



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

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It's the first *Transportation Friday Newsletter* of 2014, and we have hit the acceleration lane with full speed.

[Destination2040](#) begins next week and EVERYONE is welcome to attend. Destination 2040 is the name of the Mobile MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and Tuesday and Wednesday of next week we will have the initial public input meetings. Before we start testing alternatives in the model, let's hear where the public wants roads to go. Up to this point, we have done some pretty innovative projects with cell phones and remote sensing tied to the Plan, and we would like public input during the development of the Plan; Destination 2040 is due February, 2015. Please see *Mobile MPO Updates*.

Also, we are hosting a Climate Change Regional Workshop on Thursday February 6th, 2014. For the past several years the Mobile MPO has been a mechanism for input into FHWA, *Impacts of Climate change and Variability on Transportation Systems and Infrastructure: The Gulf Coast Study, Phase 2*; the Study is coming to a close. If you are interested, please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. Speaking of that, check out *Funding Opportunities* as there are new funds announced for resilience projects.

Next week is [SARPC](#) Strategic Sessions, and go around the world in this week's *Just For Fun*.

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK

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Mobile MPO Updates

Destination 2040

The 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is multi-modal in scope, encompassing long-range plans for highway, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian networks. Regional growth, economic development, and accessibility within the study area along with environmental concerns necessitate that the long-range plan addresses not only improved vehicular travel but also improvements to other modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking. Preservation of the existing transportation system coupled with enhancement of all modal choices will contribute to the improvement of the overall quality of life in the region.

A major part of Destination 2040 is a public relations campaign to try and encourage public input into the development of our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). For decades we have been doing the same thing, in terms of collecting public input in our plans. Most of the time it is difficult to get attendance to a public meeting concerning a long range plan. However, this LRTP we are going to ask the public: "Where do you want the roads to be widened", "Where do you want new transit routes?", "Where do you want the bicycle routes to be?", "Where do you think the growth projections should be?"

Destination 2040 is different because normally we ask the public for input after we have done the draft plan, to basically seek their approval of the plan. However, this will be a means to get the public involved with the development of the plan, and let their concerns be addressed in the plan from the very beginning. We have done the math, and we can tell you what the travel demand forecast models tell us in terms of where growth should go and what roads need to be built or widened. Anything the public wants us to test in the model, we can do that. So whatever future projects the public can conjure, we want to address them in the LRTP.

The initial Destination 2040 meetings will be held on:

January 7th, 2014 5:30 – 7:30 PM at the GMO Building 110 Beauregard Street, Mobile, AL

January 8th, 2014 5:30 – 7:30 PM at the Mobile Botanical Gardens, Mobile, AL

<http://www.destination2040.org/>

Who is on the BAYWAY?

Most of you are familiar with the work we did for the Mobile [Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones](#). The same company [Airsage](#) that collected the data for us now receives 15 Billion points a day, and archives them. The applications of this type of data are becoming more and more useful in the transportation realm, and we need to capitalize on those types of applications. As another pilot type project, we asked if they could give us the home location of all the cell phones, or single anonymous encrypted frequencies, that were on the Bayway for a typical weekday. November 13th was that weekday, the data was collected and we just received it.

The data was presented to us in the form of proportions of total overall trips. So for the purpose of representation, the 2011 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for the Bayway (62,660 AADT) was applied to the proportion of traffic to look at estimated traffic numbers. *(It should be noted that these volume numbers have increased since 2011. We used the latest AADT (2011) because we do not have available a traffic count for the Bayway for November 13th, but the ALDOT count in the permanent counters for the Wallace Tunnels for November 13th is 62,390 (excludes the Bankhead traffic), with speeds being 53 mph - 54 mph.)*

It is interesting to see the amount of traffic from the West Coast. We are assuming these are long haul trucks coming in from the Pacific. Another big find is that there is an estimated over 23,700 trips (37%) on the Bayway that have a home or work location in Baldwin County. There will be more to follow with this data in *Destination 2040*.



http://www.mobilempo.org/Newsletter_Links/total_November13_2013.jpg

Sidewalk Survey

As part of our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update (*Destination 2040*), staff is updating the sidewalk portion of the Bicycle / Pedestrian Element of the Plan. As some of you may recall the *Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* we conducted 2 years ago outlined recommendations in terms of sidewalks and bicycling projects. Something that could have used some further investigation was the buffer areas around schools and the recommendation for sidewalks within this buffer. So to further develop the identification of the need for sidewalks, we are updating that portion of the LRTP.

