



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, December 6th, 2013

Volume 8, Number 9

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Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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There are several congratulations in order this week. Ms. Margie Wilcox, long time member of the Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory Committee won the republican ticket for Alabama house District 104. Also, last month Mayor Patsy Parker of the Town of Perdido Beach was appointed to President Obama's Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience. She is seeking comment; please see *In The News*. Speaking of Climate Change, there are new documents to review for Mobile Climate Change Workgroup, and SARPC is now the Designated Recipient of FTA 5310 funds; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*.

Gas tax increase? See *Legislative Updates*.

If you see anyone littering on the streets of Mobile, report it! Call #KMB (#562) or 208-6025 (put that number in your cell phone). Please see *In The News*, Keep Mobile Beautiful has a new web site.

Have a great weekend!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK
706-1CAR

Mobile MPO Updates

Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating / Citizens Advisory Meeting

A date has not been set but the Mobile MPO TCC/CAC will need to meet sometime in January. The cost estimate for the Right of Way for McGregor Avenue was significantly increased, creating a negative balance in our Attributable schedule of funds. We will keep you posted but it looks like we have to rebalance the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Also, SARPC (the Mobile MPO) is now the Designated Recipient of the [FTA 5310 funds](#). These are Formula Grant Funds for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities. The Mobile Urban Area will receive about \$360k annually for these types of projects. There are still some loose ends to tie up before we announce the availability of these funds to you; we will keep you posted.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting December 11th @ Noon

There will be a BPAC meeting on December 11th at noon in the board room of the GM&O Building. This will be a bring your own brown bag lunch meeting as usual. We will be holding elections for a new Chairperson. The Vice-Chair is currently Ms. Jessica Melton.

Items on the agenda include a presentation by Mr. Mike Lee from the Mobile Chamber of Commerce regarding the proposed I-10 Mobile River Bridge, a presentation from Mr. Scott Tillman from the Birmingham MPO regarding their proposed Bike Share Program, a review of upcoming road projects including Ann Street and McGregor Avenue, and a review of recent crashes involving cyclists and pedestrians. This meeting is open to the public and anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Destination 2040

Destination 2040 is a public relations campaign to try and encourage public input into our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). For decades we have been doing the same thing, in terms of collecting public input in our plans. Most of the time it is difficult to get attendance to a public meeting concerning a long range plan. However, this LRTP we are going to ask the public: "Where do you want the roads to be widened", "Where do you want new transit routes?", "Where do you want the bicycle routes to be?", "Where do you think the growth projections should be?"

Destination 2040 is different because normally we ask the public for input after we have done the draft plan, to basically seek their approval of the plan. However, this will be a means to get the public involved with the development of the plan, and let their concerns be addressed in the plan from the very beginning. We have done

the math, and we can tell you what the travel demand forecast models tell us in terms of where growth should go and what roads need to be built or widened. Anything the public wants us to test in the model, we can do that. So whatever future projects the public can conjure, we want to address them in the LRTP.

Two Destination 2040 meetings will be held on January 7th and 8th, 2014 with a web page and plenty of chances to comment. We will keep you posted; please [see brochure](#).

Climate Change Update

The Federal Climate Change Team has sent us and the Mobile MPO Climate Change Workgroup documents to review. The Gulf Coast Study is almost complete and this February will be a roll out of the final plan. There will be a multi-state/MPO Climate Change workshop as part of the closing of this study. We will keep you posted on these dates. The Vulnerability Assessment Report (Task 3.1) review documents are a 3.1 Final Report Peer Review (PDF), 3.1 Final Results Table (Excel) and a Stakeholder Review Template (PDF). The spreadsheet provides the complete asset-by-asset vulnerability scores and results. Please see [here](http://mobilempo.org/climatechange.html) to review the documents.

A big thanks goes out to all of the Climate Change Workgroup and the participation you have given.

Freight Surveys

Staff is currently updating our freight data. This consists of surveying over 200 businesses and industries in the Mobile area that use freight, or generate freight. This is no easy task, but it is data that is not available from any other resource. ***If you have any issues concerning the movement of heavy trucks, we want to hear about them.***

Several years ago, in partnership with the University of Alabama at Huntsville (UAH), SARPC layered freight into our existing Long Range Plan. The original intent was to create a single, comprehensive, multi-dimensional, multi-modal, and predictive tool for transportation infrastructure planning. The project hit some pitfalls including data availability. The trip generation and projection methodology for freight was very robust and required a lot of data. The Industry Cluster Analysis, although seemed to be a perfect match for the SARPC freight model, did not produce results that met the validation expectations of SARPC.

