



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Volume 9, Number 7

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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

## Contact Us

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It's Mardi Gras AND Valentine's Day. So if you don't satisfy your sweet tooth today, you either have a problem, or are participating in *Scale Back Alabama*. The Mobile MPO and ALDOT have announced the availability of their TAP Funds for FY 2014; please see *Funding Opportunities*. There is a Mobile MPO TCC/CAC meeting this Wednesday February 19<sup>th</sup> and a MPO Policy Board meeting on March 12th; please see Mobile MPO Updates The Baldwin Beach Express is ahead of schedule and we are hosting a GPS workshop, also *In The News*.

Have a great weekend.

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



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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### MPO meeting and TCC/CAC meeting Announced

There will be a Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating/Citizens Advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) meeting this coming Wednesday on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 10:00 in the SARPC second floor training room. The recommendations of the TCC/CAC will go before the Mobile MPO Policy Board on March 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. The MPO meeting is the SARPC Board Room. If you are on these committees, please plan on attending. We have several items to include into the TIP:

### National Highway Funds

CN Resurfacing on SR-158 from west of SR 213 to SR 13 (US 43) FY 2014 \$1,639,613

### New Freedom (Rural/State)

TR	Mobile Bay Transportation, Rural, Capital	FY 2014	\$73,012
TR	Mobile Bay Transportation, Rural, Operations	FY 2014	\$164,250
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2014	\$489,060
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2015	\$513,512
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2016	\$539,188

### JARC Funds (Rural/State)

TR Mobile Bay Transportation Rural, Operations FY 2014 \$146,000

We would also like to bring everyone up to date on the Destination 2040, and the recent Climate Change Study. Currently, the Mobile MPO STP Attributable Funding Schedule is balanced.

### Climate Change Workgroup Meeting and Regional Climate Change Workshop

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Last week there were meetings concerning *The Gulf Coast Study, Phase 2*. On Wednesday the Climate change Workgroup met for the last time, and Thursday was a workshop with attendees from all over the Gulf Coast. The tools that the team created <http://mobilempo.org/climatechange.html> will provide the Mobile MPO with a Vulnerability Score for each “critical” facility. This score can be incorporated into the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. One of the “stressors” used was storm surge. The scenarios were A) Hurricane Katrina (Base), B) Hurricane Katrina direct hit, and C) Hurricane Katrina Direct Hit at a Cat 5. Don’t believe in Climate Change? If you remember Katrina was a category 5 before it was downgraded to a 3 when it hit landfall, just west of us...

The project, *Impacts of Climate change and Variability on Transportation Systems and Infrastructure: The Gulf Coast Study, Phase 2*, involved identifying critical transportation systems, projecting the local impacts of climate change, developing scenarios for planning, evaluating vulnerability for key links and assets across all modes of transportation, and evaluating engineering options for adaptation. This study is coming to a close and will allow us these tools:

- **CMIP Climate Data Processing Tool:** An Excel-based tool for utilizing state-of-the-art climate model information in transportation planning. The tool pulls best available climate model information and translates outputs into terms that are relevant to decision makers (e.g., frequencies of extremes).
- **Vulnerability Assessment Scoring Tool:** This Excel-based tool serves as a framework for conducting a quantitative, indicator-based vulnerability screen. The tool is intended for state DOTs and MPOs interested in assessing how components of their transportation system may be vulnerable to climate stressors.

We are hoping for a final roll out of the project by Summer.

## Projects Within Region Let February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### BALDWIN COUNTY

- Constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from just east of the I-10/SR-16 (US-90) Eastbound Ramp (MP 44.748) to just west of SR-181 (MP 47.978). Length 3.229 mi.

### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- Constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-21 from 0.2 miles south of I-65 (MP 7.947) to the south abutment of the Little River Bridge. Length 10.760 mi.
- Constructing the Resurfacing (High Performance Chip Seal) and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31/Twin Bridges Road) from 0.39 miles east of the Railroad Overpass at MP 57.950 to 0.27 miles west of the Little Escambia Creek Bridge east of Flomaton. Length 1.150 mi.

