



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, December 12, 2014

Volume 12, Number  
10

## In This Issue

- **MOBILE MPO UPDATES**
- **PROJECTS LET DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**
- **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**
- **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**
- **JUST FOR FUN**
- **IN THE NEWS**
- **TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH**

## Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

## 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)

The Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating Committee/Citizen Advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) will meet on Wednesday, December 17, 2014. The Mobile MPO Policy Committee will vote on the recommendations by the TCC/CAC at a meeting on January 7, 2015. (See MPO Updates) This evening head to downtown Mobile for the ElfWalk (See Just for Fun). This will be our last newsletter of 2014. We hope you have very happy and safe Christmas and New Year's. We'll resume the Transportation Friday Newsletter on January 2, 2015.



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



[www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org) check us out on FACEBOOK  
706-1CAR

## Mobile MPO Updates

### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### **TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TCC)/CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) of the MOBILE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) MEETING**

The Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating Committee/Citizen Advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) will meet on Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 10:00 am at the GM&O Building in the Training Room at 110 Beaugard Street. The purpose of the meeting is to rebalance the STP Attributable funding schedule, review the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan and discuss adding the following item to the Transportation Improvement Program.

#### **HSIP Funds**

Construct offset left turn lanes and a WB right turn lane US98 at McCrary Road; 4/24/15; \$780,000

The Mobile MPO will vote on the recommendations by the TCC/CAC at a meeting on January 7, 2015 at 10:00 am at the GM&O Building in the Board Room.

Additional information may be obtained from the Transportation Planning Coordinator at the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, 433-6541. Written comments regarding the projects are welcome and may be submitted to:

Anthony Johnson  
Transportation Planner  
ajohnson@sarpc.org

South Alabama Regional  
Planning Commission  
110 Beauregard St  
Mobile, Alabama 36602  
(251) 433-6541

Transportation Planning Coordinator  
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission  
P. O. Box 1665  
Mobile, AL 36633-1665  
(FAX 433-6009).

Physically challenged persons who need special accommodations should contact SARPC in advance so arrangements can be made to meet their needs.

---

### **Mobile Urban Area FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)**

Our 5310 grant has received all of the final stamps! We have been officially awarded the grant. We will begin the procurement process next week.

The approved projects include:

- The City of Bayou La Batre - \$44,600 federal funds for a 15 passenger van
- Mobile ARC \$173,000 federal funds for operating assistance for public transit for disabled clients
- AHEPA - \$40,000 federal funds for a 15 passenger van
- Mercy Life - \$64,000 federal funds for a 28-30 passenger bus
- Mobile Bay Transportation Company - \$64,964 for two vans and \$21,563 for operating assistance for public transit for elderly and disabled clients

---

### **Non-motorized Mobility study for Downtown Mobile**

We have given Toole Design Group Notice to proceed on the Non-motorized Mobility study for Downtown Mobile. If you would like to be stakeholder, please let us know. There is going to be plenty of time for public input as laid out in the scope of work [HERE](#).

---

### **I-10 Mobile River Bridge**

Although the comment period is over, please stay tuned to the following web sites for details and information about the I-10 Mobile River Bridge.

For more information on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge:

ALDOT'S Web Site: <http://www.mobileriverbridge.com/>

Build The I-10 Bridge Coalition Web Site: <http://www.buildthei10bridge.com/>

---

### **DESTINATION 2040**

The MPO Staff is wrapping up the Draft 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan titled Destination 2040. The objective of the plan is to identify, to the maximum extent feasible, the multi-modal transportation improvements which will be needed in the Mobile urban area between now and the year 2040 in order to maintain an acceptable level of mobility. The plan is multi-modal in scope, encompassing long-range plans for highway, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian networks. Regional growth, economic development, and accessibility within the study area along with environmental concerns necessitate that the long-range plan addresses not only improved vehicular travel but also improvements to other modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking. Preservation of the existing transportation system coupled with enhancement of all modal choices will contribute to the improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. You can learn more about the plan [HERE](#).

