



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 3, 2017

Volume 2, Number 3

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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. The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) will meet on February 15th at noon in the SARPC Board Room. (please see *Mobile MPO Updates*) We officially have a new Transportation Secretary, and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held their first full committee meeting (see *Legislative Updates*). The *Just For Fun* this week should help some (not to be named) SARPC employees when they go downtown.

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

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.

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 (L RTP). 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). Finally, there will be a discussion concerning the STP Attributable Funding Schedule. Please put it on your calendars, and a notice will go out next week.

Mobile MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting 2/15/2017

There will be a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting at the GM&O Building in the board room on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. This will be a bring your own, brown bag lunch meeting. It is open to the public. The minutes of the meeting are available online [HERE](#). If you have anything you would like to be included on the agenda please let us know.

Performance Measures

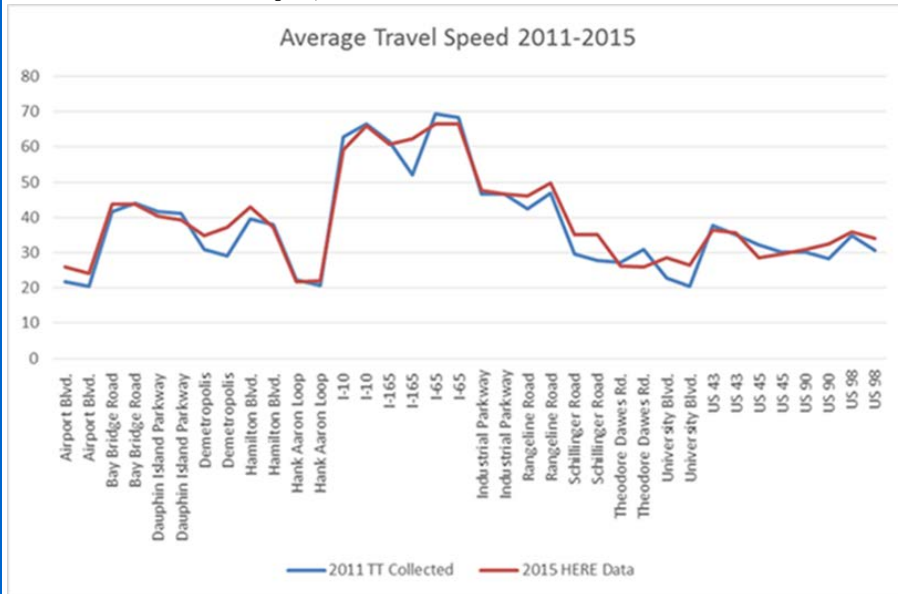
On January 18, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published in the Federal Register final rules for the last two national performance management measure regulations. One rule establishes regulations to assess the condition and performance of bridges on the National Highway System (NHS) and of 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 (L RTP) has to be fiscally constrained, which means this \$500,000 has to come from somewhere. The L RTP 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.

In terms of system performance, HERE Data was data that was made available to use through ALDOT. It is collected from cell phones, on board GPS, and blue tooth devices. It provides us with the travel time (in seconds) for every 5 minutes of a day, for every day, for a year. It is a tremendous amount of data. Since we know the distance of the TMC (a section of road), and the amount of seconds it took to travel that link, we can derive a travel speed. This is extremely useful because previously, our Congestion Management Process required us to use GPS to collect the data. Below are the average PM Peak period travel speed for the majority of our arterials and interstates for the 2011 data that we collected using GPS, and the HERE data for 2015.



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 January 27, 2017

Mobile County

None at this time

Baldwin County

For constructing the Parking Lot Lighting Installation at the Mobile Bay Ferry Dock in Fort Morgan. Length 0.074 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$118,843 to \$145,252 .

Escambia County

None at this time

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

Legislative Updates

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao Confirmed

By a vote of 93-6, the Senate on Tuesday confirmed Elaine Chao as the nation's 18th Transportation Secretary. In an email shortly after the vote, Secretary Chao reminded readers that this is her third stint at the U.S. Department of Transportation: "I look forward to working with you once again to ensure that the safety and efficiency of our country's transportation systems are second to none." She was sworn in by Vice President Pence shortly after the vote.

While Chao had widespread support, Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) sent a letter ahead of the vote asking for her stance on the recent immigration executive order. Nelson also wanted to know if the administration looked to Chao for advice on the order that created uncertainty and protests at airports over the weekend. The senator did not receive a response but voted for Chao regardless. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) voted against her confirmation because she had not publicly stated her stance on the immigration order. In addition to Schumer, the other five senators who voted against Chao's confirmation were Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Bernie Sanders (I-VT).

Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America

Wednesday, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held their first full committee hearing of the 115th Congress titled [Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America](#). The committee heard from leaders of FedEx Corporation, Cargill, Inc., BMW of North America, and Vermeer Corporation, as well as the president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). The witnesses offered ideas about how to pay for an infrastructure package and what types of projects should be included. Several talked about the need for air traffic control reform and spoke in favor of user fees and increasing the gas tax. The

panelists were also asked by Michael Capuano (D-MA) about public/private partnerships, a cornerstone of Trump's original plan, to which they all agreed cannot alone solve our infrastructure needs. In Chairman Bill Shuster's (R-PA) opening statement he talked about the focus on infrastructure in this election and the mention of it during the president's inaugural address, but did not offer any details on their infrastructure plans.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Announces Subcommittee Rosters, Approves Rules & Oversight Plan

Washington, DC, January 31, 2017

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee today held its organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, approved the Committee rules and the Committee authorization and oversight plan, and confirmed subcommittee rosters.

"Thanks to the hard work of our Members, our committee has built a record of success over the last four years moving large, complex pieces of legislation to improve our transportation networks and our infrastructure," said **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA)**. "This Congress, we have more work to do, and a golden opportunity to build a 21st century infrastructure for America. I look forward to working with Ranking Member DeFazio, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Vice Chairman Duncan, Committee Vice Ranking Member Esty, our subcommittee leaders, and all of our Members to continue improving our infrastructure and ensuring America's competitiveness."

"Transportation is not a partisan issue, it's about moving people and goods more efficiently in this country and connecting us to the world," said **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-OR)**. "Our communities and citizens rely on safe and efficient roads, rails, ports, planes, and public transit systems every day. Yet nearly one in four bridges in the United States is structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, 65 percent of our Nation's roads are in less than good condition, our rail and bus transit systems are facing a \$90 billion backlog, and full channels at the Nation's 59 busiest ports are available less than 35 percent of the time.

In the coming Congress, I plan to work with Chairman Shuster and President Trump to find common ground and bipartisan solutions that address the growing transportation infrastructure backlog without adding to the deficit."

"I look forward to continuing this Committee's tradition of working across the aisle to produce infrastructure legislation which makes our economy competitive on a global stage and creates jobs for Americans here at home," said **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Vice Chairman John J. Duncan, Jr. (R-TN)**.

"Rebuilding America's infrastructure is an economic and national security imperative," said **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Vice Ranking Member Elizabeth Esty (D-CT)**. "Both Democrats and Republicans, including President Trump, have identified our Committee's work as an area for bipartisan cooperation. I'm excited to work with Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, Vice Chairman Duncan, and all my colleagues on the Committee to advance smart, bold policies that will make America's transportation systems the envy of the world."

[Subcommittee Chairs](#) and [Ranking Members](#) were announced previously. Today, the Committee also confirmed the appointments of the following six subcommittee vice chairs:

Subcommittee on Aviation: U.S. Rep. Paul Mitchell (R-MI)

Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation: U.S. Rep. Jason Lewis (R-MN)

Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management: U.S.

Rep. Drew Ferguson (R-GA)

Subcommittee on Highways and Transit: Lloyd Smucker (R-PA)

Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials: U.S. Rep. John Faso (R-NY)

Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment: U.S. Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL)

Shuster Statement from Hearing on Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America

Washington, DC, February 1, 2017

Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA)

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Hearing on "Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America"

Opening Statement (Remarks as Prepared)

Good morning and welcome to the first full Committee hearing of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for the 115th Congress. I want to welcome our new Members of the Committee, and our returning Members. I look forward to working with all of you during what will be a busy Congress for our Committee.

This morning's hearing is about looking to the future and how we build a 21st century infrastructure for America. But before we begin, I think it is important for us to remember the successes this Committee had in the last Congress.

Our Committee, working in bipartisan fashion, was incredibly productive over the last two years. We were able to move large, complex legislation to improve America's infrastructure. The FAST Act, the WIIN Act, our PRRIA passenger rail and Amtrak reforms, the PIPES Act, the Coast Guard Authorization Act, and other Committee bills are now law because we were able to build consensus and get things done for the American people.

