US-90/Broad Street) in Mobile. Length 4.749 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,724,649 to \$2,107,905.

Baldwin County

There are no projects at this time.

Escambia County

There are no projects at this time.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

Congress is not in session. They will reconvene July 7, 2016.

USDOT Proposes New Rule to Improve 'Mega-Region' Transportation Planning.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly proposed a new rule this week that would improve coordination of multi-modal transportation planning by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) serving the nation's urban areas. The proposed rule, which would affect about a third of the nation's 409 MPOs, would promote more effective regional prioritization of multi-modal investments through better coordination among local governments with planning responsibilities in the same urbanized areas, as designated by governors. Its goal is to improve the effectiveness of transportation planning for multi-modal projects addressing regional needs. It would revise the definition of "Metropolitan Planning Area" (MPA) to align with its statutory definition, requiring the MPA to include the entire urbanized area. Where there are multiple MPOs in a single MPA, the proposed rule would also require that those MPOs and their states' governors decide whether to consolidate, adjust their boundaries or to prepare unified planning products. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking appeared in the [Federal Register](#) this week. The public is invited to submit its comments through www.regulations.gov during the 60-day public comment period. Contact: FHWA's Doug Hecox (202) 366-0660 or FTA's Sarah Clements (202) 366-3062.

AASHTO Releases Federal Surface Transportation Authorization Portal

AASHTO has developed a portal for information on federal surface transportation authorization. This is a regularly updated resource on MAP-21 reauthorization and implementation of the **Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Funding Opportunities

2016 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant Announcement - due July 1st at noon

We only had 2 applications turned in last Friday for TAP. We have \$192,095 (federal) available for FY 2016. We have announced a "call for projects" OPEN TO ALL 9 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS. Those that applied for the first round that was due June 3rd, are eligible to apply for this money as well. One project will be selected.

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as the recipient of Urban Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, is announcing the availability of the FY 2016 TAP funding. The maximum amount that can be applied for with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$192,095 (federal) and the minimum match is 20% **only cities and counties that are members of the Mobile MPO may apply.**

New this round of funding is that estimates for the application's budget must be developed by a professional engineer registered in the State of Alabama.

The TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes

or other divided highways.

Ten (10) copies of the application are due no later than 12:00 p.m., Friday, July 1st, 2016. Applications (paper only) are due to the Transportation Planning Department of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) at:

SARPC
110 Beauregard Street, Suite 207
Mobile, AL 36602

You can pick up an application at our offices, or we can mail you the application and guidelines. Electronic versions of the applications are available online at www.mobilempo.org. Click the Mobile MPO tab, then the Transportation Alternatives tab.

ALDOT's Rural FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Funding

due July 15th

ALDOT has announced the annual grant application for federal assistance provided through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. The "Vehicle Inventory Form" is provided in the application in Microsoft Word, but is upon request also available electronically in Excel. Applications are turned into to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) by July 15th, as SARPC must endorse the application.

Please note that the one-year sit out rule is waived for this grant application cycle.

All projects funded through Section 5310 must be derived from locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation planning process. ALDOT has designated the 12 Regional Planning Councils to coordinate transportation services in their regions.

Please read the application in its entirety before starting to complete it. Immediate attention must be given to the public hearing requirements, authorizing resolution, and the required Planning Council endorsement (contact information is located in Appendix A).

ALDOT mailed the applications, and it will soon be available on the ALDOT web page. You can contact Kevin Harrison for ALDOT's application for FTA 5310 Rural at kharrison@sarpc.org.

Completed *ALDOT grant applications* must be submitted to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission by **noon on July 15th, 2016**. Applications received after the established deadline will be returned. **Postmarked submissions will not be accepted.**

Mobile MPO Urban FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Funding

due July 15th

The Mobile MPO regular round of FTA 5310 Urban funding for FY 2016 was due June 3rd. Of the available \$110,000 of operating, we have \$342,000 applied for; *there are no more operating funds available* this FY. However, of the \$387,000 available for capital, we still have \$350,000 available. We have announced another round of CAPITAL ONLY funding due July 15th at noon.

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Designated Recipient for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 *Urban Area Funding* for the Mobile Urban Area. Our funding under the FAST ACT has been increased to \$314,000 annually.

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) is now accepting Applications for funding consideration through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. FTA provides funding for transit related services that assist the Mobile Urban Area's population of seniors & individuals with disabilities.

The application package provides specific eligibility requirements, match requirements, and eligible activities. The application and program management plan can be found at <http://www.mobilempo.org/5310.html>. (*web site says June 3rd, but applications are due July 15th*)

Completed grant applications must be submitted to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission by **noon on July 15th, 2016**. Applications received after the established deadline will be returned. **Postmarked submissions will not be accepted.**

EDA releases FY 2016 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Funding Opportunity, announces new grant process to stream application process

EDA recently released the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) notice announcing the availability of funding through the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. The Public Works program is designed to provide funding for design, construction, or renovation of critical public infrastructure needed to create or retain jobs in a locality. The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides resources for both design, construction and renovation as well as technical assistance to support long-term job creation/retention in cases of sudden and severe economic events.