### MOBILE COUNTY

- Constructing the Intersection Improvements for CR-358 (Three Notch Road); CR-328 (Dawes Lane); and CR-328 (Dawes Lane Extension) in Mobile. Length 0.100 mi.
- Constructing the Sidewalks and Crosswalks on 12th Avenue and Kansas Street in Chickasaw. Length 0.794 mi.
- Constructing the Welcome Center Replacement (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, Demolition, Building, Lighting, Landscaping, Sewer, and Lagoon Removal) on I-10 at the

Alabama/Mississippi State Line.

- Constructing the Reconstruction (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, Signing and Signals) of Wilson Avenue from SR-17 (St. Stephens Road) to 12th Avenue in the Cities of Prichard, Mobile, and Chickasaw. Length 2.477 mi.
- Constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from the Halls Mill Creek Bridge to the Pavement Joint at Pinehill Drive in Mobile. Length 5.203 mi.

### **What's Under Construction?**

## Legislative Updates

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### **U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) Holds Hearing on MAP-21 Reauthorization:**

The U.S. Senate EPW Committee held a hearing Wednesday on the reauthorization of MAP-21 and the economic impact of maintaining federal investments in the nation's transportation infrastructure, including the Highway Trust Fund's (HTF) solvency. "It is critical for our nation to continue investing in our aging infrastructure. Therefore, preserving the Highway Trust Fund needs to be our number one priority in this committee, in other committees, and in the Senate and the House," said U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.). President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas Donohue of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urged the U.S. Senate to identify ways to maintain and increase transportation infrastructure investment. "The chamber believes that Congress should maintain a user-fee based Highway Trust Fund to support a strong federal role and enable multi-year funding commitments by the federal government to states and metropolitan planning organizations," he said in a prepared statement. "Raising user fees to cover the [trust fund's] shortfall and allow for increased investment should not be dismissed." American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) President Mike Hancock claimed that the impending insolvency of the HTF poses a threat to state budgets, the construction industry and overall economy. In January, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that the fund's Highway Account is likely to run out of money in August.

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### **New Bill Would Make Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Eligible for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Loans**

The New Opportunities for Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Financing Act (HR 3978), introduced by Albio Sires (D-NJ) and co-sponsored by Andre Carson (D-IN), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), would allow communities to access low-cost loans to build bicycling and walking networks. This means a city could get a loan now and build a network of sidewalks, bike lanes and paths to improve safety and increase physical activity—and repay the loan over many years. The bill would set aside 1 percent of TIFIA's \$1 billion and earmark that money for biking and walking. For these projects, TIFIA's minimum project cost would be lowered to \$2 million

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### **Business, labor groups push for gas tax hike**

By Keith Laing

Business and labor groups do not typically agree on much, but they came together on Wednesday to push Congress to increase the tax that is paid by drivers on each gallon of gasoline they purchase. The 18.4 cents-per-gallon federal gas tax has not been increased since 1993, but transportation advocates said during a Senate hearing Wednesday that it was well past time for another increase.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohue told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee that increasing the gas tax would be "the simplest, most straight-forward, and most effective way to generate enough revenue" to cover an estimated \$20 billion per year shortfall in transportation funding.

"The gas tax hasn't been increased since 1993," Donohue told lawmakers. "Cars are more fuel efficient, people are driving less, and inflation has eaten into purchasing power. As a result, the Highway Trust Fund is going bankrupt. We are already borrowing billions of dollars from the general fund. Next year there will be a \$13 billion cash shortfall. By 2020, it will be \$100 billion."

The last transportation bill that was passed by Congress in 2012, which maintained the 1993 gas tax status quo, included only enough funding to cover two years of road and transit projects. The 2012 bill contained approximately \$54 billion a year worth of infrastructure spending, but the gas tax only brings about \$34 billion per year. Continue [\[HERE\]](#)

## Funding Opportunities

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### **FY 2014 Transportation Alternatives Program –TAP FUNDS**

**Deadline:** *May 2, 2014*

Only cities and counties can apply for TAP funds, and your jurisdiction will determine your application for TAP Funds. If you are in the Mobile Urbanized Area, you are eligible for the Urban Area TAP Funds available through the Mobile MPO at South Alabama Regional Planning Commission. If you are outside of the Mobile Urbanized Area you will apply to ADLOT for TAP funds (see below). The applications, guidelines and funding limits between the STATE TAP and the URBAN TAP *are slightly different*. Please be aware, and if there are any question please do not hesitate to call us. The federal guidance on TAP funds is here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>

