



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, February 9th, 2018

Volume 25, Number 6

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET JANUARY 26TH, 2018
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Recently Completed

- Planning Studies
- Destination 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Toole Design Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile
- 2018 Unified Planning Work Program
- 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program
- Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

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There is a **Mobile MPO Policy Committee meeting** on **ASH WEDNESDAY at 2:00PM**. ALDOT has shortlisted three teams for the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project, and There are several scheduling changes to road projects in Mobile - please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. The Infrastructure Plan may finally be released and the Feds have avoided another shutdown - See *Legislative Updates*. Please take a moment to take a survey as part of an ALDOT research project - See *Transportation Research*.

Have a safe and happy Mardi Gras weekend!

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

MOBILE MPO Meeting 2/14/2018 at 2:00PM

Safety Performance Measures

The Mobile MPO, and the Eastern Shore MPO, will have to adopt Safety Performance Measures by February 27th, 2018. The Alabama Department of Transportation has already developed performance measures for the State of Alabama, and the MPO has the option of supporting the state's Safety Performance Measures or adopting their own. The performance measures are baselines and targets for:

- Number of Fatalities
- Fatality rate (VMT)
- Number of Serious Injuries
- Serious Injury rate (VMT)
- Number of Bicycle/Pedestrian injuries

All of the federally funded transportation projects must work towards the goals set by the MPO, and the State of Alabama. At the TCC/CAC meeting this past Wednesday, these were discussed and recommended for adoption at the upcoming MPO Policy board meeting. Also, project 100060153 (CN) SR-158 Extension from 0.5 Mile East of Glenwood Road to West of Lott Road (SR-217). Grade Drain, Base, Pave has a new cost estimate from \$17,721,177 to \$30,005,229 that requires a MPO resolution. This cost estimate increase is a result of creative shifting of federal funds within ALDOT.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please be sure MPO staff has a proxy for you.

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project Announces Shortlist

MOBILE, AL. – On Tuesday, the Alabama Department of Transportation announced the shortlist of three project teams to respond to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Alabama Department of Transportation's (ALDOT) Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project, which will provide relief to one of the region's most congested areas.

In November 2017, four teams responded to a request to provide ALDOT with Submittals of Qualifications (SOQ). Upon review of the SOQs, the shortlisted teams moving forward in the RFP process are:

I-10 Mobility Partners

- Equity Members: Cintra and Meridiam
- Lead Engineering Firm: Parsons
- Lead Contractor: Ferrovial Argoman and Parsons
- Lead Operations and Maintenance: Cintra and Meridiam

Gulf Coast Connectors

- Equity Members: ACS, Macquarie, Hochtief, and John Laing
- Lead Engineering Firm: T.Y. LIN International
- Lead Contractor: Dragados, Lane Construction, and Flatiron
- Lead Operations and Maintenance: Gulf Coast Connectors

Mobile River Bridge Group

- Equity Members: InfraRed Capital Partners, Shikun & Binui, Astaldi, and

- Southland Holdings
- Lead Engineering Firm: Figg Bridge Engineers
- Lead Contractor: A Joint Venture of Astaldi, Johnson Bros, and Shikun & Binui
- Lead Operations and Maintenance: InfraRed Capital Partners (InfraRed Infrastructure V), Astaldi, and Southland Holdings

The project will be completed with the use of a Public-Private Partnership (P3), which is a way to use public and private funds to accelerate the delivery of the project. P3 financing allows ALDOT to utilize private sector technical, management and additional financial resources to help achieve the project's objectives.

The selected team will not only build the bridge but also take over the maintenance of the project. Therefore, the team will be expected to enter into a 55-year contract. The funding of this project will include revenues generated from all electronic tolling, a public subsidy and equity from the concessionaire.

The three teams – deemed qualified after a thorough technical and financial capability review that included past project experience – will submit proposals for the design, build, finance, operations and maintenance of the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway. Proposals will be due this fall, with the selected team expected to be chosen by the end of the year.

The project will be built under the Alabama Toll Road, Bridge and Tunnel Authority.

