



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

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This week the Mobile MPO announced the availability of the **FY 2016 TAP funding** (*See Funding Opportunities*). There will be an MPO meeting on June 1st, 2016 and TCC/CAC meeting on May 18th (*see Mobile MPO Updates*). The Alabama State Legislature has passed a new funding formula for the state's roads and bridges (*See Legislative Updates*) and the Mobile City Council approved cuts to the Wave Transits budget (*See In the News*). Mayor Stimpson has submitted a \$3.47 million road contract to begin a total reconstruction of Ann Street; more on that next week. This week's *Just For Fun* will be the height of your day...

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 June 1st, 2016; TCC/CAC Meeting on May 18th

There will be a MPO meeting on June 1st, 2016 to go over the Draft Unified Planning Work Program. The TCC/CAC will review the document on May 18th. The 2017 UPWP will be in the folders at these meetings and members will not get a copy mailed until later this summer. It must be adopted by September 15th, 2016. We did not have a quorum on March 2nd, those items that were on the March 2nd agenda will be on the agenda at the June 1st meeting.

MPO FUNDING

The Mobile MPO apportionment was increased with the passing of the new FAST ACT Transportation Funding Bill. The per capita amount was \$6.8 Million per year under the bill MAP-21. That has been increased to \$7.1 million per year, which equates to being able to program almost \$9 million per year once the 20% local match is included. Our Attributable funding schedule has been moved around a bit; however, even though we had an increase in potential funding, we are still negative in terms of budgeting projects in year 2020 and 2021.

FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Designated Recipient for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 *Urban Area Funding* for the Mobile Urban Area. We are well underway with this program, and have already purchased our first vehicle for Mercy Life. Congratulations to all that have been awarded. We are working diligently to get all procurements completed as fast as possible. We will most likely advertised in April for the new call for projects for the FTA 5310 Urban Program. Our funding under the FAST ACT has been increased to \$314,000 annually.

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 the consultant is now working with the ADA Coordinators on the text of each of the ADA documents, grievance procedures, and the potential for a full ADA Transition plan, not just Public Rights of Way. The deadline for Mobile County and the cities within the Mobile MPO to have an adopted ADA Transition Plan for public Rights of Way, is July of this year.

(for areas outside the boundaries of an MPO, ALDOT is working on a time line for you, and you will not follow the same timeline as the Urban areas)

Projects Within Region Let April 29th, 2016

Mobile County

For constructing the Additional Lanes and Bridge Replacement (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, and Bridge) on CR-372 (Schillinger Road) from the intersection of SR-42 (US-98) to the intersection of SR-217 (Lott Road). Length 1.572 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$9,621,937 to \$11,760,145.

Baldwin County

For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from the junction of SR-59 in Robertsdale to the Florida State Line. Length 16.543 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,634,824 to \$3,220,340

For the Maintenance Dredging of Little Lagoon Pass in Gulf Shores as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from

\$1,061,002 to \$1,296,780 .

Escambia County

There are no projects at this time.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

Alabama Legislature passes new transportation funds allocation formula

The Alabama legislature nearly unanimously passed a new funding formula for the state's roads and bridges Wednesday evening, in what legislators and outside groups are celebrating as a return to greater local control of transportation funds.

The bill, **SB180**, establishes the Alabama Transportation Safety Fund, which will receive revenues designated for "maintenance, improvement, replacement, and construction of state, county, and municipal roads and bridges within the state."

Under the new bill the first \$32,000,000 in transportation revenues levied under any new tax or revenue measures will be divided equally among Alabama's 67 counties, with \$500,000 going directly to each county commission for use solely on roads and bridges.

Though he is against [increasing the proposed gas tax](#), Representative **Will Ainsworth** (R-Guntersville) says the bill is a step in the right direction for local control and equitable distribution of funds should they lose that battle.

"We wanted to make sure the revenue was distributed fairly, and that it would go to all areas of the state, not just large projects," Ainsworth told **Alabama Today**. "The bill guarantees money is going to go to counties with rural areas as well. From my standpoint it protects my constituents in Marshall County, if they were to pass the tax, to make sure Marshall County residents get their fair share."