## **Projects Within Region Let December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

---

### **Baldwin County**

- for constructing the Widening, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on Wilters Street from the intersection of SR-59 to Rock Creek to include the extension of Wilters Street from Rock Creek to the junction of CR-83 (Baldwin Beach Express) in Robertsdale. Length 2.575 mi

- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from the east end of Blakeley River Bridge (MP 42.718) to just west of the I-10 Westbound Ramp (MP 44.083). Length 1.364 mi.

#### **Escambia County**

- for constructing the Division wide Emergency Repairs at Various Sites as indicated in the plans.
- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-21 from just north of the intersection of Sunset Drive (the beginning of the four-lane section) to just south of the junction of CR-14. Length 3.705 mi.

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

## Legislative Updates

---

### **House approves \$1.1T bill financing government**

By [Associated Press](#)

WASHINGTON -- Swapping crisis for compromise, the House narrowly approved \$1.1 trillion in government-wide spending Thursday night after President Barack Obama and Republicans joined forces to override Democratic complaints that the bill would also ease bank regulations imposed after the economy's near-collapse in 2008.

The 219-206 vote cleared the way for a final showdown in the Senate on the bill -- the last major measure of a two-year Congress far better known for gridlock than for bipartisan achievement.

Hours before the vote, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi delivered a rare public rebuke to Obama, saying she was "enormously disappointed" he had decided to embrace legislation that she described as an attempt at blackmail by Republicans.

The White House stated its own objections to the bank-related proposal and other portions of the bill in a written statement. Even so, officials said Obama and Vice President Joe Biden both telephoned Democrats to secure the votes needed for passage, and the president stepped away from a White House Christmas party reception line to make last-minute calls.

In addition to the government funding, the bill sets a new course for selected, highly shaky pension plans. It also sets up a clash for February between Republicans and Obama over his decision to remove the threat of deportation from about 4 million immigrants living in the country illegally. Click [HERE](#) to read the full article.

---

### **Chairman Announces Republican Additions to T&I**

Earlier this week, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair Bill Shuster (R-PA) announced the new Republican members of the full committee that will be added with the seating of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress in January. The new members are: Rob Woodall (GA), Todd Rokita (IN), John Katko (NY), Brian Babin (TX), Crescent Hardy (NV), Ryan Costello (PA), Garret Graves (LA), Mimi Walters (CA), Barbara Comstock (VA), Carlos Curbelo (FL), David Rouzer (NC), and Lee Zeldin (NY). Click [HERE](#) for the press release.

## Funding Opportunities

---

### **U.S. Forest Service – Community Forest Program Funding**

Deadline: January 16, 2015

The Community Forest Program is a grant program that authorizes the U.S. Forest Service to provide financial assistance to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. Click [HERE](#) for the funding opportunity.

---

### **HUD \$1 Billion National Disaster Resilience Competition**

Application Deadline: March 2015

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently launched a National Disaster Resilience Competition, which makes \$1 billion available to communities that have been struck by natural disasters in recent years. The competition promotes risk assessment and planning, and will fund the implementation of innovative resilience projects to better prepare communities for future storms and other extreme events. Representatives from eligible communities will have the opportunity to attend Rockefeller-supported Resilience Academies across the country to strengthen their funding proposals. Click [HERE](#) to apply.

---

## **HUD – Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants**

### ***Applications Due: February 9, 2015***

The Choice Neighborhoods program supports locally driven strategies to address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Choice Neighborhoods is focused on three core goals:

- Housing: Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood;
- People: improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth with services and supports delivered directly to youth and their families; and
- Neighborhood: Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices about their community.

