



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 17, 2017

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Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>
transportation@sarpc.org

Kevin Harrison, PTP
Director of Transportation
kharrison@sarpc.org

Tom Piper
Senior Transportation
Planner
tpiper@sarpc.org

Monica Williamson
Transportation Planner
mwilliamson@sarpc.org

Anthony Johnson
Transportation Planner
ajohnson@sarpc.org

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

There is a Technical Coordinating and a Citizens Advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) meeting scheduled on February 22nd at 10:00 AM and the Mobile MPO will meet on March 15th in the SARPC Board Room (please see *Mobile MPO Updates*).

Have a great weekend! And check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!

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

www.mobilempo.org  check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

TCC/CAC Meeting 2/22/2017; MPO Meeting 3/15/17

There will be a TCC/CAC Meeting on February 22nd in the SARPC Board Room. We have several items to discuss including the Congestion Management Process (CMP) and it's update in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Also, the TIGER grant for Bring Back Broad Street that was awarded to the City of Mobile will have to be included into the 2016 -2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Please put it on your calendars, and a notice will go out next week.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting

The Mobile MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) met this past Wednesday. Mr. Vince Calametti, the chief engineer with the ALDOT Southwest Regional Office gave an update on the proposed I-10 Mobile River Bridge. The meeting also included a discussion about several projects in the MPO area that have bike/ped components, including the City of Mobile's Broad/Beauregard Street TIGER project, the Water St. project, the road diet on Springhill Ave., Schillinger Blvd., and Zeigler Blvd. Recent crashes involving cyclists and pedestrians were also discussed. The minutes of the meeting are being transcribed and will be posted on the BPAC webpage soon.

3-C Agreement To Be Updated

To all members of the Mobile MPO, we have to update our 3-C agreement. This is the agreement between SARPC, ALDOT, the WAVE Transit, the eight Urban Area cities and Mobile County that actually creates the Mobile MPO. In order to execute this agreement, we will need a resolution from Mobile County and each city in the next month or so. If you are a new mayor, your staff is familiar with this as we did this last Spring. Because there is a new federal transportation act "the FAST ACT", the language has changed and we must update the agreement. We sent notifications last week to each MPO member. Please call Kevin if there are any questions.

Performance Measures

On January 18, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published in the Federal Register final rules for the last two national performance management measure regulations. One rule establishes regulations to assess the condition and performance of bridges on the National Highway System (NHS) and of pavements on the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS. The other establishes regulations to assess the performance of the NHS, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. All MPOs will have 6 months after each State finalizes their state Performance Measures. The performance measures used by the Mobile MPO, and the Eastern Shore MPO will be discussed at length in the next several months, and the topic is on the agenda at the Alabama Transportation Planners Association Conference (ATPA) March 23-24 in Florence, AL

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

One of the items that was discussed at the TCC/CAC and the MPO meeting is a reinvention of the Mobile Urban Area CMP. Prior to FY 2017, the Mobile CMP was a thorough process for monitoring congestion, developing improvements, and prioritizing improvements; however, it was inefficient, and ineffective. The current federal transportation funding bill, the FAST ACT, has introduced requirements for performance measures for projects and processes. As a performance measure, projects not being implemented through a Congestion Management Process, is an indicator that it is time to reinvent the process.

Our intention is create a new funding program out of the STP Attributable Funds of \$500,000 (federal) annually for strictly intersection type improvements. These can be new adaptive signals, access management strategies, roundabouts, etc. It has to be additional capacity, as that is what the STP Attributable Funds are for, but the new program would concentrate on intersections. The projects would have to be justified, with performance measures. These performance measures would be included in the project ranking process, and would include a travel time index (free flow / congested speed), a roadway congestion index (capacity index), and a rear-end collisions per mile factor. We have developed this for some corridors and presented them to the TCC/CAC on November 9th with a lot of discussion. The Long Range Transportation Plan *Destination 2040* will have to be modified to account for this new program. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) has to be fiscally constrained, which means this \$500,000 has to come from somewhere. The LRTP identified a grade separated interchange at Azalea Rd and Airport Blvd. Rather than spending \$14 Million on such a large project that may not be well received with the business owners, we are proposing to use that money in the mean time for smaller intersection type improvements all over the Urban Area.

The Mobile MPO approved for staff to move forward with this, so we will be modifying the LRTP and the TIP, which will require MPO adoption at the next meeting.