The bill also provides for the public notice of, and periodic reporting on new projects taken on by the **Alabama**.

The **Business Council of Alabama** also praised the bill's passage, saying it "paves the way for the first new investment in Alabama's road and bridge infrastructure in the last quarter-century."

The BCA, [which heavily supports increasing the state's gas tax](#), called SB180 "heavily responsible and accountable" in a press release Wednesday afternoon.

"The Senate for its previous passage of SB 180 and now House members deserve praise for supporting this responsible and accountable legislation," said BCA President and CEO **William J. Canary**. "A well-supported surface transportation system is as important to manufacturing, wholesale, and retail businesses and industries for profitability and job creation as any other component of a successful business model."

"Today, Alabama legislators exercised true leadership by voting in favor of SB 180," added **Jim Page**, CEO of the **West Alabama Chamber of Commerce** and spokesperson for the **Alliance for Alabama's Infrastructure**. "We applaud the members of the legislature who recognize that we can no longer ignore Alabama's crumbling infrastructure. If our state wants to remain economically competitive and keep our citizens safe, then we must invest in and protect funding for our roads and bridges."

The [proposed gas tax increase](#), which would raise Alabama's tax on fuel to the average of its neighboring states, is currently on the House calendar, but with only 8 days left in the 2016 Regular Session, would need to overcome several obstacles and move quickly to become law.

Funding Opportunities

2016 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Announcement - due June 3, 2016

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 \$200,000 (federal) and the minimum match is 20%. Due to limited funding, only one application per entity will be accepted, and **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 4:00 p.m., Friday, June 3, 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.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx Announces \$500 Million in Eighth Round of TIGER Funding (Due April 29th, 2016)

WASHINGTON –Today, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced \$500 million will be made available for transportation projects across the country under an eighth round of the highly successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program.

“The TIGER program funds vital transportation projects that provide real benefits to communities all across the country. Every year, we see hundreds of compelling applications that have the potential to improve people's access to economic opportunities, make people safer, and improve their well-being,” said Secretary Foxx. “I am proud that for seven rounds, TIGER has been able to make a valuable contribution to improving our nation's transportation infrastructure, and I look forward to this year's competition.”

Like the first seven rounds, FY 2016 TIGER discretionary grants will fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region.

The 2016 TIGER grant program will continue to make transformative surface transportation investments by providing improvements over existing conditions. The grant program will focus on capital projects that generate economic development and improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation for communities, both urban and rural.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, does not provide dedicated funding for the planning, preparation, or design of capital projects; however, these activities may be funded as part of an overall construction project. Continue [HERE](#).

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.

Federal Highway Administration Announces \$60 Million in Grants for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies- Deadline June 3rd

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today announced \$60 million in grants to fund cutting-edge transportation improvement technologies that will improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure return on investment.

“This program will take technological innovation to a new level and help to make the entire transportation network more reliable for commuters, businesses, and freight shippers,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “An efficient transportation system is the foundation of a strong economy.”

The new program—Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD)—is aimed at addressing the concerns outlined in *Beyond Traffic*, the USDOT report issued last year that examines the challenges facing America's transportation infrastructure over the next three decades, such as a rapidly growing population and increasing traffic. Gridlock nationwide is expected to increase unless changes are made soon.

“Innovative technologies offer exciting solutions that can help meet the challenges outlined in *Beyond Traffic* and can improve safety and efficiency of transportation across the nation,” said Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau. “This new program will help harness and support these technologies and push the boundaries of what is possible for the future of transportation in our country.”

ATCMTD technologies are intended to improve the return-on-investment of safety, efficiency, system performance and infrastructure improvements, including the enhanced use of existing transportation capacity. The awards may be used for projects that use real-time traveler information, traffic data collection and dissemination, vehicle-to-infrastructure and an array of other dynamic systems and intelligent transportation system technologies.

ATCMTD was established under the “Fixing America's Surface Transportation” Act. State departments of transportation, local governments, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations and other eligible entities are all invited to apply under the program.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published today is available at www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/funding.cfm

For more information, click [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces \$266 Million Funding Opportunity to Improve Bus Service Nationwide

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the opportunity to apply for approximately \$266 million in competitive grant funding for bus programs nationwide. The funding consists of \$211 million in grants for buses and bus facilities projects, as well as \$55 million specifically for FTA's Low and No Emission (Low-No) bus program, which promotes technologically-advanced and environmentally-friendly buses. These investments will help advance the President's vision for a cleaner, 21st century transportation system that reduces carbon emissions while expanding transportation options for families.