Today, with the availability of the much improved Freight Analysis Framework (FAF3), the percent trucks are derived from FAF3 data. ALDOT has conducted vehicle classification counts for SARPC at over 40 stations within our study area. The FAF3 base year data is more in line with the vehicle classification counts data provided by ALDOT. Although the FAF3 data does provide a year 2040 truck count, it is based on a percentage of the total overall volume for year 2040 projected for each facility. These projections derived by the FAF3 are grossly overestimated and are unusable; the SARPC freight component to the model only uses the TADT (a percentage of trucks) derived from the FAF3.

A portion of the trip generation component to the industry cluster analysis of the model that was to be produced by the UAH study, was freight surveys conducted by SARPC. These freight surveys began in 2008 and continue today. Staff maintains and updates a database of these surveys that not only try to develop a local sense of where freight is coming from and going to locally, how much freight is generated locally, but it gives the MPO a sense of infrastructure needs in terms of our freight providers (turning radius, capacity issues, etc.).

DON'T FORGET TO CARPOOL

The CommuteSmart program began as a solution to growing traffic congestion. As an alternative to a single occupied vehicle, the program provides commuters with the tools for ridematching and starting carpools. The various services available help commuters lower their personal commuting expense, reduce the wear and tear on their personal vehicles, and lessen their level of stress traveling back and forth to work each day.

In 2005, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham and the [Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization](#) (MPO) began looking at expanding the CommuteSmart program to the entire State of Alabama. Mobile was one of the first cities to join the program.

CommuteSmart offers commuters free online ridematching, carpool services, the Emergency Ride Home program and more. Find out how this local rideshare program supports and encourages working commuters in their efforts to find a smarter way to work! Check out the website <http://www.commutesmart.org/mobile/> or call (251) 706-1CAR for more information.

Projects Within Region Let December 6th, 2013

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-180 from 0.28 miles west of the Foley Beach Express to east of SR-161 in Orange Beach. Length 3.3 mi.
- For constructing the Maintenance Dredging at Little Lagoon Pass in Gulf Shores.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- None at this time

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Video Wall Upgrades at the Traffic Management Center and at the Southwest Region Construction Office in Mobile.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Guardrail, Bridge Jacking, Pedestrian Bridge Removal, Signals, and Bridge Rail Retrofit on I-10 from Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George Wallace Tunnel. Length 8.6 mi

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

Time to Update with the UPDATE ACT OF 2013

Blumenauer Pushes for Gas Tax Increase: In a move that received a lot of attention this week, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced the UPDATE Act of 2013, which would follow the recommendation of the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction report and increase the federal gasoline tax by 15 cents per gallon, nearly doubling it to 33.4 cents per gallon. The federal gas tax has remained unchanged for more than two decades; Blumenauer's proposal would put the tax slightly higher than it would be had it been indexed for inflation in 1993. You can read more about this proposal [HERE](#)

Staff's thoughts:

The overall VMT in the country is lower [\[HERE\]](#), and it is not just economy driven but a shift in travel patterns [\[HERE\]](#). The vehicles of today are getting better gas mileage, people are traveling less, and we have not had a gas tax increase since 1993. The average motorist is paying about half as much per mile as they did in 1993. This shift is concerning because alternative methods for funding roads, like public private partnerships PPP's and toll roads, are turning out to be clunkers for investors [\[HERE\]](#). We need federal funds to help pay for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge, AND all of our other road projects.

Congress is going to have to do something. Former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on Monday said Washington is "too afraid" to invest in new infrastructure. "It's going to be up to Congress, it's going to be up to the administration, and the people to decide that they are sick and tired of driving on crumbling roads, bad and dangerous bridges, and riding on 50-year-old transit systems," LaHood said on MSNBC's "Morning Joe."

Funding Opportunities

Round 3 of the Implementation Assistance Program SHRP2, Deadline February 14, 2014:

FHWA recently released the recipients of [Round 2 grants](#) and announced the schedule for rounds 3 and 4. These grants are intended to help transportation agencies deploy new products developed under the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). If you would like additional information or have questions about the program, please contact Carin Michel, FHWA SHRP2 Implementation Manager at goSHRP2@dot.gov or 410-962-2530. Click [HERE](#) to read the release about the upcoming rounds.