About the Toll Road, Bridge and Tunnel Authority:

The powers of the Authority include the ability to give consent and approval for ALDOT to build toll road, bridge or tunnel projects in places that are deemed desirable, practicable, and economically feasible.

Members:

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Speaker of the House of Representatives
- Director of Transportation
- Director of Finance
- Chair of the House Government Appropriations Committee
- Chair of the Senate Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee
- Two At-Large Members

About the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project:

This critically important, high-priority transportation project will involve constructing a new six-lane bridge across the Mobile River to increase Interstate 10's capacity and replace the existing four-lane Bayway with an eight-lane facility at an elevation above the 100 year storm surge event to reduce traffic headaches for thousands of commuters each day by saving motorists time.

The Wallace Tunnel currently averages 75,000 vehicles per day, reaching up to 100,000 vehicles during the peak tourism season. With almost double the daily traffic originally anticipated for the crossing, heavy congestions and longer travel times impact motorists, businesses, and the quality of life in the region. ALDOT expects this project to:

- **Reduce travel time between Mobile and Spanish Fort/Daphne.**
- **Increase reliability in travel times and accessibility to jobs, educational facilities, medical services, and recreational activities.**
- **Facilitate access to/from major industries and freight destinations in Mobile and Baldwin Counties and provide hazardous material vehicles a direct route away from the downtown district.**
- **Take all efforts to preserve and protect the Mobile Bay so that generations to come can enjoy the view and natural beauty from the bridge.**

Hyperlinks within the advisory:

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project: <http://mobileriverbridge.com/>

ALDOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, environmentally and economically sound transportation network across Alabama. For further information, visit www.dot.state.al.us.

US 45 Feasibility Study

There were six submittals for the US 45 Feasibility Study last month. The Consultant Selection Committee reviewed the six firms RFQ's, and graded them accordingly. The three firms that were shortlisted by the Consultant Selection Committee were, Burk-Kleinpeter, Neel-Schaffer and Volkert. Presentations and interviews were last Friday and the committee selected Volkert to compete the work. The contract is under negotiation and we will begin work soon; we will keep you posted.

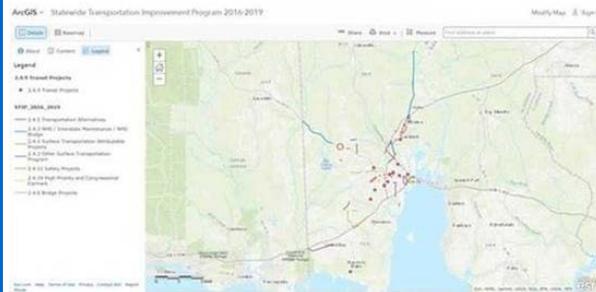
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

The TIP represents a four year program (2016-2019) for improvements in the various transportation systems located within the Mobile study area as identified in the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the twenty-five year plan for the Mobile Urban area [Destination 2040](#). The LRTP establishes the transportation programs that are needed to meet travel demand by the study year and study area. LRTP projects that become funded are moved into the TIP and submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT),

where they are programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For MPO projects, TIP project selection is based on priorities established by MPO member governments and the availability of funds through the Surface Transportation Attributable program. For other projects, ALDOT has discretion of project funding based on availability of funds from various types of funding categories. Most often, projects in the TIP are derived from the LRTP. The TIP guides ALDOT in its annual allocation of funds for transportation improvements and becomes a part of the STIP.

ArcGIS Online is now being utilized by MPO staff to map all federally funded surface transportation projects within our area. Check it out.

2016-2019 E-TIP [HERE](#)



Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing Agreement Concerning Mobile's Transportation Planning Process

The Mobile MPO 3-C Agreement has been finalized and executed. [HERE](#)

Mobile MPO 101

Here are a couple of great videos that were produced by our counterpart in Birmingham (Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham). The videos are a summary of the MPO planning process and are below:



Funding a Project with an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210829210>



Inside an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210825997>

[HERE](#) are the slides and presentations of the Mobile MPO 101 training.