"Transit buses are a lifeline to opportunity for countless Americans, but too often these buses are outdated and unreliable," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "As demand for transit grows and our nation's population continues to expand, these much-needed funds will help bring communities the latest technologies to strengthen and improve their bus infrastructure."

Eligible projects include those that replace, rehabilitate, lease, and purchase buses and related equipment as well as projects to purchase, rehabilitate, construct or lease bus-related facilities, such as buildings for bus storage and maintenance.

"Our state and local partners across the country will benefit from the increased funding and flexibility available through this program," said FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan. "With a large and growing maintenance backlog throughout the public transportation industry, it is vital for local agencies to have additional resources to address their community's needs."

FTA will award the grants to eligible transit agencies, state transportation departments, and Indian tribes on a competitive basis. Projects will be evaluated by criteria outlined in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), including the need for investment in bus transit systems, benefits to the community (including economic and workforce development), implementation of low and no-emission technologies, and integration with local and regional long-term planning.

Transportation contributes about 27 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, and the Administration has committed to major reductions in emissions. The FTA funds to help public transportation agencies purchase advanced technology, clean and efficient buses will help to reduce transportation emissions.

The Low-No Bus Program is a down payment on the administration's 2017 budget proposal. Over a 10-year period, the "21st Century Clean Transportation Plan" invests an average of nearly \$20 billion per year in new funds to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide new ways for families to get to work, to school, and to the store. The Budget would expand transit systems in cities, fast-growing suburbs, and rural areas; make high-speed rail a viable alternative to flying in major regional corridors; modernize our freight system; and expand the successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program to support high-impact, innovative local projects.

The [Fixing America's Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#), passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in December 2015, restored FTA's competitive Bus & Bus Facilities Program, authorizing it through 2020. The FAST Act also made the Low-No program, previously funded and managed under FTA's research programs, a subset of the larger competitive bus program.

The previous round of Low-No funding was [announced](#) in September 2015, and project selections are expected in the coming months.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces \$5.3 Million Funding Opportunity to Improve Mobility Focused on Healthcare

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the availability of \$5.3 million in competitive grant funds to improve public transportation options that increase access to healthcare for those who lack good transportation choices.

"We know it can be challenging for many people to travel to medical appointments, and missing them can lead to re-hospitalizations and poorer health," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "This new grant opportunity sets the stage for transit agencies and community organizations to develop local solutions that provide ladders of opportunity, improve health outcomes, and reduce health care costs."

FTA's Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants will help build partnerships between health, transportation and other service providers to develop strategies that connect patients with public transportation options. A [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) appeared in today's Federal Register.

The grants will further FTA's Rides to Wellness initiative, which emphasizes public transportation as a strategy for people to access health services, resulting in greater preventive care, fewer unnecessary hospital readmissions, and lower costs. The initiative focuses on improving outcomes for those with chronic conditions and ensuring that at-risk populations can get to wellness visits, healthy food, and community services.

In part to help people take advantage of the healthcare expansion made possible by the Affordable Care Act, Rides to Wellness Coordinated Access and Mobility grants will encourage partnerships between public transportation agencies and the healthcare industry to devise solutions to access challenges.

"We're excited at this opportunity to fund creative ideas that will result in solutions to the healthcare transportation puzzle," said FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan, who launched the Rides to Wellness initiative last year. "We know that when people have consistent, affordable transportation options to get to their healthcare providers, they receive appropriate preventive care instead of using emergency rooms and suffer fewer costly setbacks."

The grants will focus on communities demonstrating mobility management, technological solutions, and effective partnerships. Grant applicants must include participating groups with stakeholders from the transportation, healthcare and human service sectors.

