



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Volume 9, 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

Contact Us

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

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

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

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

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

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission  
110 Bearegard St

Mardi Gras is in full swing. We hope everyone is making it out to see the parades and catch some moon pies. You can check the parade schedule [here](#). The MPO Policy Committee will meet the week after next on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the board room of the GM&O building. Don't forget it is time to apply for TAP Funds in *Funding Opportunities*.

Laissez Les Bon Temps Roulez!

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

### JOINT MOBILE MPO Policy Board and TCC/CAC MEETING

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization will meet on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 10:00 am at the GM&O Building in the Board Room at 110 Bearegard Street. The MPO will vote on the following items to be included into the Transportation Improvement Program from recommendations of the Technical Coordinating/Citizens Advisory Committee:

#### National Highway Funds

CN	Resurfacing on SR-158 from west of SR 213 to SR 13 (US 43)	FY 2014	\$1,639,613
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#### 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
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Additional information may be obtained from the Transportation Planning Coordinator at the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, 433-6541. Written comments regarding the projects are welcome and may be submitted to:

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

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

## 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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### EPA pushes back new ozone standards to late 2015

Jason Plautz, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, February 26, 2014

New standards limiting ozone pollution can't be finalized until November 2015, U.S. EPA said today in a court filing responding to green groups that sought an earlier deadline for the rule.

In its [filing](#), the agency acknowledged that it missed its statutory five-year deadline to review the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone. The review, the agency said, is taking longer "due in part to the abundance of new scientific evidence concerning the potential health and welfare effects of ozone pollution," as well as the need to review comments from the scientific bodies that advise the agency.

While EPA staff are "working diligently" on the necessary assessments and reviews, "EPA now anticipates that it will take final action no later than November 15, 2015," said the filing to a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Several green groups and public health advocates represented by Earthjustice had asked a federal judge to set an Oct. 1, 2015, deadline for EPA to finalize its ozone rule, saying the agency had enough evidence to set the standard and was violating the Clean Air Act by stalling. Under that request, a proposal would be due out by Dec. 1 of this year ([Greenwire](#), Jan. 22).

Earthjustice attorney Paul Cort said EPA's proposed schedule is "actually very similar," with the only difference being how soon it can sign a notice of proposed rulemaking.

"We do not believe EPA has really justified the additional time it claims to need," Cort said. "We believe our schedule of Oct. 1, 2015, provides adequate time and is more in line with the urgency of the problem."

The ozone NAAQS of 75 parts per billion was last set in 2008, but the White House in 2011 stopped a proposal to tighten the standard to between 60 and 70 ppb.

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### Alabama Senate passes revisions to state's open meetings law

By [The Associated Press](#)

MONTGOMERY, Alabama — [A bill passed by the Alabama Senate on Thursday](#) would restore the public's ability to sue because of closed meetings, the sponsor said.

The Senate voted 26-1 for the bill sponsored by Republican Sen. Cam Ward of Alabaster and backed by the Alabama Press Association and Gov. Robert Bentley. The bill now goes to the House for consideration.

Ward said three recent decisions by the Alabama Supreme Court gutted Alabama's open meetings law and this legislation restores many of its provisions.

One court ruling made suing because of a secret meeting difficult, but Ward's bill says civil actions can be brought by any Alabama resident. The bill provides for penalties ranging from \$1 to \$1,000 for violating open meeting requirements.

In response to another court ruling, the bill makes clear that the open meetings requirements apply to committees and subcommittees created by government boards.

Ward's bill also prohibits two or more serial meetings in which less than a quorum of a board gets together privately to deliberate an issue the board will vote on within seven days.

It does not prohibit members of a board from exchanging background and educational information before a vote, but they can't deliberate. It also does not change the way the Legislature conducts its business, and it does not apply to trustees of the University of Alabama and Auburn University when they have gatherings to fill top academic and coaching positions.

The bill is a compromise worked out with associations representing county commissions, city councils, and school and college officials.

Ward said he's optimistic the bill will become law because the public needs transparency in government.

"It is absolutely necessary for confidence in government," he said.

Felecia Mason, executive director of the Alabama Press Association, thanked the Senate leadership for making the bill a priority.

"It restores key provisions of our open meetings law that are important to Alabama citizens," she said.