#### **MOBILE URBANIZED TAP FUNDS**

The Mobile MPO announces the availability of the FY 2014 Transportation Alternates Program (TAP) funding. The maximum amount that can be applied for with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$200,000 (federal). 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. Applications for Mobile Urban Area TAP Funds can be found [\[HERE\]](#)

#### **ALDOT TAP FUNDS**

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) announced application availability for the FY 2014 Transportation Alternates Program (TAP) funding. 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. ***ALDOT TAP Funding applications can only come from ALDOT [\[HERE\]](#).***

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#### **GRANT: Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Funding Opportunity**

The *Health Impact Project* is planning to launch a call for funding proposals this month. Grants will support HIA demonstration projects and the development of HIA programs integrating health in decision-making. HIA help to identify and address likely benefits and risks of a decision made in a field outside of the health sector. Eligible organizations include nonprofits, state, local and tribal agencies, and educational institutions. [HERE](#) for additional information

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**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is soliciting proposals** that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced by diesel engines and diesel emissions exposure, from fleets operating at marine and inland water ports. Eligible diesel emission reduction solutions include verified emission control technologies such as exhaust controls and engine upgrades, verified idle reduction technologies, certified engine repowers, and/or certified vehicle or equipment replacement. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

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**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/rlf.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

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Happy Valentine's Day!

Speed dating on an English double decker bus in Phoenix, AZ



An English pub in the heart of downtown PHX. Here they meet and have a few drinks. . At 7.30 pm a BIG red double Decker bus picks everyone up. The women get on first and take a seat. Then the men board the bus and find a woman to sit next to. During the adventure they play an assortment of fun and traditional British songs. Every three minutes the music cuts out to the sound of BIG Bens Gong. This is the signal for all the men to switch seats and find a new gal to get to know - They continue to switch everyone around until they get to first destination.

The Phoenix Art Gallery. Open late on a Wednesday evening is where they have a group treasure hunt. This is meant to be a relaxed and informal approach to dating. At 9pm they all jump back on the bus. More speed dates as they head back to the Rose and Crown. For all those fortunate enough to make a connection, Heritage Square (where the pub is located) makes for a very romantic evening stroll to end the night. Even if you don't find love, this time, you are guaranteed to meet some new friends. The pub has a fantastic front porch for watching the world go by, pool tables, darts, juke box and fine English ales.

## In the News

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**The Baldwin Beach Express is Ahead of Schedule:**



Construction Underway for the Baldwin Beach Expressway (WPMI): It'll soon be called the Baldwin Beach Express, and much sooner than expected. Work to connect Interstate 10 east of the Loxley exit to the Foley Beach Expressway has been on a fast track. Contractors brought in extra workers and so far the weather has cooperated. This project was scheduled to open in the fall so this is all good news for tourists and for locals. At a cost of more than \$80 million, all roads will soon lead to the beaches. Contractors are four to five months ahead of schedule, and now depending on the weather, getting from Interstate 10 to Gulf Shores and Orange Beach quickly may come as soon as faster as mid to late April. "Visitors coming to the beach can come up I-10 and get off on this interchange and go straight down and avoid a lot of red lights," said Cal Markert Director of the County Highway Department. It's been the plan all along to free up room on Hwy 59. Businesses on 59 have complained for years that the tourist traffic has set them back. After all tourist have their mind and their GPS set on one destination and that's the beach. "We intend this corridor to be more of an expressway than 59 where you have a lot of traffic lights and things," said Commissioner Tucker Dorsey. The idea is to make our beaches easier and quicker to get to giving Orange Beach and Gulf Shores the "fastest route" advantage over other beach destinations like Pensacola, Destin or Panama City Beach. Locals will also benefit. "It's just going to make it closer and more convenient for us to go wherever we need to go across the Bayway," said Theresa Clemons of Rosinton. The city of Foley may benefit the most allowing it to keep and attract more businesses. Big box business, some already headed their way. "Big Lots and Hobby Lobby will probably generate anywhere from \$250,000 to \$350,000 in sales tax revenues," said Foley Mayor John Konair. It may not look it now with all the heavy machinery, but one step at a time, one day at a time this will be the road to be on. "We are very fortunate to have it be where we as fast as we are," said Markert. Once this portion opens from I-10 to the beaches the plan is to head north extending the new expressway all the way to I-65 just north of Bay Minette. Governor Bentley plans to use money from the restore act from the BP oil spill to pay for the extension.