With full support of the Mobile County Public School System, SARPC staff surveyed every school principal of every school in Mobile County this week. The survey is an online survey located [\[HERE\]](#). We have had great response, and some great projects developed from this process. Not only will this help with the LRTP, but keep in mind that since MAP-21 created the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) that took the place of Safe Routes to School, there is no more school specific project development mechanism. SARPC staff is currently conducting this survey for all three counties within our region. We will keep you posted of the results.

Climate Change Update

Over the past five years, the SARPC has been working in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on an in-depth U.S. DOT study exploring opportunities to increase resilience of Mobile's transportation system to climate change and extreme weather. The project, *Impacts of Climate change and Variability on Transportation Systems and Infrastructure: The Gulf Coast Study, Phase 2*, involved identifying critical transportation systems, projecting the local impacts of climate change, developing scenarios for planning, evaluating vulnerability for key links and assets across all modes of transportation, and evaluating engineering options for adaptation.

Please join the Gulf Coast Phase 2 project team for a day-long workshop to discuss the implications of this study for the communities of the central Gulf Coast. During this workshop, we aim to:

- Share Mobile-specific findings from the study;
- Recount lessons learned during this in-depth analysis;
- Introduce tools and methodologies developed for the study that are designed for use across the country;

and

- Host a working session to discuss how the findings of this study may inform your local resiliency planning efforts. The interactive working session will allow attendees to begin developing a plan for local action.

During this workshop, the project team will walk through a series of tools that were developed for the Gulf Coast 2 study. These tools will be available from the U.S. DOT for any agency to use for free, and include:

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

Register today! The workshop will be open to the **first 40 registrants**. Registration includes a \$15 fee per person for lunch, which will be provided at the workshop. The fee should be paid in full at the time of registration to ensure that food can be ordered in advance.

Please register here <http://mobilempo.org/climatechange.html> and make checks payable to South Alabama Regional Planning Commission and send to Kevin Harrison at 110 Beauregard St. Suite 207, Mobile, AL 36602. To contact the U.S. DOT partner, you can reach Rob Hyman of FHWA at Robert.Hyman@dot.gov or (202) 366-5843.

Projects Within Region Let December 6th, 2013

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-180 from 0.28 miles west of the Foley Beach Express to east of SR-161 in Orange Beach. Length 3.3 mi.
- For constructing the Maintenance Dredging at Little Lagoon Pass in Gulf Shores.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- None at this time

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Video Wall Upgrades at the Traffic Management Center and at the Southwest Region Construction Office in Mobile.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Guardrail, Bridge Jacking, Pedestrian Bridge Removal, Signals, and Bridge Rail Retrofit on I-10 from Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George Wallace Tunnel. Length 8.6 mi

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

The House is not in session until next week and the Senate is begins a pro forma session today at 11:45 EST. There are no new Legislative Updates this week.

Funding Opportunities

Resiliency funds available for resilience projects that is at risk of being damaged or destroyed by a future natural disaster

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces the availability of approximately \$3 Billion in funds under the Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program and the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013. This announcement solicits proposals for resilience projects – defined as those projects designed and built to address current and future vulnerabilities to a public transportation facility or system. This resilience funding is intended to protect public transportation infrastructure that has been repaired or rebuilt after Hurricane Sandy or that is at risk of being damaged or destroyed by a future natural disaster. These investments reduce the likelihood that U.S. taxpayers are asked to repair the same infrastructure after a future major storm or natural disaster. Furthermore, the activities funded under this notice will help strengthen and build more resilient communities to better withstand future disasters. The Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 was enacted on January 29, 2013, and provided \$10.9 Billion for FTA's Emergency Relief Program. FTA has previously allocated \$5.7 Billion for recovery and resilience projects to public transportation agencies impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Additionally, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 permits the Secretary to transfer up to \$5.383 Billion to other agencies to fund programs authorized under titles 23 and 49, United States Code, in order to carry out resilience projects in areas impacted by Hurricane Sandy. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) authorized the Emergency Relief Program. With the authorization of this program, Congress provided FTA with primary responsibility for Federal reimbursements for emergency response and recovery costs after an emergency or major disaster that affects public transportation systems. The Emergency Relief Program allows FTA to make grants for eligible public transportation capital and operating

costs in the event of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, that affects a wide area, including projects to protect public transportation assets from damage. Beginning in late October 2012, President Obama issued major disaster declarations for specified counties in the following States: Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia, as well as the District of Columbia as a result of the impacts Hurricane Sandy and its remnants. Providers of public transportation in the affected areas as defined by these Presidential declarations are eligible to apply for funding for public transportation resilience projects. This notice includes a description of eligible projects, the criteria FTA will use to identify projects for funding, and a description of how to apply for funding. This announcement is available on the FTA Web site at: <http://www.fta.dot.gov>. A synopsis of the funding opportunity will be posted in the FIND module of the government wide electronic grants Web site at <http://www.GRANTS.GOV>. FTA will announce final allocations in a **Federal Register** notice and on the FTA Web site.