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

The target start date or project engineers estimated amount has changed for the following:

Project : 100066916 (RW)
Federal aid number : NH 0042 (517)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CONSTRUCT BRIDGE ON GLENWOOD ROAD OVER SR-42 (US-98)
Old Target start date : February 01, 2018
New Target start date : March 01, 2018

Project : 100066183 (FM)
Federal aid number : NH 0016 (523)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-16 (US-90) FROM I-165 APPROXIMATELY 3 MILES EAST TO MP 34.087

Old Target start date : March 30, 2018
New Target start date : April 27, 2018

Project : 100066180 (FM)
Federal aid number : STPAA 0163 (503)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : RESURFACING ON SR-163 FROM NORTH I-10 BRIDGE ABUTMENT TO SR-16 (US-90) AND ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD CROSSING
Old Target start date : March 30, 2018
New Target start date : April 27, 2018

Project : 100046894 (UT)
Federal aid number : STPMB 7550 (601)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD)
Old Target start date : March 01, 2018
New Target start date : June 01, 2018

Project : 100046895 (CN)
Federal aid number : STPMB 7550 (601)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD)
Old Target start date : April 27, 2018
New Target start date : August 31, 2018

Project : 100052448 (RW)
Federal aid number : STPMB 7612 (600)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : MCDONALD ROAD (CR-39) ADDITIONAL LANES FROM NORTH OF I-10 TO OLD PASCAGOULA ROAD.
Old Engineers Estimate : \$1,000,000.00
New Engineers Estimate : \$1,155,014.00

Project : 100050693 (UT)
Federal aid number : IM I065 (380)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS AT I-65 AND SR-13 (US-43), SOUTH OF CREOLA
Old Target start date : March 01, 2018
New Target start date : March 01, 2023

Project: 100050694 (CN)
Federal aid number : IM I065 (380)
County : MOBILE
Project Description : INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS AT I-65 AND SR-13 (US-43), SOUTH OF CREOLA
Old Target start date : November 02, 2018
New Target start date : November 03, 2023

Projects Within Region Let January 26, 2018

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- None at this time

-

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Roadway Extension (Grading, Drainage, Pavement, and Bridge) on SR-158 from a point east of SR-217 (Lott Road) to the junction of Schillinger Road in Semmes. Length 1.544 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$17,475,217 to \$21,358,599 .

BALDWIN COUNTY

- None at this time

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

Legislative Updates

The Infrastructure Plan is Coming?

Based on sources within the Trump administration, the infrastructure community in Washington is anticipating the release of the president's long-awaited infrastructure package on Monday morning. The release is likely to come in the form of "principles," and it is unknown how

closely they will reflect separate leaks in recent weeks of the funding and the streamlining provisions. The administration's budget will also be released on Monday. The plan is rumored to ring in at the more recent \$1.5 trillion figure, though only \$200 billion will come from federal sources and no pay-for will be identified. This is the kickoff to the process of writing the legislation.

Outgoing House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster told fellow Republican lawmakers at their policy retreat last week that an infrastructure plan must be bipartisan, and expressed his willingness to consider a variety of funding solutions including a gas tax increase, asset recycling, and public private partnerships. Shuster specifically called out the gas tax as a logical way to fund improvements because the money goes directly from the pump to the highway trust fund to rebuild highways, bridges, and roads. He received mixed responses from his party and acknowledges that a bipartisan plan may lose some Republicans.

Congress Adopts Two-Year Budget Deal, Also Passes Six-Week Stopgap Spending Bill

Congress approved both a two-year budget deal Feb. 9 that sets higher spending levels, and a six-week stopgap funding bill that keeps funding for most programs at 2017 levels through March 23 to give lawmakers time to pass a detailed appropriations measure in coming weeks.

The budget deal includes \$20 billion over the two years in additional funding for various types of infrastructure including surface transportation, but provides no details on how those dollars would be distributed among infrastructure categories.

And it eliminates, for fiscal 2018 and 2019, spending caps or "sequesters" that would have required across the board reductions in certain types of federal funding for transportation and other programs, including for infrastructure project grants.