The [Fixing America's Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#), signed into law in December, authorizes a pilot program for innovative coordinated access and mobility that augments FTA's Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program. The FAST Act initiated the program with an initial \$2 million in first-year funding, expanding to \$3.5 million per year by Fiscal Year 2019. FTA supplemented the pilot program with funds from FTA's Research Program.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx Announces Notice of Funding Availability for Infrastructure Projects

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced the availability of credit assistance for critical infrastructure projects across the country through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. Secretary Foxx encouraged states and cities across the country to submit letters of interest for direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit through TIFIA as a result of the recently enacted Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

"The TIFIA credit program has a strong record of success in stimulating local economies and bringing critical transportation projects to

communities that need them,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “This year, the added flexibility and streamlined review process should make it easier for a variety of applicants to take advantage of the funding opportunities, and to bring significant infrastructure developments to their neighborhoods.”

The FAST Act authorizes \$1.435 billion in capital over five years for the TIFIA credit assistance program. Historically, one dollar of TIFIA Program funds supported a TIFIA loan of approximately 14 dollars and resulted in infrastructure investment of up to 40 dollars, when taking into account other state, local and private sector investments.

A wide range of surface transportation infrastructure is eligible for TIFIA credit assistance, including highways, passenger and freight rail, public transit, intermodal freight facilities, and international bridges and tunnels. The FAST Act expands eligibility to include transit-oriented development and the capitalization of a rural projects fund within a state infrastructure bank.

In addition, for eligible small projects, the FAST Act allows TIFIA to reserve funding to offset the fees charged to applicants by TIFIA for financial and legal services. Because of the flexibility provided by the TIFIA programs, many qualified, small-scale and large-scale projects that might otherwise be delayed or shelved can move forward quickly, providing an immediate boost to jobs while laying a foundation for continued economic growth.

To date, the TIFIA program has provided \$22.7 billion in credit assistance to support more than \$82.5 billion in transportation infrastructure investments to help build 56 major transportation projects around the country. Updated information regarding TIFIA’s loan portfolio is available [here](#).

DOT’s Build America Transportation Investment Center (BATIC), which was announced in 2014, has expanded TIFIA’s ability to meet the needs of the nation’s transportation system. BATIC serves as a single point of contact and coordination for states, municipalities, and project sponsors looking to utilize federal transportation expertise, apply for federal transportation credit programs, and explore ways to access private capital in public private partnerships (P3s). Since BATIC’s formation, DOT has closed over \$8 billion in financing to support \$21 billion in projects.

BATIC has also increased the number of non-traditional DOT credit program applicants, most significantly TIFIA-eligible inside-the-gate port projects. BATIC has facilitated interdepartmental coordination for mega-projects that need to access multiple DOT credit programs. It is also providing project finance capacity building resources for states and municipalities in conjunction with the BATIC Institute: An AASHTO Center for Excellence, which includes best practices papers, a P3 case study webinar series, and peer to peer exchanges on finance and development.

The TIFIA Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is available [here](#). Additional information about the TIFIA program is available at <http://www.transportation.gov/tifia>.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

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

With the US 59 Pedestrian Bridge well under way in Foley, we thought it would be fun to look at how some pedestrians feel about REALLY HIGH pedestrian bridges that have glass floors. Some people are really afraid of heights. Watching these people face their fears is Just For Fun....

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



In the News

After plea to 'use your hearts,' Mobile council approves transit cuts

By [Lawrence Specker | lspecker@al.com](mailto:Lawrence.Specker@al.com)

Suffering was implied, when Mobile leaders opted last fall to reduce funding to the city's public transit system, The WAVE. On Tuesday, the pain became real.

The [Mobile City Council](#) had designated its April 12 meeting as a time for public comment on proposed cuts to WAVE service, prior to an expected vote. No one was predicting a short meeting, and the council heard more than two hours of sometimes impassioned, occasionally tearful, often reproachful testimony about the effect the cuts would have on bus riders, including the blind, the elderly, the disabled and the working poor.

In the end, on a 5-2 vote, the council opted to approve the cuts. There seemed to be no sense of triumph in the decision, however, and several council members said they hoped to see it lead to a county-wide discussion on the establishment of a true regional transit system in the future.