Our track record speaks to the hard work of our Members and staff. For our new Committee Members here today – take note. Our goal is the same level of success for this Congress, so get ready to roll up your sleeves. America's infrastructure is the backbone of our economy. As a people, we are bound together by our values and our dedication to liberty. But physically, we are bound together by our transportation network.

From the beginning of the very First Congress that authorized the first Federal lighthouses, to the Transcontinental Railroad, to the Panama Canal, to the Interstate Highway System, to the Nation's airports, the federal government has played a vital, Constitutional role in ensuring the American people and our economy are connected through infrastructure.

A strong infrastructure means a strong America – an America that competes globally, supports local and regional economic development, and creates jobs. However, our infrastructure will face significant challenges in the future. Forecasts predict that our population will grow

from 319 million in 2014, to 400 million by 2051. The movement of freight is expected to increase by 40 percent over the next 30 years. By the end of the next decade, air travel demand is expected to increase from 750 million passengers annually to one billion. And transportation technology continues to evolve – driverless cars, commercial drones, and commercial space transportation are just a few examples of this change, but more changes are coming.

Our infrastructure policies have to keep pace with changing technologies. We must be able to meet our infrastructure needs of today, but also be poised to tackle the challenges of tomorrow. One thing November's election taught us was that the American people are ready for their elected officials to rethink the way we do things here in Washington and challenge the status quo. This election also raised the profile of infrastructure in the minds of the American people and policymakers. In fact, I believe this was the first time a president ever mentioned the word "infrastructure" in an inaugural address. This feeling of optimism is echoed by over 400 associations who wrote in support of investing in infrastructure and fixing the Highway Trust Fund. Their thoughts are contained a letter I would like to enter into the record today.

What does this mean for us? It means that we now have a unique opportunity. The wind is at our backs, and it's time to act on our infrastructure needs. President Trump made a promise to the American people that he would reassert America's greatness. From my perspective, that means ensuring that America is competitive in the crowded global marketplace of today and tomorrow. It means reimagining and building a 21st century infrastructure—leveraging resources from all levels of government and the private sector. Modern infrastructure lets our people, goods, products, and crops get where they need to go more efficiently and at less cost.

It's improved roads and bridges that reduce bottlenecks and problems that slow the flow of commerce. Modern infrastructure is an aviation system with truly modern, efficient, and transformational air traffic control technology. It's ports and waterways that let our farmers and manufacturers move their crops and products to remain competitive with other nations. It's rail systems that focus on more effective, efficient service in regions of the country where rail transportation works well. It's pipelines that can transport the energy products that will power us into the future. It's infrastructure that is resilient when natural disaster strikes. It's infrastructure that can be built faster, unburdened by bureaucracy and impediments to private investment. And it's infrastructure that encourages innovation and unleashes the next revolution in mobility. Modern infrastructure means jobs, because when transportation efficiency improves the bottom line for our job creators, they can put more people to work.

That is my vision for a 21st century infrastructure, and it can be achieved if we work together to build it. I welcome our panel of experts and look forward to hearing from you. Your organizations have a unique understanding of our infrastructure needs. Your companies and your workers depend on the functionality of our transportation networks, so your perspectives are critical in helping us shape the future of America's infrastructure.

Click [here](#) for additional information from the hearing, including testimony, video, and background information.

[50 YEARS OF US TRANSPORTATION CHECK IT OUT!](#)

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

Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

Deadline: Rolling

Grants made under these programs will leverage regional assets to support the implementation of regional economic development strategies designed to create jobs, leverage private capital, encourage economic development, and strengthen America's ability to compete in the global marketplace. Through the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO), the Economic Development Administration (EDA) solicits applications from rural and urban communities to develop initiatives that advance new ideas and creative approaches to address rapidly evolving economic conditions. EDA is employing a new two-phase review process for proposals/applications submitted under this FFO. Proposals will be reviewed by EDA within 30 days of receipt; and following the proposal review, full applications will be reviewed within 60 days of receipt.

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](#).

Just For Fun

Imagine you are cruising on Dauphin Street, no wait, you can't do that. Imagine you are cruising on Dauphin Island this weekend for the Mardi Gras parade, and you need to parallel park. The space is too small for the 3 point parallel park trick. Thankfully, you have installed... "Liddiard wheels". This is the "what's next" for the automobile, and it is genius. These tires probably will not do so well in the rain, and *JUST FOR FUN*, if you install them on your pick-up truck with an aggressive tread, prepare to be jarred around a bit. [HERE](#)



In the News

Seven ugly urban underpasses now functioning as public parks

Transforming wasted space into community hot spots

BY [MEGAN BARBER](#)

When Manhattan's High Line opened on the west side in 2009, locals and visitors alike flocked to the revitalized railroad trestle to marvel at its transformation into a gorgeous and walkable park. Arguably the most famous urban adaptive reuse project in America, the High Line made industrial reuse cool and prompted a wave of creative development.