Read More at: <http://www.local15tv.com/news/features/featured/stories/construction-underway-baldwin-beach-expressway-3503.shtml>

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#### SARPC HOSTING GPS WORKSHOP

The SARPC Transportation Planning Department will host a free half day GPS orientation class for users of Trimble GPS units. The class will be offered on March 19, 2014 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the SARPC Training Room on the second floor of the GM&O Building in downtown Mobile at 110 Bearegard Street. The class will focus on GPS fundamentals using Terrasync and Pathfinder Office software workflow and will include Data Dictionary Creation, Data Collection an Attribution, Point, Line, and Polygon creation, Nesting and Segmenting, Post Processing, Data Exportation to GIS format, and File Geodatabase Creation. Seating is limited to twenty participants. If you are interested in participating you may register with Instructor David Wright at (256) 665-5589 email: [david\\_wright@neigps.com](mailto:david_wright@neigps.com).

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#### Mobile sidewalks stretch from here to St. Louis, but Coastal Alabama residents still find availability lacking



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on February 12, 2014 at 2:27 PM, updated February 13, 2014 at 5:04 PM

**MOBILE, Alabama** -- Taking a stroll along every mile of the city of Mobile's sidewalks would compare to walking from the Port City all the way to St. Louis, the River City. With 3.3 million linear feet of sidewalks -- or 621 miles -- Mobile is one of four Coastal Alabama cities to adopt the Complete Streets policy, along with Daphne, Fairhope and Orange Beach. Through Complete Streets, each city commits to planning transportation needs around motorists

as well as pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Other municipalities also recognize the value of walkability.** The hundreds of miles of sidewalks maintained by cities and Mobile and Baldwin counties serve as a primary path to connect hundreds of citizens to their hometowns' best features.

"It's truly trying to get you out of the traffic and in a safer environment for those that chose to not just recreate but try to use it for transportation," said Ken Grimes, Orange Beach City administrator.

Though many of the bigger cities in Coastal Alabama require sidewalks for new construction and subdivisions, sidewalks in some cities, like Dauphin Island and Creola, are non-existent - but not for lack of desire.

"I wish we had more," said Sandy Lynn, a public service worker in Bayou La Batre where no city-maintained sidewalks exist. "I love to walk and it's hard here. Kids could ride their bikes more safely if there were more sidewalks."

A city-by-city survey of sidewalks in Baldwin and Mobile counties revealed the following details.

#### **Baldwin County**

About 85 miles of sidewalks, including a chunk of the Eastern Shore Trail, run through unincorporated Baldwin County, said Cal Markert, the county engineer.

The mileage also includes the county subdivisions that are required to have sidewalks, he said.

It's not unusual for the county to get requests from residents about putting walking and bicycling paths in their communities, Markert said.

"It adds to the value of the neighborhoods," he said. "There are so many beautiful places to want to get out and walk."

#### **Eastern Shore Trail**

**Almost 20 years in the making and the nearly 30-mile Eastern Shore Trail** -- stretching from the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park on the Causeway in Mobile through Daphne, Montrose, Fairhope and Point Clear to Weeks Bay -- is expected to be completed this year.

In September, the Baldwin County Commission was awarded a \$308,324 Federal Transportation Alternatives Program grant to complete a 1.5-mile missing link on the trail's south end along U.S. 98, between Baldwin County 13 and Ala. 181.

The nonprofit Baldwin County Trailblazers, which spearheaded the project through its late founder Teko Wiseman, will put up about \$77,000 in matching funds for the project.

Barring any unforeseen design issues, the project is expected to go out to bid in April with construction starting in May and a completion in June, according to county officials.

Beyond the Eastern Shore Trail, it's been discussed with the Trailblazers and county and city officials in Foley, Gulf Shores and Orange Beach to one day link all trails throughout south Baldwin County.