The budget deal increases federal spending by \$300 billion over the next two years. According to Politico, defense spending will increase by \$80 billion in the current fiscal year, and another \$85 billion in fiscal year 2019. Meanwhile, domestic spending will grow by \$63 billion in the current year, and \$68 billion next year.

However, [the latest in a series of short-term "continuing resolutions"](#) will mean state departments of transportation will not have access to full-year federal funding for the next six weeks, at a time many are moving ahead with their spring construction projects.

And states will not have access to federal-aid highway funding for the CR period of Feb. 9 through March 23 until the Federal Highway Administration issues another notice to distribute additional pro-rated obligation authority.

The FHWA on Feb. 2 issued such a notice covering the period from Jan. 19, when an earlier CR expired, through Feb. 8.

In the new CR, [lawmakers also approved \\$89.3 billion in new disaster aid](#), mainly targeted at states and territories that were struck by hurricanes last August and September.

It includes \$1.828 billion in additional disaster funding for the USDOT, with \$1.374 billion for the FHWA's emergency relief program to make repairs for highways damaged by disasters. Another \$330 million is designated for the Federal Transit Administration's emergency relief program to cover operating and capital costs for transit systems disrupted by hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

In addition, the measure provides the Federal Aviation Administration with \$114.6 million, of which \$35 million is to support operations, communications equipment and security at airports affected by those hurricanes, while \$79.6 million helps replace equipment and navigational aids and make facility repairs to hurricane-damaged airports.

The disaster aid package provides \$10 million to the Maritime Administration for its Ready Reserve Fleet port facility in Beaumont, Texas, which was damaged by Hurricane Harvey.

Reports: White House Releasing Investment Plan Feb. 12, Same Day as Budget Proposal

President Trump will release his long-awaited infrastructure investment plan Feb. 12, the same day his administration expects to issue his budget proposal for the upcoming 2019 fiscal year, said news reports citing White House sources.

Following an initial Bloomberg report on the Feb. 12 release date, Politico said Feb. 6 that the White House confirmed it.

The Politico story reported that a White House official said in a statement: "Next Monday, February 12th, the president will release his infrastructure principles, which will outline a plan that will generate at least \$1.5 trillion of investment, cut the burdensome regulatory process from 10 years to 2, and provide funding for projects in rural America."

Trump said in his Jan. 30 State of the Union speech that he would ask Congress to pass legislation to [generate at least \\$1.5 trillion in total project investment](#), by leveraging federal funds to produce new state, local and private investment.

Stakeholder groups have emphasized that any major project investment program needs to dedicate new revenue to [put the Highway Trust Fund on a sustainable long-term course](#). The trust fund is currently on course to reduce highway spending in 2020 and become unable to support new investments in 2021 unless Congress acts to bolster it.

Transportation groups have also said that funneling new investment dollars through existing, formula-based federal programs like those in the Highway Trust Fund would be an efficient way to distribute funds so that states could apply them to projects they most need. Some are concerned that the president's proposal could pit states and projects against each other with federal officials deciding which would win funding.

Cochran: Cooperative, Bipartisan Effort Needed to Complete FY2018 Appropriations

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) today said Congress will need to work in a cooperative and bipartisan fashion over the next several weeks to complete the FY2018 appropriations process successfully.

The Senate has approved a continuing resolution (CR) to fund government operations at existing levels through March 23. The legislation also included a two-year agreement on spending levels and an \$89.3 billion emergency supplemental package to aid the victims of recent natural disasters. The bill passed by a 71 to 28 vote.

"I appreciate the many hours of negotiations that have gone into this legislation," Cochran said. "I hope we continue in this cooperative

and bipartisan fashion as we undertake the challenging work of crafting responsible legislation to finish the 2018 appropriations cycle and begin next year's bills."

Cochran's full statement in the *Congressional Record* is available here: <http://bit.ly/2Ewvg5U>

Republicans, Democrats fight over infrastructure plans

David Shepardson

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. House of Representatives Democrats on Thursday proposed \$1 trillion in new infrastructure spending over 10 years - five times the amount President Donald Trump is expected to offer in his upcoming plan to spur states and cities to seed new public works projects.