Since then, cities across the country have worked to reclaim seemingly inhospitable urban infrastructure, from [old cisterns to sewage plants](#).

Elevated highways and rail lines were long overdue for a makeover. While freeway cap parks—or removing freeways entirely—have become increasingly popular to reunite cities fragmented by urban highways, capping isn't always feasible. Instead, many cities are turning transit underpasses into public parks, replacing trash, overgrown weeds, and dark passageways with art installations, funky lights, and pedestrian thoroughfares.

We've rounded up 7 creative examples [transit underpasses](#) that have been transformed. One is a decades-old projects that turned a downtrodden underpass into a skateboarding destination. Other projects are still under construction or in the works. But all are examples of a new era in underpass design—one that emphasizes high-impact solutions to reconnect neighborhoods and revitalize communities.

Know of an underpass park that we missed? Let us know in the comments!

[The Wabash Lights in Chicago](#)

In an effort to combat the dark shadow of Chicago's elevated train tracks, two art-influenced entrepreneurs want to install a light installation on the underside of Wabash Avenue. In February 2016 a [beta test](#) of the lights were installed, and eventually the project hopes to light up over 2 blocks of the underpass.

[The I-5 Colonnade Bike Park in Seattle](#)

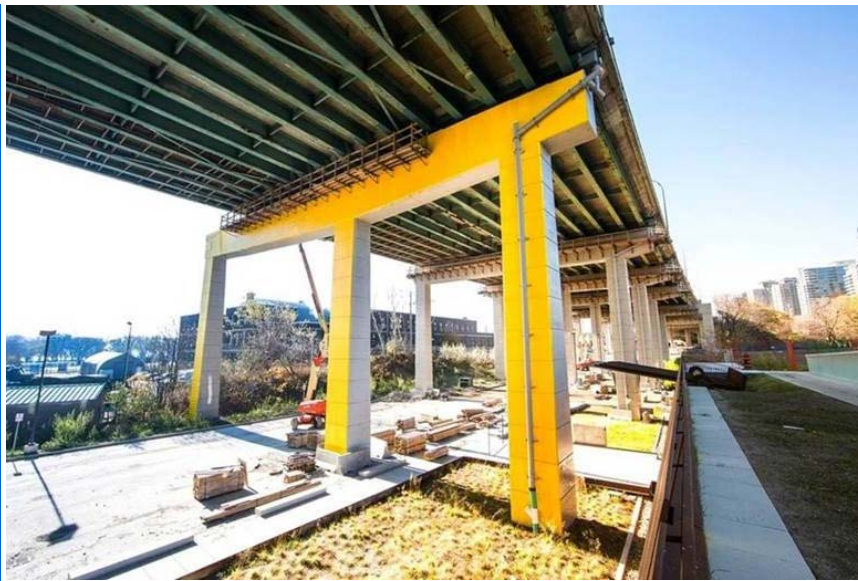
Built under the elevated spans of the I-5 in Seattle, the Colonnade trail system transformed a long-neglected and dangerous two acres of underpass into one of America's first urban mountain bike parks. Originally opened in 2008, the urban park has had its ups and downs over the years, but its unlikely success story has been a model for many other cities.

[The Underline in Miami](#)

Following in the footsteps of New York City's High Line, [the Underline](#) in Miami wants to transform a rundown trail below the MetroRail—the city's elevated rapid transit system—into an urban park. The project envisions a 10-mile walking and biking path that will act as the foundation for Miami's larger 250-mile pedestrian infrastructure network.

The \$110 million project will renovate the existing, unlit path into an interactive trail full of vegetation, art, and workout equipment. The first phase of construction is currently underway, and the entire project will take years to complete.

[The Bentway in Toronto](#)



The underbelly of Toronto's Gardiner Expressway. Via [The Bentway's Facebook Page](#)

Formerly known as Project: Under Gardiner, [the Bentway](#) aims to transform the vacant and forgotten area underneath Toronto's Gardiner Expressway into a new community gathering place. The project stemmed from a decision by the Toronto City Council to rehabilitate the elevated highway, much of which is five stories high. To take advantage of the wasted space under the highway, a new 1.75 km trail will knit together seven neighborhoods and provide access to important tourist destinations.