Economic Development Administration

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

EDA provides strategic investments that foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas of the United States. Under this FFO, EDA solicits applications from both rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. Link to Additional Information: [EDA's website](#) Please contact Diane Burnett of SARPC staff for questions 706-4621. Also, don't forget SARPC has a revolving fund loan program. <http://www.sarpc.org/rif.asp> The RLF is a locally controlled source of capital used to finance small business start-up and expansion whose projects will create permanent jobs. By combining RLF and bank financing the borrower can realize an effective rate well below market rates.

Just For Fun

Have you ever walked into a parking lot from a grocery store and tried to unlock a vehicle that looks like yours, but is not? Imagine going to a convenience store, getting back in your vehicle, KNOWING it is your vehicle, but there is something different about your passenger...



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjaPA8evcqE>

In the News

Keep Mobile Beautiful launches new web site

Keep Mobile Beautiful has announced the launch of their new website, www.keepmobilebeautiful.org

Ann Claire Carnahan, an Ambassador Girl Scout, is working toward her Gold Award which is similar to the Boy Scout's Eagle Award. In doing so she helped a Mobile non-profit. Her specific goal was to create a website for KMB that would be packed with information and easy to navigate.

"For my project, I have created Keep Mobile Beautiful's first ever website, www.keepmobilebeautiful.org. The website was launched this weekend and is proving to be a huge success," Carnahan said in a recent email. "Now that I have completed the website itself, I am working on getting the word out about it, to help improve Keep Mobile Beautiful's communication with Mobile citizens."

The UMS-Wright Preparatory School student also announced a contest Keep Mobile Beautiful is holding to promote the website.

People are encouraged to visit the new website and check it out. Then go to the Keep Mobile Beautiful Facebook page. "Like" the page, and add a comment on the page about the new KMB website and you are entered into a competition to win tickets to Bellingrath Gardens, which was just named the best place to see Christmas lights in America by howstuffworks.

WAVE TRANSIT STUFF THE BUS

It is The Wave's 7th year to Stuff the Bus!!! This year we will be stuffing the bus for children who attend the Nina Nicks Joseph Child Development Center on Washington Avenue in Mobile.

This agency is the oldest child day care center in Mobile, open since 1945. They currently serve 120 children.

82% of those are from the lower socio economic group, and receive funding from the state for their care.

The children that they serve are 6 weeks to 12 years old.

Please bring by an unwrapped gift for children in this age group to our Wave bus which will be parked in front of the Midtown Wal-Mart on Saturday, December, 14, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

People making donations will get a chance to meet the staff of Nina Nicks Joseph Child Development Center, and the Wave Transit System and ask them both questions about their services.

If bringing a gift to the location of Wal Mart Midtown, is not convenient, you can drop off a gift at the Nina Nicks Joseph Center, or at the Wave offices either at 1224 W. I-65 Service Rd South, or 110 Beauregard St., Suite 104.

For more information, call Paula B. Dicks at the Wave at 251-338-0099 or contact her at pdicks@thewavetransit.com

REQUEST FOR INPUT

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL LEADERS TASK FORCE ON CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE – Appointed on November 1, 2013

State, Local and Tribal leaders across the country are already contending with impacts of climate change. The task force will provide recommendations to the President on (1) removing barriers to resilient investments, (2) modernizing Federal grant and loan programs to better support local efforts, and (3) developing the information and tools they need to prepare.

The first meeting of the Task Force will be held at the White House in Washington D.C. on Tuesday, December 10, 2013. It will include a discussion of opportunities for greater Federal, State, Local and Tribal alignment to strengthen disaster recovery and resilience. A total of four meetings will be held at the White House before July 2014. The task force will deliver its recommendations to the President no later than November 1, 2014 and the task force will sunset no later than six months after delivery of the recommendations. Topics for future consideration will include addressing the impacts of climate change on energy, water, and transportation infrastructure, human health, community development, natural resources, and agriculture.

Your input into the process is greatly appreciated. Please assist me as a task force member by sharing with me your ideas related to the following topics and others.