Click [HERE](#) for more information

---

## Just For Fun

### **No Christmas parade in Mobile this year? 2,000 elves hope to prove that wrong, and break Guinness record**

By [Michael Dumas | mdumas@al.com](mailto:Michael.Dumas | mdumas@al.com)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rO4uKgBb5cQ>

MOBILE, Alabama - How many elves does it take to screw in a light bulb? No clue, but it's going to take about 2,000 of them in downtown Mobile on Friday night to break the Guinness World Record.

That's the goal of organizers with the Mobile County Public School System, and the city of Mobile, as they strive to turn the monthly LoDa ArtWalk into ElfWalk 2014.

"When we think about the spirit of Christmas, being an elf probably means keeping that holiday tradition alive," said Eric Browne, a theater teacher at Baker High School and the coordinator of the school system's Arts in Action program.

It was during an ArtWalk meeting over the summer that he and another educator came up with the idea of theater students descending on the downtown entertainment district "dressed up as elves, interacting with folks," Browne said.

Eventually the question was asked, he said: How many elves is a world record?

The answer a few months ago was about 1,200, according to Browne. And then, after planning for what he's calling "Elfapalooza" was in full swing, 1,792 children shattered that record in Bangkok, Thailand, and the bar was raised even higher.

Which is why organizers are hoping for an even 2,000, he said.

#### **That's a lot of hats and pointy ears**

To meet the Guinness requirements for record consideration, Browne said Bienville Square will be fenced in, and at 7 p.m. the city's elves will be counted as they are welcomed into the square.

Participants must have on elf hats, pointy ears and be wearing a combination of green and red

clothing, he said.

Everyone must be in the square for a total of five minutes for the number to be official, Browne said.

After the count - of hopefully at least 1,793 - the elves will disperse and then the "March of Elves" parade will commence and head west on Dauphin Street. Student visual, theatrical and musical artists from several Mobile County schools will perform before and after "Elfapalooza," starting at 6 p.m.

**The list includes:**

- **[Tuba Christmas](#)**
- Baker's Dozen (Baker High School) chorus group
- Kicking Canes Dancers (Alma Bryant High School)
- Musical theater groups from Dunbar and Old Shell magnet schools

Many of the above performers are in the school system's Arts in Action program, and participating in ElfWalk fits right in, according to Browne.

"I felt it was important to get this talent we have in the Mobile County Public School System out of the classroom and in the eye of the community," he said. "(Arts in Action) was developed to get our student visual artists, dancers and performers opportunities to perform at public venues such as Art Walk.

"Hopefully in the future we'll have more performances."

But it's not just about students, Browne said. The community-at-large must come out and transform itself into elves for the record-setting effort to have a chance. Toward that end, the school system will have 1,000 elf hats (with ears) first-come, first-serve.

And the city is pitching in another 400, according to ArtWalk coordinator Joanie Stiff.

"We are so excited about this," Stiff said. "It's going to be so much fun."

Browne and Stiff encourage participants to show up already in costume - remember, that means hat, ears and green-and-red clothing - at Bienville Square before 7 p.m.

## In the News

---

### **South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) Annual Meeting**

Please plan to join us at the SARPC Annual Meeting planned for January 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the Grand Hotel at Point Clear. The annual meeting provides representatives of SARPC's thirty-two member governments as well as other interested citizens an opportunity to participate in a day and a half conference that features informative presentations and information exchanges on a variety of public policy issues confronting the South Alabama region. Please contact Ms. Grace Crawford or Ms. Paula McGlasker at (251) 433 – 6541 for further information.

---

### **HIGHWAY TRUST FUND**

#### **Panel: No Quick Fix to Highway Funding, But Possible Long-Term Legislation in 2015**

A panel of Washington policy experts including AASHTO Executive Director Bud Wright predicted Congress will not be able to quickly pass a major highway/transit bill in coming months, but that a long-term bill could emerge in the context of a broader deal on tax law changes. Click [HERE](#) to read more.

---

#### **Here are the Coastal Alabama traffic areas to avoid during your commute on Friday, Dec. 12**

By [Angela Levins | alevins@al.com](#)

MOBILE, Ala. -- Here is a look at the road projects underway in Mobile and Baldwin counties that drivers could run into during their commute.

