



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, April 22, 2016

Volume 18, Number 4

## In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET APRIL 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

## Recently Completed Planning Studies

Destination 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan  
Toole Design Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile  
2016 Unified Planning Work Program  
2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program  
Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

## Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>  
[transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org)

Kevin Harrison, PTP  
Director of Transportation  
[kharrison@sarpc.org](mailto:kharrison@sarpc.org)

Tom Piper  
Senior Transportation Planner  
[tpiper@sarpc.org](mailto:tpiper@sarpc.org)

Monica Williamson  
Transportation Planner  
[mwilliamson@sarpc.org](mailto:mwilliamson@sarpc.org)

Anthony Johnson  
Transportation Planner  
[ajohnson@sarpc.org](mailto:ajohnson@sarpc.org)

Congrats to the 8 awardees of the ALDOT's TAP Grants this year (*see In The News*). Last week the Mobile MPO announced the availability of its **Mobile Urbanized FY 2016 TAP funding** (*See Funding Opportunities*). There will be an MPO meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and TCC/CAC meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> (*see Mobile MPO Updates*). This week's *Just For Fun* is for the Birds....

Have a great weekend!

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



[www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org) check us out on FACEBOOK

## Mobile MPO Updates

### MPO Meeting June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016; TCC/CAC Meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup>

There will be a MPO meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to go over the Draft Unified Planning Work Program. The TCC/CAC will review the document on May 18<sup>th</sup>. 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 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. We did not have a quorum on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, those items that were on the March 2<sup>nd</sup> agenda will be on the agenda at the June 1<sup>st</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup>, 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 29<sup>th</sup>, 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

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### **Appropriations subcommittee backs transportation spending bill**

By Melanie Zanona - 04/19/16 11:59 AM EDT

A Senate subcommittee on Tuesday swiftly approved a \$56.5 billion transportation spending bill, sending the legislation to the full panel.

During a brief markup, the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on transportation and housing unanimously backed a measure that would provide \$56.5 billion in discretionary spending to the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Housing and Urban Development and other related agencies in fiscal 2017.

The figure is \$2.9 billion less than the president's budget request and \$827 million less than the current level.

Susan Collins (R-Maine), the panel's chairwoman, asked that members hold off on offering amendments until the full committee markup on Thursday. This is usually one of the less contentious appropriations bills in Congress, and ranking member Jack Reed (D-R.I.) applauded the subcommittee's bipartisan work.

"You've done an extraordinary job, and you have worked to include priorities for members on both sides of the aisle, reflecting the bipartisan tradition of this committee," Reed said to Collins.

The appropriations bill contains \$16.9 billion for the DOT, which is \$1.7 billion below the current level. The legislation prioritizes programs to make transportation systems safer, more efficient and reliable, according to a summary.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would get \$16.4 billion, or about \$131.6 million more than the current level.

Lawmakers emphasized that the bill would grant \$1 billion for the FAA Next Generation Air Transportation Systems and fully fund air traffic control, contract towers and aviation safety oversight facilities.

"This legislation assists families in need, funds grants to help reduce homelessness, increases the safety of our nation's highways and airspace, and supports transportation infrastructure and community development projects that will help grow our economy," Collins said.

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### **States Struggle With Infrastructure Needs After FAST Act's Mild Funding Hikes**

A number of state departments of transportation are telling lawmakers and residents to expect their highway systems to continue to deteriorate unless legislatures provide more project funding, and some states are eyeing unusual steps to keep projects moving.

A senior Michigan DOT official – Chief Operations Officer Mark Van Port Fleet – recently warned state House and Senate transportation committees, [the Detroit News reported](#), that "the results of our predictive model is that the condition of pavement is going to continue to decline" despite higher state and federal funding levels approved in the past year.

A [March 22 MDOT staff analysis](#) said: "A significant amount of pavement is in fair condition. Even with the recent passage of increased state and federal transportation revenue, many of these pavements, if not addressed soon, will fall into poor condition. Once pavements deteriorate into the poor category, it is more costly to bring them back into good condition."



New state projections also see vehicle miles on state roads going up faster than earlier estimates, with congestion continuing to worsen.

The MDOT official told lawmakers that a large multiyear state funding plan, signed into law by Gov. Rick Snyder last November, is "going to slow the decline" in road conditions, the Detroit News said.

AASHTO and other industry trade groups have said the new five-year FAST Act federal surface transportation legislation provided "modest" increases in core highway and transit program funding. While that was an improvement from previous levels, AASHTO has said it was not enough to allow states to eliminate their large backlog of needed infrastructure projects to maintain their networks and reduce congestion.

Bud Wright, AASHTO's executive director, said state struggles for transportation funding are likely to continue.