Projects Within Region Let February 24, 2017

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31) from the intersection of Florida Highway west of Canoe to MP 55.300 in Flomaton. Length 10.299 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,941,862 to \$2,373,387 .
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Bridge Rail Retrofit, and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31) from the Baldwin County Line to the intersection of Florida Highway west of Canoe. Length 11.000 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,254,214 to \$2,755,150 .

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from east of the intersection of Ramsey Road in Grand Bay to the west end of the Fowl River Bridge west of Theodore. Length 7.310 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,674,778 to \$2,046,951.
- For constructing the Precast Concrete Pavement System on I-165 (Southbound Service Road Left Turn Lanes) just west of the intersection of Bay Bridge Road (SR-16/US-90). Length 0.121 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$673,347 to \$822,980.
- For constructing the Bridge Girder Repair (Collision Damage) on CR-39 (McDonald Road) over I-10. Length 0.340 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$306,703 to \$374,860 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Planing, Widening, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on CR-13 from the intersection of CR-48 in Fairhope to the roundabout at CR-30 (Site 1) and from north of the roundabout at CR-64 to the junction of Ottawa Drive in Daphne (Site 2). Length 1.646 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$510,400 to \$623,822

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

Legislative Updates

House T&I Leaders Mount Efforts to Boost Interest, Promote Ideas for Investment Plans

Leadership from both parties in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee are pressing efforts to build momentum for strong investment legislation this year.

Those efforts include a new investment-focused website by the Republican majority, and a new letter to President Trump by the ranking Democrat spelling out his ideas to inject more funding into several major transportation sectors.

The committee majority on Feb. 6 launched a ["Building 21" effort with a dedicated website](#) it said was intended to help "focus attention on policies that will build a 21st century infrastructure."

It included separate video interviews with Chairman Bill Shuster, R-Pa., who discussed the federal role for investing in public works, and another with a group of T&I Republicans describing their ideas for modern-era transportation systems.

[Shuster in a press release](#) also said: "America's infrastructure is the backbone of our economy and we must invest to meet the challenges of today while preparing for the opportunities of tomorrow. The '#building21' initiative is designed to explain our vision for America's infrastructure that promotes job creation, encourages economic development and prepares the nation for the breakthroughs in mobility that are around the corner."

Shuster added that in addition to the website the committee "will continue to hold hearings, listening sessions and roundtables throughout the Congress as part of our agenda to explore what system users, manufacturers and consumers need to truly develop an infrastructure and transportation network that is second to none."

The site also included a copy of a Jan. 31 Washington Post story that focused on the challenge of paying for infrastructure investments. In it, Shuster said ideas that have been discussed include repatriating foreign-held profits of U.S. companies, raising motor fuel taxes and tolling.

But Shuster described tolling of interstate highways as "a non-starter." He said talk of wooing private investors to finance projects is not likely to help the largely rural district he represents, and indicated he thinks states will need more federal funding as part of any package.

On Feb. 7, top T&I Democrat Peter DeFazio of Oregon [wrote President Trump seeking administration support for three proposals](#) he said "could be a critical part of your commitment to invest \$1 trillion in infrastructure, without increasing the size of the budget deficit."

[As earlier reported](#), DeFazio had summarized those ideas in a Feb. 1 committee hearing but had yet to list them in more detail until he did so in his letter to the president. DeFazio also told Trump he is developing legislation to implement each of the proposals.

His plan calls for Congress to index gasoline and diesel fuel taxes to construction cost inflation, capping the annual increase at no more than 1.5 cents a gallon, and using that gain to back annual issuance of 30-year bonds for highway and transit improvements.

DeFazio told Trump the fuel tax indexing would provide "more than \$500 billion in infrastructure investment to improve the conditions of our nation's highways, bridges and public transit systems, address the federal underinvestment which has caused the current state-of-good-repair backlog, and address future highway and transit needs" through fiscal 2030.

The congressman also calls for spending all the accumulated balance in Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (about \$9 billion) on harbor dredging and related projects, plus all annual receipts from the harbor maintenance tax on ship-carried imports.

And DeFazio wants Trump and the Congress to remove or increase a federal cap on how much airports can levy in a passenger facility charge on airfares. That step, he said, could pay for "safety-critical and expansion projects that will restore aging airports to their former glory – not to mention help them keep up with increasing demand – without increasing Americans' tax burden."

Key Senate, House Lawmakers Say Private Project Financing Not Enough for Many Areas

A number of congressional leaders on transportation issues are saying that relying on private financing to pay for infrastructure projects won't get the job done in many areas of the country.