The Bentway will also serve as a year-round activity and event space, including gardens, a skating rink, recreational amenities, public markets, public art, special exhibitions, festivals, and theater and musical performances. Most of the project will open in a series of phased events in 2017.

Burnside Skatepark in Portland

Located underneath Portland's Burnside Bridge on the east side of the Willamette River, this skate park was originally built 26 years ago without permission. A group of skaters took a dilapidated piece of land protected from the rain and poured a mecca of concrete skateboard features.

When nearby business owners realized that a skate park could be a positive attribute for the neighborhood, they helped lobby Burnside's city officials and the rest is history. Now, this completely legal skate park is part of skateboarding legend, and has even been featured in video games and professional magazines.

Underpass Art Parks in Washington D.C.

The Noma Parks foundation is working on a plan to improve the condition of some of Washington D.C.'s underpasses by adding art installations to beautify the spaces. There are plans to install art on four underpasses (check out the locations [over here](#)).

The first project—which is under construction now—will bring a "light-filled art park" to the [M Street NE passageway](#). Called Rain, the installation will use LED lights inside hundreds of polycarbonate tubes to look like a thunderstorm.

Sabine Promenade in Houston



The Sabine Promenade in Houston, Texas. *Tom Fox, SWA Group*

This award-winning park—completed in 2006—located below Houston's I-45 features bike and pedestrian pathways landscaped by architects from the [SWA Group](#), a large firm founded in the 1950s by Hideo Sasaki and Peter Walker.

The half-mile stretch below the highway features nighttime lighting that changes from white to blue depending on the phases of the moon, access to the Buffalo Bayou, and what some have called an ["unintentional sculpture park"](#) made up of the highway's underpinnings.

How an old loop of railroads is changing the face of a city

TEDNYC - Filmed October 2016

Urban planner Ryan Gravel shares the [story](#) of how his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia, rallied to build a massive urban park that will transform an abandoned railroad track into 22 miles of public green space called the Atlanta BeltLine. The places we live aren't inevitable, he says — and if we want something different, we need to speak up.

How and When U.S. Transit Funding Could Change

BY [JOSH COHEN](#) | JANUARY 30, 2017

Elaine Chao is unlikely to receive much resistance tomorrow during a Senate vote on her confirmation as secretary of transportation. The longtime Washington, D.C., insider — Chao was labor secretary under George W. Bush and deputy transportation secretary under George

Her confirmation will be a rare piece of straightforward federal transportation news after months of speculation about what Trump's \$1 trillion infrastructure package might look like and [how he would pay for it](#). Adding to the confusion, Senate Democrats released their own [trillion-dollar infrastructure plan](#) last week, and reports have been circulating that Trump's budget proposal will [drastically slash](#) federal transit funding.

The latter piece of news comes from the [Heritage Foundation's Blueprint for Balance](#). The far right think tank's so-called "skinny budget" proposal takes a draconian approach to federal investment with calls to eliminate over \$10 trillion in federal spending over the next decade. Arguing that transit should be a local concern and that most people choose to drive in America, the Blueprint eliminates the Federal Transit Administration, [TIGER grants](#), federal funding for Amtrak and the D.C. Metro system, the New Starts transit program and much more. The Hill [reports](#) that Trump transition team members and former Heritage staffers Russ Vought and John Gray are shaping a budget that would follow the Blueprint's recommendations.

Unsurprisingly, slashing federal funding would have a devastating long-term impact on local transit. "It would be massively disruptive and absolutely a job killer," says Jon Orcutt, communications and advocacy director at urban mobility nonprofit Transit Center.

The FTA disburses grants to local municipalities for capital transit projects, both for improving existing infrastructure and building new. Larger transit agencies such as New York's Metropolitan Transit Authority and Los Angeles' Metro tend to rely less on federal funding than smaller agencies, but the amount varies significantly year to year depending on the number of capital projects underway in a given city.

The FTA's [Federal Transit Database](#) provides information of city transit agencies' 2013 and 2014 budgets. It gives a snapshot of how much agencies rely on federal funding for their capital spending.

In 2014, for example, federal funding accounted for 11.4 percent of Los Angeles' capital spending. That same year it accounted for 23.4 percent of Seattle's Sound Transit agency's capital spending, 29.3 percent of Houston's and 54.7 percent of Boston's. All told it's billions of dollars local agencies would have to try and come up with themselves (and realistically, could not).