This funding solicitation also announced that EDA is moving towards a two-step application process where applicants can submit a proposal at any time to determine alignment with EDA priorities before submitting a full application. This means there are **no longer any quarterly deadlines for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs**. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact EDA's state representative to develop their project and EDA application. To learn more about EDA's grant programs and opportunities, please feel free to contact Diane Burnett at dburnett@sarpc.org.

Industrial Access Road and Bridge

Industrial access funds are intended to provide adequate public access to new or expanding distribution, manufacturing and industrial firms. The industry must be committed to new investment and the creation of new jobs. The new access must be on public right of way for public use (state, city or county) and the project sponsor (city or county) must maintain the completed facility unless the facility consists of turn lanes, crossovers, etc., that are located on state highways. Industrial access funds are limited to construction, construction engineering and inspection costs. The project sponsor is responsible for all preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation costs.

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

Just For Fun

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!!!

There will be lots of travel this weekend, and traffic is going to be not so *Just For Fun*. So, while you are driving through massive congestion, and it may feel like this:

[\(video\)](#) *(this may be the scariest thing you have ever seen)*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZKqhvch3mU>

Think about your passengers and how to fight the boredom. Besides counting license plates, here are a couple more games to keep them occupied while you sit on the Bayway....

[Punch Buggy Don't Punch Back](#)

[Lip Sync Uptown Funk](#)

[Mess with people](#)

In the News

Alabama Ceremony Completes I-22 Project

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley joined other state and local officials June 20 in Birmingham to mark the completion of the final section of Interstate 22, a 213-mile highway linking that city with Memphis, Tenn., along the US 78 corridor.

Bentley and the others cut a ribbon for the I-22 Interchange at I-65, which completed a 98-mile segment in Alabama on what was called "Corridor X" until it garnered the I-22 designation in 2004.

[The announcement said](#) the Alabama Department of Transportation "has worked on the final phase of the connector since 1984, building through some of the roughest terrain in the state."

In Alabama, I-22 runs from the Mississippi state line through Marion, Walker and Jefferson counties to I-65 just north of downtown Birmingham. Just in Alabama, the I-22 segment includes 15 bridges and 14 ramps and cost slightly more than \$1 billion to build, the announcement said.

The final Alabama project, connecting I-22 to I-65, began in 2010 at a cost of \$168 million, [AL.com reported](#).

"This road provides a major traveling route through some rural areas of Alabama that until now have not had a major interstate within miles," Bentley said. "One of the great benefits of this project is the economic development opportunities it will provide to some of these rural areas, particularly those in Marion and Walker counties and parts of Jefferson County that have been previously inaccessible to major industries."

The Corridor X project evolved through decades of discussion, planning and construction. The route was originally included in interstate and defense highway plans during the 1930s, the announcement said. Interest in the project was revived in 1965, and Congress approved it in 1978 in the Appalachian Development Highway Program and construction began in 1984.

"Although this project has taken many years to get to this point, I am proud of all the hard work from the dedicated Department of Transportation staff and the local, state and federal partners that have made today possible," Bentley said.

The U.S. Interstate Highway System at 60 Showing Signs of Decline, Lack of Attention

As transportation groups prepare to observe the 60th anniversary of interstate highway system, many also say it has gone in a few decades from an economy-lifting network to a system that is increasingly clogged and decaying from lack of sufficient investment.

President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which was also known as the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act, into law on June 29, 1956. Within a few years the nation would see construction begin replacing a network of two-lane U.S. highways with the multi-lane, high-speed interstate highway system that continued to spur economic growth as it built out in the next few decades. A number of groups plan special events to mark the week, and to point to the challenge ahead.

The TRIP research group said it plans to release on June 27 a new report on the aging interstate system, which would be an update from 10 years ago when TRIP reported on it at 50 years old. That 2006 report said the interstate network was still the "nation's most critical transportation link despite growing traffic congestion," but said the [congestion "is likely to get worse](#) unless the nation commits to new vision of a 21st century highway system."

Since then, Congress approved a major round of new investments only in the 2009 Recovery Act to help climb out of a severe recession. Lawmakers then struggled to pass long-term surface transportation investment measures until December's five-year FAST Act, which provides only modest funding increases to the core highway program.

However, the FAST Act also provided \$5 million to fund a study by the Transportation Research Board on "actions needed to upgrade and restore the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways to its role as a premier system that meets the growing and shifting demands of the 21st century."

On June 29, the American Road & Transportation Builders Association and the American Trucking Associations plan to jointly hold a [three-hour "lunch and policy discussion"](#) at the Washington, D.C., National Press Club.

Scheduled participants include Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., who chairs the Environment and Public Works Committee, and Jeff Paniati, CEO of the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

Bud Wright, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, told the AASHTO Journal that the anniversary is a good time for the entire country to take stock of what the interstate system has been and what it is now.

"The interstate highways gave the United States incredible gains in mobility of personal travel and cargo shipments as new segments opened in state after state. It was a remarkable achievement that helped make the U.S. economy the world's leader," he said.