That view by key lawmakers could affect the shape of any eventual investment plan to improve transportation systems and other types of infrastructure, as President Trump has strongly advocated. Various Trump administration officials have said they support measures to greatly expand the use of private finance to pay for projects.

In a Feb. 8 hearing on modernizing infrastructure at the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Chairman John Barrasso, R-Wyo., took issue with the idea that private partnerships to build projects faster would work in many areas that lack sufficient funds to repay investors.

That committee plays the lead role in the Senate in writing legislation authorizing highway investments.

"Funding solutions that involve public-private partnerships, as have been discussed by administration officials, may be innovative solutions for crumbling inner cities, but do not work for rural areas as today's testimony will show," [the chairman said in his opening statement](#).

Barrasso added: "As was stated in written testimony submitted today on behalf of Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota — 'Public Private Partnerships and other approaches to infrastructure investment that depend on a positive revenue stream from a project are not a surface transportation infrastructure solution for rural states.'

Barrasso was referring to testimony by Wyoming Department of Transportation Director William Panos for those five states. Both he and Colorado DOT Executive Director Shailen Bhatt told senators that in a new investment plan states would need direct federal funding in addition to whatever financing incentives it may provide. (See [related story](#).)

Panos also said rural as well as urban states benefit from the distribution-formula programs of the Highway Trust Fund and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act that Congress passed in December 2015. He said funneling new investment funds through those programs would move projects faster for states than through a federal discretionary program.

Bhatt said that "Congress can't fix a funding problem through financing . . . financing mechanisms cannot correct what is essentially a funding problem due to insufficient investment."

The ranking EPW Democrat, Tom Carper of Delaware, [in his opening statement said](#) the project financing issue goes beyond rural states. "While financing techniques are a tool that may be appropriate for some types of projects, financing will not solve all infrastructure needs, regardless of whether you are a rural or urban state," Carper said.

In a recent interview with the Washington post, House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster, R-Pa., also raised doubts about how well private financing could help his largely rural congressional district.

"Investors won't come in unless there's some sort of return," [Shuster told the Post](#). "There are things that you can do with tax [breaks] that will attract the dollars, but I think the states can't do it without the federal government coming to the table with a piece of the funding solution."

Lawmakers from both parties are proposing [new measures to increase the amount of direct federal funding](#) that goes to transportation, including one that diverts some tariff revenue into the Highway Trust Fund and another that would issue surface transportation bonds backed by revenue from indexing the level of federal gasoline and diesel taxes against construction cost inflation.

Officials at a number of infrastructure groups including the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials have taken the position that while they are open to additional private financing measures, [states will need additional federal funding](#) to significantly improve the transportation systems across the nation.

And a [coalition of hundreds of industry groups](#) have called on President Trump to include a dedicated, long-term revenue stream to sustain the trust fund well beyond the 2020 expiration of the FAST Act.

State Transportation Chiefs Urge Congress to Provide More Direct Federal Funding

The heads of departments of transportation for two western states told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee they need Congress to craft an infrastructure investment plan that provides new federal funding to help states improve their systems and meet growing demand.

Wyoming DOT Director William Panos and Colorado DOT Executive Director Shailen Bhatt made their comments at a Feb. 8 EPW hearing on ["Modernizing our Nation's Infrastructure."](#) Both said the transportation networks in their states are important to the nation as cross-country routes for freight and personal traffic besides serving their own residents.

Panos said his statement, which emphasized the perspective of rural states with nationally important assets but low population levels, also represented the DOTs of Idaho, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota.

He said rural states would need direct federal funding rather than private financing or new bond programs that require a repayment revenue stream. "With sparse populations and extensive road networks, the cost per capita of paying off principal and interest is high in rural states, [Panos said in his prepared remarks](#).

He also said: "Wyoming's estimates indicate that current funding does not enable Wyoming to maintain, much less improve, its road and bridge conditions. If Congress chooses to advance an infrastructure initiative including surface transportation investment, the funds would be put to good use promptly."

Officials representing President Trump have speculated that public-private partnerships or private investment could play a much bigger role in financing transportation projects. Panos said that while his region's departments do not oppose P3s, those "and other approaches to infrastructure investment that depend on a positive revenue stream from a project are not a surface transportation infrastructure solution for rural states."

Instead, Panos urged senators to distribute any new federal funding through existing formula-based programs, and to strengthen the Highway Trust Fund so that it would no longer be on course to run short of funding in 2020.