Trump will outline his long-awaited plan to use \$200 billion to try to generate at least \$1.5 trillion in infrastructure improvements over 10 years next Monday, a White House official confirmed earlier this week.

But Democrats want far more government spending, including \$100 billion on schools alone as well as billions to expand rural broadband internet service, improve airports, mass transit, roads and ports, boost energy efficiency and improve aging water systems.

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi said Trump's plan was a "disappointment" and spends too little federal money. The plan "shifts the burden onto cities and states," she added.

A leaked document last month disclosed administration plans to reduce federal cost-sharing for projects to no more than 20 percent of the costs from the traditional 80 percent.

The Trump administration has previously rejected Democrats' call to spend \$1 trillion in new government spending as not fiscally responsible.

On Wednesday, Democratic and Republican congressional leaders unveiled a spending deal that includes an additional \$20 billion over two years "to invest in infrastructure, including programs related to rural water and wastewater, clean and safe drinking water, rural broadband, energy, innovative capital projects, and surface transportation."

Specific spending details will be left up to members of Congress when they write legislation later this year.

Trump will meet with state and local officials Monday to tout his plan, which includes \$100 billion in incentives for state and local projects, \$50 billion in grants for rural projects, \$30 billion for government lending programs and \$20 billion for transformative projects, sources briefed on the matter said.

Trump plans a separate meeting with congressional leaders later next week and is expected to travel to Florida for an infrastructure event next Friday, two officials said.

One big question is how improvements will be paid for. Democrats did not propose a specific funding mechanism Thursday, and the Trump administration has said it plans to rely on spending cuts to pay for the plan. The White House has not ruled out potential new revenue streams, such as an increase in the gas tax.

Funding Opportunities

Section 5307, 5310, and 5311: Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Administration for Community Living](#) (ACL) has worked with the [National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#) to clarify the ability of grantees to use Older Americans Act Title IIIB Supportive Services Funds to match Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs. These FTA programs include Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307), Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities (Section 5310), and Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311). This information has been publicized [here](#).

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.

The FHWA continues the Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration authorized within the Technology and Innovation Deployment Program (TIDP) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The AID Demonstration provides incentive funding for any project activities eligible for assistance under title 23, U.S.C. in any phase of a highway transportation project between project planning and project delivery including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment, and construction that address the TIDP goals. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published on September 1, 2016 (<https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-21063>) requests grant applications and provides selection criteria, application requirements, and technical assistance with [Grants.gov](#) during the grant solicitation period.

Link to Additional Information: [FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation Grants page](#)

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



It is FLU season, and it is Mardi Gras. There is one sure way that a Mobilian can contract the flu if he/she so wanted to do so; stick some dirty Mardi Gras beads in your mouth. That's right, it turns out it is dangerous to eat, or even stick dirty Mardi Gras in your mouth and/or suck on them. Our streets are pretty clean, and the cities in South Alabama that have Mardi Gras parades do an excellent job of cleaning the streets. Unlike *other cities*, our drains in South Alabama are bead free. However, one news journalist has now discovered the real reason that it is un safe to suck on dirty Mardi Gras beads. So *Just For Fun*, don't pick up any dirty Mardi Gras beads off the street and eat them, or stick them in your mouth; they may contain [lead](#). [HERE](#)

In the News

WAVE Transit 2018 Mardi Gras Holiday Schedule

Monday, February 12, 2018

The Wave Transit System will run a reduced bus service operating under a Saturday bus schedule. The Customer Service Office will be open at the GM&O Transportation Center from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 13, 2018 Mardi Gras Day

The Wave Transit System will be closed and will not operate bus service. Regular bus service will resume on Wednesday, February 14, 2018. Call 251-344-6600 for more information, or visit us at www.thewavetransit.com.

First steps toward building a bridge set to begin

MOBILE, AL (WALA) -

[This week the first steps towards building that new six-lane bridge across the Mobile river are set to begin.](#) While it's not the actual construction of the bridge, people will see crews along their Interstate 10 commute working to make that project happen.