That likely will be small consolation to WAVE riders facing the loss of a service that many describe as a lifeline, when the cuts take effect in a few weeks. Among those who described their plight was Amelie Neese, a nurse at USA Medical Center. Neese spoke on behalf of her paraplegic son, Todd Stringfellow, who relies on public transit to get him to college classes.

"This is his first semester at the University of South Alabama," she told the council before its vote. "Depending on the outcome of today, it could be his last."

At the beginning of Tuesday's discussion, Executive Director of Finance Paul Wesch recapped the process so far. Prior to passing the Mobile's 2015-2016 budget in September, the Mobile City Council [approved an amendment cutting slightly more than \\$700,000 from the allocation to The WAVE](#), a change supported by Mayor Sandy Stimpson. The city still allocated about \$5.5 million for the service.

That cut triggered a lengthy process to determine how The WAVE would reduce services and gather feedback from involved agencies and the public. The result was a slate of proposed route cuts that Wesch said were guided by two principles: To cut service on routes and at times with the lowest ridership; and to maintain service, as much as possible, within the city. (Because of the emphasis on service within Mobile, the proposed cuts fell heavily on routes reaching into Prichard and Chickasaw, a point that has figured prominently in the ensuing discussion.)

Feedback was accepted, by writing and at a public comment hearing held Feb. 25. Following this, Wesch said, some of the cuts to service within the city were eased.

With that history established, Tuesday's council session provided one last chance for comment on a decision that had been extensively framed: City leaders have said they feel that Mobile's expenses are out of line with transit spending in Montgomery and Huntsville; that Mobile can't afford to fund a regional system, at least not without contributions from the communities it serves; and that in a time when the city has been making a comprehensive effort to tighten spending, it was only fair for The WAVE to be pushed to be more efficient.

While The WAVE's advocates don't necessarily buy all the numbers, their appeals on Tuesday had more to do with the human cost.

At the Feb. 25 public comment meeting, Prichard Mayor Troy Ephriam drew cheers from the audience with a fiery call for Mobile leaders to maintain the status quo, continuing to fund WAVE service in his city. Speaking before the Mobile council on Tuesday, he struck a far more somber note, asking for time and compassion. "We have not been given a fair opportunity to do what we can," he said, saying that Mobile was moving so quickly that cash-strapped Prichard had no realistic opportunity to come up with money to offset the action.

"It's not as if Mobile and Prichard are separated by five, ten, fifteen miles," he said, saying that the cities are linked economically and socially.

"We want to be a partner in resolving this, and not just left out."

Severia Campbell-Morris, one of two Prichard City Council members who accompanied Ephriam, said she knew the value of the system personally: Suffering from glaucoma, she had come to depend on The WAVE to get into Mobile for shopping and medical treatment. "We come to Mobile for all the services and things we need," she said.

Campbell-Morris was not the only person to speak on behalf of those who rely on public transit because of blindness or impaired vision. Latonya Reese, a blind woman residing in the Tillman's Corner area, implored the council not to take away the Tillman's Corner circulator, a route slated for closure due to its low ridership. She depends on it to get to work, she said.

"Use your hearts," Reese said. "People will suffer." Continue [HERE](#)

Midtown Mobile Movement Releases Vision for Old Shell Road Development

Following extensive community engagement and the feedback received from a survey, website comments and emails received, Midtown Mobile Movement is asking urban designers to create concepts that could be used to work with the Augusta Evans developer and allow the goal of their Design Old Shell Road plan to be realized over time. For the full article, continue [here](#).

Concept A – View from Old Shell



Why Baldwin County is Alabama's undisputed king of growth

By [John Sharp | jsharp@al.com](mailto:John.Sharp@al.com)

Baldwin County, the state's undisputed king of growth, added another 3,000 residents last year.

No other county in Alabama is rising faster. For mayors, schools, planners and families trying to put down roots, it's astonishing, nerve-racking and challenging, all at the same time.

Baldwin's population has climbed by 21,444 since 2010, [pushing it past 200,000](#), according to the latest Census data.

The next-quickest growers were Madison and Lee, at 18,278 and 16,697, respectively. Madison County is home to Huntsville, while Lee County includes Auburn.

In fact, those three counties have [accounted for 49 percent of the state's population increase since 2010](#).