"We are already seeing record-high traffic volumes, and the population and freight traffic will only keep growing," he said. "States are having to make hard decisions on how much to invest in their transportation networks without much more help at the federal level, even though the integrated highway system is a national economic asset. So far Congress has mainly pushed infrastructure expenses back to state governments."

In Missouri, [the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported](#) that the Missouri DOT plans to "dip heavily into its cash reserves to secure federal matching funds in coming years," a plan that risks drawing reserves too low to handle sudden high-cost repairs or drops in projected revenues.

One Missouri House lawmaker introduced legislation to [auction off naming rights to highway and bridges](#) as an alternative to a Senate plan to raise motor fuel user taxes.

Auditors for the South Carolina General Assembly told lawmakers they needed to increase funding for the state DOT, besides recommendations the audit panel made for how the SCDOT can improve its accounting and reporting on use of funds. ([See story in the States section](#) of this week's Journal.)

But news reports said differences on funding measures between the House and Senate could kill funding legislation for this year.

Among others finding their budgets crimped is the Oklahoma DOT, where [appropriations have been repeatedly cut](#) as overall state revenues fell below forecasts, partly due to lower state receipts from oil and gas production.

And in Mississippi, where DOT Executive Director Melinda McGrath has warned that her department faces "dire" investment choices without more funding, lawmakers unable to reach agreement on a proposed fuel tax increase [killed a placeholder bill this month](#) at the deadline for revenue-generating legislation.

## Funding Opportunities

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### 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 Beaugard 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](http://www.mobilempo.org). Click the Mobile MPO tab, then the Transportation Alternatives tab.

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### **U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx Announces \$500 Million in Eighth Round of TIGER Funding (Due April 29<sup>th</sup>, 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](#)

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### **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](mailto:dburnett@sarpc.org).

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### **Federal Highway Administration Announces \$60 Million in Grants for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies- Deadline June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

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](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/funding.cfm)

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

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### **Transit Core Capacity Improvement Projects**

FTA announced the availability of \$20.5 million in competitive grant funds to support comprehensive planning associated with new fixed guideway and core capacity improvement projects that are seeking or have recently received funding through FTA’s Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program. The grant funds are provided through FTA’s Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning. Please see the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) and a summary of the funding opportunity with links to application materials is available on the [FTA website](#). **Applications are due at midnight Eastern time on June 13, 2016.**

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### **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](#).

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## **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](#).

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## **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](#).

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## 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](#).

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## Just For Fun



The California Department of Transportation found over 200 dead crows on California highways recently, and there was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be from vehicular impacts. However, during analysis it was noted that varying colors of paints appeared on the ...bird's beaks and claws. By analyzing these paint residues it was found that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with motorcycles, while only 2% were killed by cars.

The Agency then hired an Ornithological Behaviourist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of motorbike kills versus car kills. The Ornithological Behaviourist quickly concluded that when crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow to warn of danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "motorcycle".

## In the News

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MODAL PROGRAMS BUREAU SPECIAL PROGRAMS SECTION TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) FY 2016 PROJECTS (MOBILE, BALDWIN, ESCAMBIA COUNTIES)

AGENCY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FEDERAL	TOTAL
FAIRHOPE, CITY OF	NEW SIDEWALKS TO MANLEY RD. SOCCER COMPLEX	\$400,000	\$500,000
ATMORE , CITY OF	SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS	\$396,980	\$496,225
SATSUMA, CITY OF	SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS	\$399,080	\$498,850
ROBERTSDALE, CITY OF	KRCHAK LANE & PALMER ST. SIDEWALK	\$398,956	\$495,695
SPANISH FORT, CITY OF	SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS ALONG HWY 225	\$396,057	\$495,072
ESCAMBIA COUNTY COMM.	SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS	\$372,914	\$466,143
BREWTON CITY OF	SIDEWALK EXTENSIONALONG HWY 49	\$231,720	\$289,650
FLOMATON CITY OF	SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS	\$187,110	\$233,888

### Why toll roads and bridges are making a coastal Alabama comeback



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

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)  
on April 17, 2016 at 6:04 AM, updated April 17, 2016 at 6:05 AM

Alabama once sold roosters to finance a bridge, so it might not seem so out of the ordinary for transportation officials to turn to tolls for big-ticket projects.

In the next few years, tolls may play a crucial role funding major roadwork in Mobile and Baldwin counties, where [rapid coastal growth is fueling congestion](#).

"It is another tool in our toolbox," Baldwin County Commissioner Chris Elliott said.