Drivers told FOX 10 News they are ready to have a new way to get back and forth between Mobile and Baldwin counties. One driver said, "With having another bridge it will be a lot better for traffic." Another added, "Mobile should get excited for something that's going to help us."

Allison Gregg with the Mobile River and Bay Way project said crews with Jordan Pile Driving will start setting up their equipment this week.

She said, "Drivers along I-10 are going to see some pile driving that is going happen. So we are going to have some heavy equipment around the I-10 and Bay Way as well."

Crew members will work on three different areas: Texas street, near the cruise terminal, and along the Bayway.

"We're going to be testing the soil, along the alignment, and this is data we are collecting to give to teams who have submitted qualifications to propose to actually build the project," said Gregg.

The pile driving will begin after Mardi Gras and crews will be in these areas until May. Gregg said the test piling won't affect drivers at all.

Gregg continued, "Of course drivers should always be aware of safety and keep an eye out for anything going on." According to Gregg state leaders will meet in Montgomery Tuesday to select a short list of teams proposing to build the project. Building the bridge is expected to begin in 2019 and should be complete by 2024.

[More on Bridge](#)

Stakeholders Highlight Trust Fund, Local Decision-Making in Any Infrastructure Plan

Associations representing state departments of transportation, governors, legislatures and local officials said the coming national debate over an infrastructure improvement program should invest in every part of the nation and "secure the long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund."

The 12 groups issuing [the Feb. 8 joint statement](#) included the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, National Governors Association, Council of State Governments and National Association of Counties.

"We welcome President Trump's and Congress' focus on infrastructure," they said. "A strong federal-state-local partnership will be critical to delivering a bipartisan infrastructure package that invests in every community."

News reports have said much of the president's plan will aim to disburse federal funds to high-profile projects, prioritizing those that can generate high levels of nonfederal funding.

By contrast, many stakeholder groups have said any new investment program should distribute funds to states and localities by established formulas that let state and local authorities use the money on projects they most need.

The associations' joint statement makes a similar point.

"States and local governments know firsthand the needs of our communities and invest in infrastructure accordingly," they said. "This includes roads and bridges, airports, waterways and ports, transit, passenger rail, water and sewer systems, public facilities, energy, broadband and telecommunications networks."

The groups said that besides fixing the trust fund, they "welcome a renewed focus on streamlining the federal review process to help deliver urgently needed projects to build the America of the future."

And as some policymakers want to use an infrastructure plan to entice much more private investment in projects, others caution that many projects and geographic areas will not draw enough interest from for-profit investors.

The associations in their statement said that "we must find the correct balance between federal, state and local investments and private-sector partnerships."

Air-Taxi Startup Has a Working Prototype

Joe Ben Bevirt and his startup Joby Aviation Inc. have created a prototype of a flying car named Rachel. Reporters who saw the invention in person said it performed 15 minutes of flight in a 15-mile loop with a safe landing. It uses electric motors and functions like a cross between a drone and a small plane. Bevirt made his fortune by selling bendable tripods and other camera accessories, which he has poured into this project and believes that one day these will shuttle people all around cities. Many other companies are working on similar ways to incorporate air travel into daily life, but Bevirt is reluctant to give a rollout date acknowledging the regulatory and public perception challenges that lie ahead. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Dems call for \$1 trillion federal investment in infrastructure

BY MALLORY SHELBOURNE

House Democrats on Thursday called for \$1 trillion in federal dollars for an infrastructure overhaul, a proposal that comes just days ahead of the announcement of [President Trump's](#) long-awaited infrastructure proposal.

The House Democratic Policy and Communications Committee (DPCC) unveiled the party's own infrastructure package at a press conference meant to counter the anticipated release of a Monday White House proposal.

"The federal government is a necessary partner in this effort to rebuild our country. It's not enough to punt this to the private sector, as the president wants," said Rep. [David Cicilline](#) (D-R.I.).

"Rebuilding our country will require a serious smart investment of real federal resources to get this work done."

The blueprint pushes for a stronger federal investment in various infrastructure programs, including energy, airports, schools, water and roads. It also calls for the use of U.S.-made materials like iron and steel, in addition to green materials.