"As part of any infrastructure effort, Congress should be alert for opportunities to strengthen the Highway Trust Fund and its ability to support vitally important surface transportation programs," he said. "If an infrastructure initiative provides short-term funding help for surface transportation but the HTF proverbially falls off a cliff" in 2020, "the surface transportation program would suffer from instability and uncertainty."

Bhatt said Colorado is already utilizing bonds and is managing congestion in some highways with tolled express lanes. But he said the state lacks the funding to accelerate many projects, and that the Colorado DOT's 10-year plan has more than \$10 billion of priority projects it could invest in across if funding becomes available.

"CDOT has many financing tools available to build projects," [Bhatt said in his prepared remarks](#). "What we no longer have is the funding necessary to finance infrastructure projects where tolls aren't viable without sacrificing the maintenance conditions of our existing infrastructure."

He said while the state needs to do its part, "our transportation system has significant federal interests, including interstate commerce and quality of life of all citizens, and we need to continue to have a strong federal partner in transportation."

Like Panos, Bhatt said financing measures are not sufficient to address transportation needs. He told the committee that "I cannot emphasize enough that critical point: Financing mechanisms cannot correct what is essentially a funding problem due to insufficient investment."

He said the five-year Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act provided stable federal funding but "did not significantly increase funding to allow Colorado and many other states to meet our critical funding needs."

Bhatt added: "I implore you to find a way to secure a significant infrastructure investment bill that will allow us to invest in long-term infrastructure projects across Colorado that will help connect economic centers and markets."

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Funding Opportunities

FHWA Offers New Funding for Innovative Demonstration Projects

New funding is available from the Federal Highway Administration's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program to encourage the transportation community to adopt proven innovations. [Funding](#) or the AID Demonstration program, launched in 2014 as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, was continued by the 2015 [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act](#). Since AID Demonstration was introduced, FHWA has provided more than \$43 million for 61 awards.

Under the program, funding of up to \$1 million may be awarded for projects that use proven innovations in any project phase, including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment and construction. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through [Grants.gov](#), the federal government's website for information on funding opportunities. For more information on the AID Demonstration program, contact [Ewa Flom](#) of the FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation

FY 2017 NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

Proposals Due: March 15

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) [Coastal Resilience Grants Program](#) is intended to build resilience by reducing the risk to coastal communities, economies, and ecosystems from extreme weather events and climate-related hazards. Projects that build resilience include activities that protect life and property, safeguard people and infrastructure, strengthen the economy, and/or conserve and restore coastal and marine resources.

NOAA has identified \$15,000,000 to support projects in a new funding round, and anticipates that typical awards will range from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000. The NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program will support two categories of activities:

- **Strengthening Coastal Communities:** activities that improve capacity of multiple coastal jurisdictions (states, counties, municipalities, territories and tribes) to prepare and plan for, absorb impacts of, recover from, and/or adapt to extreme weather events and climate-related hazards; or
- **Habitat Restoration:** activities that restore habitat to strengthen the resilience of coastal ecosystems and decrease the vulnerability of coastal communities to extreme weather events and climate-related hazards.

Proposals focused on improving capacity of multiple coastal jurisdictions should identify and describe how the project will address: the vulnerability, issue(s) or problem limiting the resilience of coastal jurisdictions to be addressed; the proposed project's expected outcomes and the actions to be undertaken; and how the proposed actions will enhance resilience within the jurisdictions expected to benefit from the project.

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](#).

To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available click [HERE](#) or type www.grants.gov in your browser.

Just For Fun

StoryCorps coming to Mobile

StoryCorps is a traveling recording studio with a mission: to record and archive the stories of people all around the country. Through a partnership with Alabama Public Radio, the folks at StoryCorps will be spending over a month in the Port City, documenting stories of Mobilians young and old. And you can participate.

StoryCorps is partnering with Alabama Public Radio to record, preserve, and share the stories of Mobile, Alabama, from February 9 – March 12, 2017. Appointments open to the public on Thursday, January 26th at 10 AM CST. Sign up to share your story on the link below.



[Mobile Stop: Mobile, AL](#)

Stories from people of all backgrounds and beliefs
STORYCORPS.ORG

In the News

More States Weigh Motor Fuel Tax Increases to Pay for Transportation Project Needs

With motor fuel prices remaining at lower levels than just a few years ago while roads, bridges and other transportation facilities continue to need repair or replacement, more states are looking at funding measures this year that include hiking fuel taxes.

[Reuters reported](#) that 21 state legislatures will consider bills that increase gas taxes, including some that have gone decades since they raised the user fee that most closely reflects consumer demand for the roadway network.