## 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.

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## Just For Fun

The Mobile Mask has videos uploaded on YouTube of all of the Mardi Gras parades so far. You can check them out [here](#) if you want to see one you missed.

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## In the News

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### Alabama by the Numbers: Which Alabama metro has longest commute? How long?



Traffic backed up trying to get into Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville earlier this month. (Bob [Gathany@al.com](mailto:Gathany@al.com))

By [Challen\\_Stephens@al.com](mailto:Challen_Stephens@al.com)

Birmingham leads the state's largest metro areas for the longest commutes, as nearly one in every 7 people drive more than 45 minutes to work. The other large metros all beat the state average, to see where the Mobile Metro area ranks click [here](#).

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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 Beaugard 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).



<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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## Transportation Research

## Free Webinar on Pedestrian Safety and the Highway Safety Improvement Program

**CHAPEL HILL, NC** — The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) announce a free webinar on HSIP funding for pedestrian safety:

### **Pedestrian Safety and the Highway Safety Improvement Program**

**Thursday, March 13**

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time**

**To register:** <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/389727434>

This webinar will provide an overview of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and its applications for addressing pedestrian safety.

Karen Scurry (Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety) will provide an overview of the program and discuss the relationships between the different HSIP programs, eligibility requirements, resources for additional information, and examples of pedestrian focused projects that have used HSIP funds.

The webinar will also feature presentations from two states – Arizona and California – to focus on how HSIP is applied on the state and local levels. Providing these presentations will be Kohinoor Kar (Arizona Department of Transportation) and David Cohen (FHWA California Division).

The presenters will also participate in a question and answer session to answer questions from the attendees.

This webinar is one of the free webinars that FHWA offers quarterly as part of its Pedestrian Safety Focus States and Cities initiatives. FHWA's Safety Office is trying to aggressively reduce pedestrian deaths by focusing extra resources on the states and cities with the highest pedestrian fatalities and/or fatality rates. Webinar archives for this series, as well as listings of upcoming sessions, can be found at [http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars\\_FHWA.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars_FHWA.cfm).

PBIC offers free, public Webinars approximately every other month. To register for upcoming Webinars and to access archived presentations, please visit <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars.cfm>.

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## Downtown Mobile Alliance Strategic Plan Survey

Hundreds of Downtown Mobile Stakeholders have already completed the survey that will help the Downtown Mobile Alliance develop a strategic plan for the next five years. Join them and make your opinion count! Already, we know that parking, abandoned buildings and lack of affordable residential opportunities are some of the issues you think should be addressed. Please take the survey and add your voice. It will take about 10 - 15 minutes, and at the end you can enter your name to be eligible for a Downtown Mobile Gift Card.

As always, thank you for your interest in Downtown Mobile!

**[Take this survey](#)**

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## U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey (ACS) Public Events in March

### **ACS at National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference**

Visit Census Bureau staff at the Federal Resource Center for the 2014 NACo Legislative Conference. Staff will be on hand to answer questions and discuss the American Community Survey (ACS).

Date: Monday, March 3rd from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM

Location: Washington Hilton, Washington, DC

ACS Attendees: Anna Owens and Cheryl Chambers

Learn more about the [NACo Legislative Conference](#).

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### **ACS at National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional City Conference**

Visit Census Bureau staff at the federal agency round robin. Staff will be on hand to answer questions and discuss the ACS.

Date: Monday, March 10th from 1:45 PM-2:15 PM

Location: Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC

ACS Attendees: Gretchen Gooding and Tim Gilbert

Learn more about the [NLC Congressional City Conference](#).

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### **ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Dual Vintage Variables Webinar**

Advanced users learn about the ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) and how to work with dual vintages of variables included in the ACS PUMS files. This presentation will give a background of the ACS PUMS files before explaining how to work specifically with dual vintage variables in the 2008-2012 ACS 5-year PUMS files, including Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA), Occupation, and Industry variables.

Date and Time: Thursday, March 13th from 1:00-2:00 PM

Presenter: Tim Gilbert

Learn how to log-in by visiting the Census Bureau's [Educational Resources](#) page.

The ACS provides reliable statistics that are indispensable to anyone who has to make informed decisions about the future. These statistics are required by all levels of government to manage or evaluate a wide range of programs, but are also



useful for research, education, journalism, business and advocacy. If you have questions about this survey, please call Customer Services Center at 1 (800) 923-8282.