The \$1 trillion direct federal investment in the Democrats' plan is a steep increase from the \$200 billion of federal seed money the Trump administration is expected to kick in for a rebuilding initiative. Under the expected Trump plans, local and state governments, as well as private groups, will foot the rest of the bill.

But Democrats have long argued for a larger federal direct investment in infrastructure, while members of both parties have questioned revenue sources for an overhaul. And lawmakers from rural areas have worried that reliance on private funding would neglect rural communities, where toll roads are less likely to be profitable.

Rep. [Peter DeFazio](#) (D-Ore.), the ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, called the Trump proposal a "fake plan."

"Republicans lack a sense of history in terms of dealing with our infrastructure," he said, noting the federal government's historical role in rebuilding.

Trump recently touted an infrastructure package of "at least" \$1.5 trillion during his State of the Union address, a figure that left lawmakers on both sides of the aisle wondering how that planning would be funded.

A leaked document purporting to reveal the administration's thinking suggests the plan will emphasize payments from state and local governments, in addition to private investment, to make up for the shortfall.

Democrats on Thursday morning poked fun at the fluctuating numbers coming from the Trump administration.

"The president promised infrastructure. Well here it is — a year later," said Rep. [Elizabeth Esty](#) (D-Conn.), who sits on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

"And it went from a trillion to a trillion-and-a-half in less than a week. Because I had been at the White House the week before, and it had been a trillion and suddenly because a trillion-and-a-half, but with no new money."

One similarity between the Democrats' plan and the expected administration proposal is an emphasis on expanding broadband access to rural areas. While Democrats say they will "close the rural-urban divide," the White House said in a recent fact sheet that a quarter of the federal seed money will go towards a pot to invest in rural regions.

Democrats, according to their plan, will "connect more communities" and advance rail technology. The proposal also includes a push for enacting Positive Train Control, a key safety feature that automatically decreases the speed of a train traveling over the limit.

The package says Democrats will work to maintain the solvency of the struggling Highway Trust Fund, which receives financing from the federal gas tax for road-building projects, and contribute a larger federal investment toward rebuilding roads and bridges.

The White House said earlier this week that it will release its plan Monday, which comes after multiple delays.

Senate budget deal includes \$20 billion for infrastructure projects

BY MALLORY SHELBORNE

A bipartisan budget deal announced by Senate leaders Wednesday includes \$20 billion for U.S. infrastructure programs, an investment plan that comes ahead of the Trump administration's highly anticipated rebuilding proposal.

The funds would go toward "existing" projects for water and energy infrastructure as well as expanding broadband to rural regions and improving surface transportation, Senate Minority Leader [Charles Schumer](#) (D-N.Y.) said in a floor speech detailing the proposal.

Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) (R-Ky.) said the budget agreement "will clear the way for a new investment in our nation's infrastructure, a bipartisan priority shared by the president and lawmakers of both parties."

The deal comes as the White House [prepares to unveil](#) its long-awaited infrastructure proposal on Monday following a number of delays and widespread speculation over revenue streams for the plan.

The federal government is expected to kick in \$200 billion toward a rebuilding initiative to overhaul U.S. roads, bridges, transit systems, airports and other public works. The administration plans to rely on state and local governments, and private sector investment, to foot the rest of the bill.

The White House said Tuesday that it plans to release infrastructure "principles" for a package of "at least \$1.5 trillion," the same number [President Trump](#) touted during his State of the Union address last week.

The proposal is expected to place an emphasis on rural regions. In a fact sheet distributed to reporters last week, the administration said a quarter of the federal seed money for infrastructure would go toward a pot for rural investment.

While leaders in the Senate [reached the two-year budget deal](#) in an effort to avert a government shutdown this week, its future in the House remains uncertain, as lawmakers in the lower chamber continue to battle over immigration.