It is partly a reflection, too, the story says, of a "post-election period that gives politicians the space to tackle controversial issues," according to Carl Davis, research director at the non-partisan Washington, D.C.-based Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

The roster includes five traditionally tax-averse states that have not raised their fuel tax rates since the 1980s or earlier, Reuters said. They are Alaska, Oklahoma, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee, whose legislatures are currently debating fuel tax proposals.

In some, the proposals follow years of public discussion of transportation needs by key officials, while in some states lawmakers and the public have yet to coalesce around particular revenue ideas.

"It's very unusual at the state level to see a measure proposed and then immediately enacted," Joung Lee, policy director at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, told Reuters. "It usually takes several bites at the apple," he said.

A list of current state proposals is [available here](#).

DEFICIENT ROADS COST MOBILE AREA DRIVERS MORE THAN \$1,400 PER YEAR

Local speakers join national research group in review of road & bridge conditions, congestion, safety

A meeting was held Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce to discuss the condition of roads in Mobile.

The average driver in the Mobile region loses more than \$1,400 annually as a result of driving on roads that are deteriorated, congested, and that lack some desirable safety features, according to a new report from TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, DC. Local speakers joined TRIP on Wednesday to highlight the findings and discuss possible solutions.

The report, *Alabama Transportation by the Numbers: Meeting the State's Need for Safe, Smooth and Efficient Mobility*, examines road and bridge conditions, congestion, economic development, highway safety, and transportation funding in Alabama. The report contains regional data for the Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile and Montgomery urban areas, as well as statewide information.

Nearly 56,000 American Bridges on Structurally Deficient List, New Analysis of Federal Data Shows

by Carolyn Kramer

Data Available: www.artbabridgereport.org

(WASHINGTON) – The length of the nation’s structurally deficient bridges if placed end-to-end would stretch 1,276 miles, half the distance from New York to Los Angeles, a new examination of federal government data shows. It’s a problem that hits close to home.

An analysis of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (U.S. DOT) recently-released 2016 National Bridge Inventory data finds cars, trucks and school buses cross the nation’s 55,710 structurally compromised bridges 185 million times daily. About 1,900 are on the Interstate Highway System. State transportation departments have identified 13,000 Interstate bridges that need replacement, widening or major reconstruction.

The inventory of structurally deficient bridges has declined 0.5 percent since the 2015 report. At that pace, it would take more than two decades to replace or repair all of them, according to American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) Chief Economist Dr. Alison Premo Black, who conducted the analysis.

Black says the data shows 28 percent of bridges (173,919) are over 50 years old and have never had any major reconstruction work in that time.

“America’s highway network is woefully underperforming. It is outdated, overused, underfunded and in desperate need of modernization,” Black says. “State and local transportation departments haven’t been provided the resources to keep pace with the nation’s bridge needs.”

To help ensure public safety, bridge decks and support structures are regularly inspected for deterioration and remedial action. They are rated on a scale of zero to nine—with nine meaning the bridge is in “excellent” condition. A bridge is classified as structurally deficient and in need of repair if its overall rating is four or below.

While these bridges may not be imminently unsafe, they are in need of attention.

Other key findings in the ARTBA analysis:

- Iowa (4,968), Pennsylvania (4,506), Oklahoma (3,460), Missouri (3,195), Nebraska (2,361), Illinois (2,243), Kansas (2,151), Mississippi (2,098), Ohio (1,942) and New York (1,928) have the most structurally deficient bridges. The District of Columbia (9), Nevada (31), Delaware (43), Hawaii (64) and Utah (95) have the least.
- At least 15 percent of the bridges in eight states—Rhode Island (25 percent), Iowa (21 percent), Pennsylvania (20 percent), South Dakota (20 percent), West Virginia (17 percent), Nebraska (15 percent), North Dakota (15 percent) and Oklahoma (15 percent)—fall in the structurally deficient category.

State—and congressional district—specific information from the analysis—including rankings and the locations of the 250 most heavily travelled structurally deficient bridges in the nation and top 25 most heavily traveled in each state—is available at www.artbabridgereport.org.

Established in 1902, Washington, D.C.-based ARTBA is the “consensus voice” of the U.S. transportation design and construction industry before Congress, the White House, federal agencies, news media and the general public.

U.S. DOT Celebrates African American History Month: Granville T. Woods

Posted by USDOT Public Affairs

Often referred to as the “Black Edison,” inventor and engineer Granville T. Woods played a key role in modernizing America’s railroad industry.