Two tolling options have surfaced:

- Baldwin's state lawmakers expect passage of a bill this session that allows voters to determine whether to establish a toll authority for major projects such as a [Baldwin Beach Express](#) extension and a new bridge crossing the Intracoastal Waterway.
- The Alabama Department of Transportation announced Friday that it will conduct a travel and toll study for much-sought-after project to build an Interstate 10 Mobile River bridge and widen the I-10 Bayway.

#### 'Go on our own'

The Baldwin toll authority concept is unique for the state. No county has set up such an entity previously to deal with roads.

[The bill](#), which cleared the House earlier this month, establishes the toll authority if voters, during the November general election, support it.

Under the terms of the bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve McMillan, R-Gulf Shores, the new authority could determine how much and to what extent that tolling should be imposed to for the construction of the Beach Express from I-10 north to I-65 or to help finance the Intracoastal bridge that would open new access to Gulf Shores and Orange Beach.

The bill awaits approval in the Senate, where Sen. Trip Pittman, R-Montrose, said it has a good chance of passing during the waning days of the Legislature's regular session.

McMillan said the idea is to find an alternative means to green-light expensive projects which are unlikely to be paid for through dwindling state resources anytime soon. "We've talked about it for years and decided the time was right to go our own way and not rely on anyone else," he said.

The quasi-governmental authority, set up by the Baldwin County Commission, would have the ability to issue revenue bonds for construction. The authority's jurisdiction to set tolls would be limited to new road projects only. Existing roads, such as the highly traveled Alabama 59, would not be subject to tolling.

"You wouldn't toll Fish River Bridge, you'd do it for major projects," said Commissioner Tucker Dorsey. "We're not going to toll (Alabama) 181. But we'll have options."

The Beach Express extension would create a wide new corridor between I-65 and the beaches, the state's most lucrative tourism draw by far. Revenue from a toll charge – affecting a section of the roadway -- would be coupled with [BP spill-settlement dollars provided through a separate bill sponsored by Sen. Bill Hightower, R-Mobile](#).

The Hightower bill would give a major chunk of the state's \$1 billion BP settlement to transportation projects statewide. But it specifically sets aside \$250 million for the Baldwin Beach Express and the extension of U.S. 98 in Mobile County.

Elliott and Dorsey said Hightower's bill, while offering a significant boost for the Beach Express, would not cover its entire cost. "We're going to have to come up with another mechanism," Dorsey said. Continue [HERE](#)

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## Alabama's deadliest railroad crossing accident-free for 3 years



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

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on April 22, 2016 at 7:02 AM, updated April 22, 2016 at 7:08 AM

A notorious Alabama railroad crossing has made a Federal Railroad Administration list of the worst in the country – but state information suggests the problem already has been fixed.

On Thursday, the Federal Railroad Administration released [a list of the crossings with the most reported incidents in the last ten years](#). Most appeared to fall in densely populated urban settings: Phoenix, Ariz., claimed the No. 1, No. 2 and No. 5 spots. Baton Rouge, Memphis, Houston, Cleveland all figured in the top 13, as did Elmwood Park, N Evergreen, Ala.J., in the New York City metropolitan area.

But a crossing in., a city of 4,000 people on I-65 about 90 miles north of Mobile, also made the cut. The FRA credited the intersection with 13 incidents, good for ninth place on the list – but also with five fatalities, the highest of any intersection on the list.

A 2013 AL.com story about [the seven deadliest crossings in Alabama](#) identified the Evergreen crossing as "far and

away" the worst. The five deaths weren't a one-time fluke, but were spread across three fatal incidents.

Belleville Street in Evergreen hooks across a freight line just before ending at U.S. 31, across from a shopping center. According to [another 2013 AL.com story focusing specifically on the intersection](#), the five fatalities include two drivers, one passenger and two pedestrians.

[In that story](#), local witnesses describe collisions they'd witnessed, which included situations in which cars waiting at the intersection had been caught on the tracks. Evergreen Mayor Pete Wolff said he had been "raising hell" since 2010 to have safety gates added to the crossing. Finally, in fall 2013, they had been – but no one knew yet if they were going to make a life-saving difference.

It appears they have: On Thursday, an Alabama Department of Transportation spokesman said that the intersection had been clean for three years. "I'm showing that the last incident we had at that intersection was in January 2013," said Joshua Phillips of ALDOT. Continue [HERE](#)

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## National Performance Management Measure Regulations

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has released [a copy of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking \(NPRM\)](#) to propose national performance management measure regulations to assess the performance of the National Highway System, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, as required by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act ("FAST Act"). The NPRM is scheduled for publication in the *Federal Register* on Friday, April 22.

FHWA will be offering a number of webinars to present the details of this proposed rulemaking. The [first webinar](#) is intended to provide an overview of the complete proposal and is scheduled for April 21, 2016.

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## Transportation Research

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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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