Transportation Research

Bicycle Safety Survey

ALDOT is conducting a research project "Comprehensive Investigation of Bike Crash Causes, Patterns and Countermeasures in Alabama". Please help us share this link to participants (both drivers and bicyclists). This survey is being conducted by the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) on behalf of the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). The main objective of this survey is to identify the status of drivers' and bicyclists' understanding of cycling regulations and rules in Alabama. The survey results will help design the appropriate outreach programs to better educate both drivers and bicyclists.

https://uah.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_exhrpcJAXEaijWl

PM3 Analysis Tools and Enhanced NPMRDS Datasets

INRIX and the University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Technology (UMD CATT) Laboratory have created tools and additional datasets to simplify PM3 target-setting, tracking, and reporting. The three available options provide a range of functions for analyzing the NPMRDS dataset and include access to a peer network user group. An informational webinar will be held February 14

February 14, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

Every state DOT and MPO has several new responsibilities with the May 2017 federal rule regarding congestion and freight system performance reporting requirements (PM3). FHWA has made the NPMRDS travel time dataset – created and delivered by the INRIX/UMD CATT Laboratory team – available to DOTs and MPOs at no cost. Still, there is much to do to translate this dataset to meet the PM3 reporting requirements. INRIX and the UMD CATT Laboratory have extended their partnership beyond generating NPMRDS datasets to offering tools and additional datasets that simplify PM3 target-setting, tracking, and reporting.

2018 USDOT Webinar Series: What's New in Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Deployment

February 20, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

March 6, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

March 27, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

USDOT ITS Joint Program Office will host a new three-part webinar series highlighting the latest trends and developments in ITS deployment. To measure the deployment of ITS technology nationally, the USDOT's ITS Deployment Tracking Project surveys transportation agencies in the largest U.S. cities on a regular basis. The ITS Knowledge Resources Portal summarizes the benefits, costs, deployment levels, and lessons learned for ITS deployment and operations from over 20 years of ITS evaluation studies, research syntheses, handbooks, journal articles, and conference papers tracking the effectiveness of deployed ITS. The webinar series will provide an overview of these resources to support informed decision making on ITS investments, highlight recent additions to the survey, and solicit feedback from participants on how best to redesign the portal to improve its usability and value.

BTS Releases Pocket Guide to Transportation Mobile App

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) has released a new dynamic mobile app for the [Pocket Guide to Transportation 2018](#) – a quick reference guide to transportation statistics. This popular guide provides the latest transportation statistics at your fingertips in mobile app and printed formats. It covers data on major trends, moving people and goods, system use and performance, the economy, safety, infrastructure, and the environment. [Download](#) the app now to access all the features of the classic Pocket Guide plus enhanced navigation, sharable graphics to social media and email, and dynamic data updates to highlight the most recent up-to-date statistics. The app is available on the App Store and on Google Play (keyword: BTS Pocket Guide). To access the *Pocket Guide*, go to [BTS Pocket Guide to Transportation](#) or text USDOT BTSPG to 468311. This publication can also be obtained by [ordering online](#), by contacting BTS by phone at 202-366-DATA or by e-mail at answers@dot.gov

For inquiries other than placing orders contact Dave Smallen: david.smallen@dot.gov or 202-366-5568.

FTA Joint Procurement Clearinghouse

This [new tool](#) will enable FTA grant recipients to communicate about procurement needs and solicit partners interested in pooling resources for a joint purchase. USDOT was directed to create this forum under the FAST Act to allow public transit operators to engage in joint procurements for rolling stock (including buses, railcars, and ferries) to achieve economies of scale. FTA produced training materials, which can be found on the JPC webpage, to help users navigate the tool.

Making a Model a Good Predictive Tool

A basic part of travel demand model validation is running the model for a “base year” and comparing the outputs to observed data. In this [FHWA project](#), two model versions for each of two metropolitan areas were run twice each: 1) the more recent version for its base year and a backcast scenario (for the base year of the earlier model version), and 2) the earlier version for its base year and a forecast scenario (for the base year of the later model version). This research was intended to produce useful data on which model components are most stable over time and their sensitivities to the factors affecting travel demand that vary over time. The report includes lessons learned and recommendations for planning agencies.

New ADA Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Compliance App

Download it Today



<http://www.vuetworks.com/sidewalks-and-curb-ramps-application/>

- 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

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.