Compared to the likes of Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison but often left out of history books, Woods devoted his life to developing new electrical, mechanical and communication devices that are still used today.

Born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1856, Woods worked a variety of rail jobs, including working as a railroad engineer. Due to the color of his skin, however, he was often denied opportunities within the companies for which he worked, which motivated him to start his own business, Woods Railway Telegraph Company, in 1884.

After going out on his own and with help from his brother, Woods began work on a device called the “telegraphony,” which was patented in 1885. The invention allowed a telegraph station to send voice and telegraph messages over a single wire and was later sold to the American Bell Telephone Company.

In 1887, building on his knowledge of communications and railway operations, Woods came up with one of his most significant inventions yet, the Synchronous Multiplex Railway Telegraph. This device made it possible to send messages from moving trains to railway stations, increasing safety by allowing dispatchers to know where trains were at any given time.

Woods died at age 53, but during his short life he patented more than 50 inventions including the precursor to the modern-day “third rail” and an automatic brake system. His inventions were ahead of his time and helped lay the foundation for today’s railway systems.

The [Mardi Gras Eco-Team Volunteer Registration](#) is now live! The Mardi Gras Eco-Team is in its 4th year of recycling and needs your help to create a cleaner, greener carnival atmosphere! Volunteers are needed for the final four days of the Mardi Gras season, Saturday, February 25 through Tuesday, February 28, and a variety of shift options are available. Please [sign up](#) to be a part of this fun and festive volunteer opportunity.

Save the Date!

Crepe Myrtle Trail Ride 2017
April 1 - Arlington Park
www.crepemyrtleride.com

Transportation Research

Fostering Innovation in Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Pooled Fund Study

Call for participants ends May 31

Transportation agencies across the country are seeking ways to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility. However, existing research programs that advance innovation, such as the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, cannot meet the growing needs for pedestrian and bicyclist research. This Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) study will supplement existing research venues and fill an important missing gap by emphasizing short turnaround practical research on issues immediately relevant to practitioners. It will address national goals and priorities identified through input from local, state, and national partners in FHWA’s Strategic Agenda for Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation. The pooled fund will provide a mechanism for federal, state, regional, and local transportation agencies; academic institutions; foundations; private firms; and other stakeholders to collaboratively fund and implement pedestrian and bicycle research.

Intermodal Freight Connectors – Issues and Needs

February 15, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

Intermodal connectors are key components of the U.S. roadway network, and are critical for enabling freight shipments handled by major non-highway based freight facilities (i.e. intermodal rail yards, marine ports, large commercial airports, etc.) to be transferred to or from trucks. These connectors are critical in enhancing the efficiency of the first and last mile truck shipments to or from intermodal freight facilities. However, intermodal connectors often do not receive the funding needed to maintain or improve their physical condition, or in some cases enhance their connectivity between intermodal freight facilities and the rest of the U.S. roadway network. [This webinar](#) will feature a discussion about a nearly completed national-level freight intermodal connector study, and regional coordination efforts between public sector agencies and intermodal facility owners to monitor and address intermodal connector needs.

BTS Releases Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2016

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) released the [Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2016](#) (TSAR). The [21st edition](#) of this congressionally-mandated report presents key transportation indicators along with an overview of

the transportation system. It also includes data and statistics on passenger travel, freight movement, transportation and the economy, system reliability, safety, energy use and environmental impacts. In addition, the report focuses on closing data gaps and improving the ways in which transportation statistics are collected, compiled, analyzed, and published. TSAR is a report of the BTS director to the President and Congress. The complete report or individual sections may be [downloaded directly](#) from the [BTS website](#). Printed copies are also available upon request via e-mail through orders@bts.gov
Email links icon or online through the [BTS Bookstore](#).

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 - Location is automatically collected in GIS
-

Transportation Dictionary

The USDOT released a searchable online dictionary that includes over 9,000 transportation terms and acronyms. The terms were collected from a variety of public and private transportation publications and databases. This dictionary presents over 9,000 terms and acronyms related to transportation. The terms and acronyms were obtained from various transportation publications and databases which exist within the federal government, private organizations, Canada and Mexico.

Search Tips

- Sources are listed in parenthesis after the definition.
- None of the searches are case sensitive. Searching for PEDESTRIAN will produce the same results as searching for pedestrian.
- The Dictionary searches for the word, phrase or acronym as it is entered and returns all records that match or contain that word, phrase or acronym. For example, searching for pedestrian will return records for pedestrian and pedestrian walkway.

Click [HERE](#) for the search engine.