Continue reading [http://blog.al.com/live/2014/02/mobile\\_sidewalks\\_stretch\\_from.html](http://blog.al.com/live/2014/02/mobile_sidewalks_stretch_from.html)



<http://aldotapps.dot.state.al.us/preconstruction/index.html>

ALDOT has announced its second annual Preconstruction conference held APRIL 2-4, 2014. All attendees will walk away with a better understanding of the pre-construction process and the role each Bureau, Division and Region has in this process. The Pre-Construction Conference is a great opportunity for you to network with your peers in the transportation engineering field, allowing you to share and gather knowledge.

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#### **DOT steps forward to help Disadvantaged Businesses**

Posted by Camille Hazeur

Increasing the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in the transportation industry invites diverse backgrounds and new approaches that can help contractors build better projects. And we've been working hard to help those businesses break through the extra barriers they may face.

If you read yesterday's blog post on the Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge between Illinois and Missouri, then you know we've had some success. Because in his post, Secretary Foxx emphasized the success of the 117 different Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (or DBEs) that earned contracts totaling \$114 million on that project, including one DBE that helped save \$1 million in total project costs.

We think that outcome is something to celebrate. But we know that our work is far from finished. And that's why today we are taking a key step toward increasing the effectiveness of DOT's DBE program by consolidating the various threads of that program under a single coordinating office. It might sound like a small change, but it makes a big difference to the DBEs interested in working on DOT-funded projects. Continue [HERE](#)

## Transportation Research

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### **Are you Curious how much bike and pedestrian infrastructure costs?**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, through its Active Living Research program, and the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center have developed a document that quantifies how much bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure costs around the country.

"This document (and associated database) is intended to provide meaningful estimates of infrastructure costs by collecting up-to-date cost information for pedestrian and bicycle treatments from states and cities across the country. Using this information, researchers, engineers, planners, and the general public can better understand the cost of pedestrian and bicycle treatments in their communities and make informed decisions about which infrastructure enhancements are best suited for implementation. By collecting countrywide cost information, this database should contain useful information for any state or city, even if costs from that particular state or city are not included for a given treatment."

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### **SDITE 2014 Annual Meeting in GA - Hotel filling up fast!**

The Southern District ITE 2014 Annual Meeting is being held on March 30 - April 2 in Greensboro, GA at the Ritz-Carlton Lodge (Reynolds Plantation). For information on the meeting, visit [www.sdite2014.org](http://www.sdite2014.org).

The hotel rooms at the Ritz-Carlton Lodge are actually filling up very fast, so if you are planning on attending the meeting, you will want to go ahead and reserve your hotel room very soon! Visit [www.sdite2014.org](http://www.sdite2014.org) and click on "Conference Hotel" at the top of the page

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### **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.

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### **BTS Releases December 2013 Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI)**

Freight Shipments Fell 1.0% in December from November

The amount of freight carried by the for-hire transportation industry fell 1.0 percent in December from November, declining after a one-month rise, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS) Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) released today. The December 2013 index level (116.5) was 23.0 percent above the April 2009 low during the most recent recession.

BTS reported that the level of freight shipments in December measured by the Freight TSI (116.5) was the second highest all-time level and 1.0 percent below the all-time high level of 117.7 in November 2013. The November index number, released last month as 116.5 was revised up to 117.7. BTS' TSI records begin in 2000.

While the November index was revised up to 117.7 from 116.5 in last month's release, previous month numbers were revised down. The months from January through October 2013 were all revised down in the range between 0.4 and 0.6.

Beginning with the April release, BTS improved procedures and refined the TSI methodology. As a result there have been minor changes in monthly numbers released previously. Documentation will be made available in the near future.

The Freight TSI measures the month-to-month changes in freight shipments by mode of transportation in tons and ton-miles, which are combined into one index. The index measures the output of the for-hire freight transportation industry and consists of data from for-hire trucking, rail, inland waterways, pipelines and air freight.

Analysis: The decline in December from November resulted from slight declines across all modes. Trend: The Freight TSI remained above its 2012 range for the 12th month in a row. Beginning with January, every month in 2013 exceeded the high point of 2012, 111.6 reached in December. The index fell in December 2013 from the all-time high reached in November 2013 but still ranked as the second highest level for the index. After dipping to 94.7 in April 2009, the index rose 23.0 percent in the succeeding 56 months.