"However, we must face the facts of where we are today," Wright added. "Some of the original interstate bridges are still in place long after their projected life spans and long after traffic on them has outpaced original design levels. Large sections of these once-fabulous roadways are in disrepair. State departments of transportation are struggling to maintain their portions of this critical national network while demand keeps growing, even when many states have substantially increased their highway funding."

Wright said the interstate system is a good example of a national infrastructure asset, much like the nation's waterways and airspace, since the entire country relies on its various pieces to work well. "As a nation, we must ask ourselves if we are taking care of that asset and increasing its value and the economic payoff it delivers, or if we are letting it languish and lose value," he said.

FHWA has just published the [Bike Network Mapping Idea Book](#).

This resource highlights ways that different communities have mapped their existing and proposed bicycle networks. It shows examples of maps at different scales, while also demonstrating a range of mapping strategies, techniques, and approaches. It is intended to serve as a resource as communities work to identify, plan, and improve their bicycle networks.

Gulf Coast Rail Working Group Continues Work in Tallahassee Passenger Rail

In 2015, the Southern Rail Commission commissioned Amtrak to evaluate service options along the Gulf Coast. Amtrak developed and evaluated five alternatives. The best alternative from a ridership demand and cost effectiveness standpoint was determined to be the provision of service between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida with points in between.

In the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act"), a mandate appears in Section 11304 for the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger service in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida. The Gulf Coast Rail Service Working Group has a deadline of Sept 2016 to submit the evaluation report to US Congress.

The Gulf Coast Working Group has been meeting via monthly conference calls and monthly in-person meetings. The meetings have been hosted by various cities along the Gulf Coast (New Orleans, Louisiana; Biloxi, Mississippi; Atmore, Alabama; Pensacola, Florida; and Tallahassee, Florida). The remaining meetings will be hosted by Mobile, Alabama and Jacksonville, Florida.

The group met in June in Tallahassee and wishes to thank Ms. Mary Louise Hester, Regional Director from U.S. Senator Bill Nelson's office as well as Ms. Mary Lee Kiracofe, District Director from U.S. Representative Gwen Graham's office for attending the meeting. The time and support given for this project are appreciated by the group.

Transportation Research

Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development

by Carrie Kisseel

In March 2016, the NADO Research Foundation held a focus group on the link between transportation and economic development, and how state departments of transportation and regional planning and development organizations can work together to better plan for those issues in an integrated way. The focus group participants included regional, state, and federal agency staff and others with experience in both transportation and economic development programs. During the conversation, the focus group participants developed a definition of economic development that emphasizes doing economic development and transportation planning differently, and can be used to help frame related planning efforts:

Economic development in transportation involves deliberate interventions to produce tangible benefits that are specific to the context, are sustained over time, and make a place more resilient.

This new report, [Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a National Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development\(PDF\)](#), explores how the participants' definition of economic development can be applied in transportation planning. The report documents the themes of the focus group discussion, including economic development impacts, resilience, and state department of transportation (DOT) and regional planning and development organization roles in working together. Read about the highlights of the discussion and about noteworthy practices shared by participants that can institutionalize consideration of transportation and economic development together.

[Let's Talk Performance: Basics of Target Setting](#) (Click here to register for the webinar and receive more information)

WEBINAR DATE:

Tuesday, July 12, 2016 from 2:00-3:30 pm Eastern Time

DETAILS:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration and several national stakeholder groups, would like you to join us for the [Let's Talk Performance: Basics of Target Setting](#) webinar. The webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, July 12, from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (ET). This event is open to FHWA and FTA staff, State DOTs, MPOs, transit providers, and other stakeholder agencies.

Presenters include:

- Jessie Jones- Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
- Carl Mikyska- Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council
- Brian Betylon- FHWA Resource Center Planning Team

During this webinar, participants will learn how funding scenarios are used to help establish targets via lessons learned from the Arkansas DOT. There will also be a presentation on how Florida MPOs are working with FDOT to set targets, along with a brief overview on the basics of target setting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Michael Nesbitt at 202-366-1179 or Michael.Nesbitt@dot.gov.

BTS Releases Geographic Databases for 2016

The U.S. Department of Transportation's [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#) (BTS) released the 2016 edition of the [National Transportation Atlas Database](#) (NTAD) this week. The NTAD is a compilation of datasets representing the nation's transportation infrastructure, including more than 500,000 miles of roadway, over 600,000 bridges, and in excess of 19,000 airports. This year's NTAD consists of over 60 individual data layers, most of which have been updated within the last year. The NTAD also includes several new features: the U.S. portion of the North American Rail Network, truck parking, and road and airport noise layers. The 2016 NTAD marks the end of the traditional annual update. BTS will now begin using a dynamic publication cycle, making updated data available throughout the year, allowing for more timely delivery to users. Also new this year, NTAD will be available exclusively online. To offer larger and more complex data sets and enhanced functionality, DVDs have been eliminated. The enhanced online NTAD datasets allow for customizable downloads and APIs. They are available as GeoJSON and GeoServices (REST) services and are also available for download as shapefiles, kml and csv files.

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.

[See the Future of Transportation](#)