1. What steps can the Federal Government take to make it easier for communities to strengthen their resilience to extreme weather and prepare for other impacts of climate change?
2. In what ways can Federal programs be modernized to support climate-resilient investments?
3. What are some climate related risks to Federal, State, and Local facilities, operations and programs?
4. What information, data and tools do state, local and private-sector leaders need to make decisions to improve preparedness and resilience?
5. What are some barriers to resilient investments?
6. What are the top three issues of importance to you? Why? What role should the Federal Government play related to those issues?
7. Other comments?
8. What other issues would you propose for the task force to address?

Please send your comments to:

Patsy Parker, Mayor
Town of Perdido Beach, Alabama
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Perdido Beach, AL 36530
Phone: 251-962-2201
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Email: mayor@townofperdidobeach.org
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[Transportation Research](#)

ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit

ITE is pleased to invite you to attend our 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit, taking place March 9-12, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Miami, Miami, FL, USA. This is a not-to-be missed conference of 2014 for anyone in the transportation profession seeking to learn about how to address the critical topics in our industry and grow their professional skills.

This year's conference – ***Applying Innovation and Technology to Transportation*** - will focus on the challenges and opportunities of working with multidisciplinary teams to meet customer, community and political expectations for the creation of vibrant regions to safely live, commute, work, and play. The program will include plenary sessions from nationally recognized transportation and policy professionals as well as presentations, peer-to-peer exchanges, technology showcases and workshops focused on safety, design, operations and planning considerations.

The ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit delivers significant return on investment. Over four days, attendees will receive the immediately actionable tools and techniques and hear about latest industry trends and topics shaping and transforming the transportation landscape. As a focal point of the conference, the ITE Exhibit Hall showcases the latest technology, products, and services for the transportation industry. In addition, technical tours allow participants to see first-hand the practical application of some of the topics presented in the sessions. These technical tours are being finalized. Watch your inbox for an email update shortly.

Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning

A new set of tools and other resources for financial planning and determining fiscal constraint for transportation

plans and programs is now available. You can access these resources on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program [website](#), under the “Peer Learning” tab or through the [Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning](#) “TPCB Focus Areas” tab. With support from the Volpe Center and review and feedback from several FHWA Field Office Planners, these materials were developed to provide State DOTs, MPOs, and transit agencies with additional methods to develop realistic financial plans for transportation system planning, programming, and project development.

The key component of these resources is the set of spreadsheets that allow agency staffs to test and clearly demonstrate fiscal constraint over a few or several years. The spreadsheets can also be used to develop various transportation revenue and project expenditure scenarios or otherwise assist in broader financial planning. The recently posted resources also include an overview description of the tools, a guide to help transportation agencies cooperatively develop revenue forecasts, and a literature scan of noteworthy financial planning practices. We ask that you share this information with your State DOT and local transportation partners. If you have any questions about the Financial Planning and Fiscal Constraint Tools, please contact Robin Smith at robin.smith@dot.gov or 720-963-3072. If you have any feedback on the “FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Update” Newsletter or would like to suggest topics for future issues, please contact Rae Keasler at rae.keasler@dot.gov or 202-366-0329 or Ben Williams at ben.williams@dot.gov or 404-562-3671.

REMINDER : Please join the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Office of Freight Management and Operations for a webinar-based listening session to discuss the next generation of the Freight Analysis Framework (FAF).

During the listening session, FHWA will invite your comments, ideas, and suggestions to improve the FAF. FHWA will also provide information on how you can contribute to the future of the FAF.

FHWA will offer two webinars that repeat the same content. Please choose to attend one of the following:

- **FHWA FAF Development Listening Session 1**

December 12, 2013
1:00-2:15 PM (Eastern)

Please register by December 10: [FHWA FAF Development Listening Session 1](#)

- **FHWA FAF Development Listening Session 2**

January 8, 2014
1:00-2:15 PM (Eastern)

Please register by January 6: [FHWA FAF Development Listening Session 2](#)

After you register, you will receive further information on how to join the sessions. Please feel free to forward this invitation to interested colleagues. Please email FAF@dot.gov with any questions. We hope you will be able to participate!

Additional Notes:

To help ensure that the maximum amount of people can attend these webinars, please:

- Only register for one date.
- Only register if you will be able to attend the webinar. If you register and then find out you will not be able to attend, please notify FAF@dot.gov so we can cancel your registration and make room for someone else.