Most transit agencies I reached out to were unwilling to speculate on the impact of losing federal support. L.A. Metro spokesperson Kim Upton says, "Federal funding is a major component of our transportation system, so we will be following these developments closely including what, if any, impacts they could have on our projects."

Granted, a budget proposal is just that: a proposal. Trump's budget will need congressional approval and some transportation experts are confident Congress will spare transit the ax.

"I wholeheartedly believe this will not happen," says Adie Tomer, a [Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program](#) fellow. "I can't put it at zero chance. But the reason I don't think it's going to happen is transit is so vital and touches every single state and congressional district in the country. There's no member of Congress who's not going to have their phone start ringing wildly off the hook if they ever really put something like this on the table."

Even if Heritage's doomsday transit funding scenario did come to pass, Tomer points out, the current funding established by 2015's [\\$305 billion FAST Act](#) is protected for another four years.

"This can't happen tomorrow. You can't just bleed the FTA dry," he says.

But this isn't the first time transit funding has been in the crosshairs of conservative politicians. For example, in 2012, House Republicans [tried to eliminate](#) a dedicated portion of gas tax revenue, redirecting transit's only federal funding source to highway spending.

"Republicans have taken aim at eliminating FTA since 2011 when the Tea Party movement started," Orcutt says. But, he agrees with Tomer that transit often garners bipartisan support. "The people who come to the rescue and have been swing votes in the past are suburban Republicans whose high-earning constituents wouldn't be able to get to work from the suburbs to their downtown jobs without transit."

Likely in anticipation of the coming transportation funding fight, the [Senate Democrats' \\$1 trillion infrastructure package](#) includes hundreds of billions to modernize, repair and expand transit and a \$10 billion expansion of the TIGER program. It also takes a fairly status quo approach to roads and highway spending.

The proposal has to be taken with a very large grain of salt since it provides no specifics on funding such massive investments, but Orcutt says, "as a broad brush it looks great. It's a more balanced approach between roads and transit than we've seen in a long time."

The issue is a long way from being settled. Trump is expected to release a budget proposal within his first 45 days in office. After that it

heads to Congress for debate and amendments.

And though he remains mostly sure that federal transit funding is safe, Tomer says, "even if you don't think it's going to move, it's important to pay attention to see how this affects real proposals in the future."

Mobile becomes first City in America to adopt Hurricane Home Protection Program

January 30, 2017

The City of Mobile is the first city in America to adopt a hurricane home protection program through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity and the State of Alabama.

Partners from Habitat for Humanity will assess the home's stability during hurricanes. Following the assessment, they will make the necessary repairs, and if needed, provide a new roof for the house.

An online application will open soon for citizens to apply to have their home assessed. They will be given out on a first come first serve basis.

Not only does a new roof protect the home in times of disaster, but it also helps the homeowner receive discounts on insurance rates.

"This program will tremendously impact the lives of Mobilians," said Mayor Stimpson. "In times of disaster, we all want to have the peace of mind that we can find shelter in our own homes. This program helps citizens properly secure their home, so they can remain safe during tropical storms."

Mobile County Road to Re-Open Ahead of Schedule

February 02, 2017

After 10 a.m., on Friday, February 3, there will be no detours or delays, when traveling down Half Mile Road in Irvington. The roadway between Bellingrath Road and Padgett-Switch Road will be open for travel and a new, wider and longer bridge will also be in place. Although the project began in November, county workers were able to complete the work ahead of schedule.

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.

Transportation Research

National Transportation Statistics Updated

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) this week updated [National Transportation Statistics \(NTS\)](#) – a web-only reference guide to national-level transportation data. NTS, updated quarterly, includes a wide range of national transportation information. NTS consists of more than 260 tables of national data on [the transportation system](#), [safety](#), [the economy](#) and [energy and the environment](#), of which 40 were updated today. The next quarterly update is scheduled for April. [NTS](#) contents are available on the [BTS](#) website.

Path to a Walkable Future

February 8, 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Walkable communities are the most successful when people come together to create a place where every person has safe, accessible, and enjoyable active transportation. This [America Walks webinar](#) will address questions such as what kind of coalitions and partnerships have worked best in creating walkability? And how can walking advocates work with other sectors to create vital and vibrant communities for the future?

BTS Releases Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2016

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) today 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](#).

New ADA Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Compliance App

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- Simple to Use
 - Download from Apple Store or Google Play
 - Collect information at your pace
 - Gathers ADA Compliance inventory and condition information
 - Location is automatically collected in GIS
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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.