Bankhead Tunnel maintenance work should be wrapping up, but be aware you could run in to delays between 8:30 p.m. and 2:30 a.m. through the weekend.

**Mobile:**

Royal Street: Between Dauphin and Conti streets, work on the Van Antwerp building continues to hamper traffic from time to time. Be cautious of pedestrians and workers.

Satchel Paige Drive: Satchel Paige Drive between Government and Bolling Brothers boulevards is closed to traffic. The road is being widened to a four-lane divided road. Work is expected to take about three months. The road project is part of the McGowin Park Shopping Center construction.

**Mobile County:**

Jackson Creek Bridge: Old Pascagoula Road is closed between Ramsey Road and March Road. Bridge being replaced. Project estimated to last a year.

**ALDOT Mobile County:**

I-10: Resurfacing and bridge work from Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George C. Wallace Tunnel. Drivers should expect nighttime closures Sunday to Thursday from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. Work is expected to be completed next summer.

U.S. 90: From Halls Mill to Pine Hill Drive. Lane closures will be at night. Work is expected to be complete by December.

Welcome Center: The Welcome Center at the Alabama/Mississippi line is shut down until at least spring 2016.

**ALDOT Baldwin County:**

I-10: CR 68 connector to Baldwin Beach Express. Work is about 95 percent complete. Drivers may see an occasional lane closure on CR 83 for completing remaining work.

Little Lagoon Pass bridge remains under construction. ALDOT reports that the work is about 65 percent complete. There is a detour bridge next to the Little Lagoon Pass bridge. Expect minimal traffic delays.

## Transportation Research

---

### **\$163 Billion Needed to Fix Nation's Aging Surface Transportation System**

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) released the *2015 Bottom Line Report*, which estimates that the U.S. needs to invest \$120 billion in the nation's highway and bridge network and \$43 billion in America's public transportation infrastructure over the next 6 years. Currently, \$83 billion is invested in roads and bridges and \$17.1 billion in public transit. These investment needs are calculated based on an analysis of demand trends and current network performance. Click [HERE](#) for the full report.

---

### **FHWA is offering an 8 hour workshop on the New FHWA Roadway Lighting Handbook.**

The purpose of the event is for participants to learn about roadway lighting design and the requirements from the new Handbook. Presentations and discussion will focus on:

*The impact of New Solid State LED Lighting technology*  
*Lighting Design Standards from the FHWA, AASHTO and the IES*  
*Warranting and the Impact of Lighting on Roadway Safety*  
*New Innovative approaches to Roadway Lighting Design*

The workshop presenters will be:

*Dr. Ronald Gibbons, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute,*  
*Paul Lutkevich, Parsons Brinckerhoff and*  
*Don McLean, DMD and Associates*

Date/Time: January 20th, 1pm – 5pm,

January 21st, 8am to Noon

Questions? Joseph Cheung - FHWA Office of Safety

202-366-6994 [Joseph.Cheung@dot.gov](mailto:Joseph.Cheung@dot.gov)

---

The 2nd Annual Automated Vehicles Summit will be held on December 15-16 in Orlando.

<http://www.automatedfl.com/event/2014summit/>

For questions and more information please contact:

Ed Hutchinson [Ed.Hutchinson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Ed.Hutchinson@dot.state.fl.us)

**Florida DOT**

**Transportation Statistics Office Manager**

**605 Suwannee Street MS 27**

**Tallahassee, FL 32399-0445**

---

**The U.S. Census has released the first Industry Series release for the Construction sector**

The first set of detailed statistics from the Industry Series for the following sectors has been released on the Census Bureau's American FactFinder web site:

- [Sector 23: Construction](#)

Data for these sectors will be released on a flow basis. Click [here](#) to view a release schedule, see what has been released, or take a sneak peek at what's projected to be released in the next 30 days. For more information about the Industry Series, click [here](#).