But it's Baldwin that stands out. The county – with a land mass larger than Rhode Island – features no single large metro. Instead, it's a proliferation of smaller cities and their residential surrounds.

The northern half of the county has remained quiet and largely rural. But the southern half is exploding, from Spanish Fort to Daphne and Fairhope, across to Loxley, Robertdale and Foley, and down to Gulf Shores and Orange Beach.

Shelby County outside Birmingham was once Alabama's standard-bearer for growth, but no more.

'Great choices'

According to statistics provided by the Baldwin County Association of Realtors, the county has experienced a 39 percent increase in the number of residential properties purchased since 2011. And during the period, sales in each new year topped the previous one.

The average days on the market for a house in Baldwin County was 169 in 2011 and 173 in 2012. It fell to 158 in 2014, then to 145 in 2015. Continue [HERE](#)

Transportation series: What's wrong on Pleasure Island?

BY JOHN MULLEN johnm@gulfcoastmedia.com | 0 comments

GULF SHORES, AL – When it comes to what's wrong with transportation on Pleasure Island and the resort towns of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, it's pretty simple.

There are only two north-south roads and only two east-west roads. And when you cram 100,000 people or more all trying to move about between the two cities chaos can erupt.

The problems are exacerbated on check out days or Saturday and Sunday mornings in the busy season.

"It's like we have a Fourth of July type situation every weekend during the season," Orange Beach Mayor Tony Kennon said.

In Gulf Shores that means long lines from the east and west on Alabama 182, or beach road, trying to turn north on Alabama 59 to head out of town. Once on Alabama 59 it's bumper to bumper pretty much to and through Foley as the exodus heads to I-10.

For Orange Beach those checkout times can mean a line of traffic from the Foley Beach Express toll bridge east down Canal Road to Alabama 161, south from there to Alabama 182. Residents have even said they've seen traffic backed up on Alabama 182 east all the way to the Perdido Pass Bridge.

Additionally, in Orange Beach, traffic on Canal Road east on check out days or other days of high volume through the Alabama 161-Canal Road intersection, traffic as stacked up as far as four miles east.

It's a mess at certain times of the day.

And the volume is going to grow as building continues. Brett Robinson has two condo buildings, one in each town, that are more than 20 stories apiece. It will add 80 units in Gulf Shores and 112 in Orange Beach

Two more by other developers, again one in each town, are scheduled to be brought to planning commissions this month. Abaco is a 78-unit, 24-story Gulf-front condominium complex planned for West Beach Boulevard in Gulf Shores. Continue [HERE](#)

Transportation Research

Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures

This new FHWA [guidebook](#) discusses how communities can measure bicycle and pedestrian investments and the data required. It provides several performance measures and examples of communities currently using the measures.

Incorporating On-Road Bicycle Networks into Resurfacing Projects

This FHWA [report](#) provides guidance for transportation agencies interested in integrating bicycle facilities into their resurfacing program. Guidance includes methods for fitting bicycle facilities onto existing roads, cost considerations, and case studies.

Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts

An upcoming public webinar will provide an overview of FHWA's forthcoming *Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts* report. This resource will highlight examples of design flexibility as a follow-up to FHWA's [Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Flexibility Memorandum](#). It will cover planning and design solutions for reducing conflicts between modes, enhancing access to opportunity, achieving connected pedestrian and bicycle networks, and reconnecting communities. The webinar will provide an overview of core concepts in the final report, anticipated to be released in May 2016. The webinar on April 11th will focus on planning and design strategies to reduce conflicts between modes.

Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts – Webinar 2 (Reducing Conflicts between Modes)

(Open to the Public)

April 11, 2016: 2:00-3:30 pm (Eastern Time)

Registration is now open. To reserve your seat, please visit

<https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/dot/fhwa/WC/Lists/Seminars/DispForm.aspx?ID=955>

If this link does not work, please copy the link and paste it into your browser.

Building Healthy Places Toolkit

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) released [Building Healthy Places Toolkit: Strategies for Enhancing Health in the Built Environment](#) to provide guidance on creating healthy, vibrant communities. The toolkit builds on previous ULI efforts, including the [Building Healthy Places Initiative](#) and [Healthy Corridors Project](#).

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