Round 3 of the Implementation Assistance Program SHRP2, Deadline February 14, 2014:

FHWA recently released the recipients of [Round 2 grants](#) and announced the schedule for rounds 3 and 4. These grants are intended to help transportation agencies deploy new products developed under the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). If you would like additional information or have questions about the program, please contact Carin Michel, FHWA SHRP2 Implementation Manager at goSHRP2@dot.gov or 410-962-2530. Click [HERE](#) to read the release about the upcoming rounds.

Economic Development Administration

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

EDA provides strategic investments that foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas of the United States. Under this FFO, EDA solicits applications from both rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. Link to Additional Information: [EDA's website](#). Please contact Diane Burnett of SARPC staff for questions 706-4621. Also, don't forget SARPC has a revolving fund loan program. <http://www.sarpc.org/rlf.asp>. The RLF is a locally controlled source of capital used to finance small business start-up and expansion whose projects will create permanent jobs. By combining RLF and bank financing the borrower can realize an effective rate well below market rates.

Just For Fun

How well do you know our planet? Here are 40 incredible statistics involving our planet, and some that you did not want to know: [HERE](#)

What countries do not use the Metric System?



What countries has Britain NOT Invaded? (There are only 22 of them)



In the News

Ford to unveil solar hybrid concept car

By Laura Barron-Lopez

Ford announced on Thursday plans to unveil a plug-in electric vehicle that uses solar panels on its roof to recharge. The vehicle, dubbed the C-Max Solar Energi, will be on display at the 2014 International Consumer

Electronics Show in Las Vegas next week, the Michigan-based company said in a statement on Thursday, according to Bloomberg.

Using only electric power, the vehicle can travel about 21 miles and has a total range of roughly 620 miles. On its roof, it has 300 watts to 350 watts of SunPower Corp. solar cells.

The vehicle might signal a shift in production of rechargeable cars that don't need to be plugged in, said Mike Tinsley of Ford.

According to estimates, Ford sold more than 85,000 hybrids and electric vehicles in 2013.

March Road To Be Closed In Early 2014

December 20, 2013

March Road, from I-10 Service Road to Wells Road North, will be closed for approximately six months, beginning Monday, January 13, 2014. The closure is due to the Mobile County Public Works Department replacing the bridge over Jackson Creek on March Road. Motorists are asked to be cautious and to take alternate routes. Detour routes will be posted.

Feds May Require Cars to Talk to Each Other to Avoid Crashes

Jan. 1, 2014

By MARK MOONEY via WORLD NEWS



PHOTO: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is considering a new technology that would alert drivers of dangers of a crash up ahead. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is considering a new technology that would alert drivers of dangers of a crash up ahead. Michael Krinke/Getty Images

Federal officials will decide in the "coming weeks" whether to require new cars to include smart technology that would alert drivers of a coming crash, even in vehicles that are two or three cars away. The vehicle-to-vehicle -- or V2V -- technology has undergone testing in recent years and has already been installed in some cars that are on the road. A recent study by the Government Accountability Office determined that if the gizmos were widely deployed, "V2V technologies could provide warnings to drivers in as much as 76 percent of potential multi-vehicle collisions."

In 2011, there were 5.3 million car crashes that injured 2.2 million people and killed 32,000, according to the GAO. "The continued progress of V2V technology development hinges on a decision that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration plans to make in late 2013 on how to proceed. ... One option would be to pursue a rule requiring their inclusion in new vehicles," the GAO wrote in a November study.

The year ended without NHTSA's expected decision, and this week the agency would say only that it expected "to announce a decision in the coming weeks." Putting smart cars on the road comes with complications beyond cost, which is expected to be "modest relative to the price of a new vehicle," according to the GAO.

What could make cost a factor are the communication system safeguards that would be necessary for the widespread use of these cars. "Widespread technology depends on other cars having the same system so they can talk to each other," said David Wise, director of the GAO's Physical Infrastructure Team, who wrote the GAO study. But it also requires that the system be secure.

"Privacy is the real challenge," Wise said. He said the V2V will likely rely on GPS-type data that could track a person's movements. "Who has access and how do you secure the data?" Wise asked rhetorically. He also raised the specter of someone hacking the system and causing havoc on the road.

"The cost is in the communication security system," he said. There is also the issue of liability if a car that has the V2V system is involved in a crash, the GAO report said. If NHTSA decides to require new cars to be smart cars, it could still be a generation before they become commonplace on the road, Wise said.

"It takes 20 years for the country's fleet of cars to turn over," he said.

Congratulations to Katherine Pitman as new Mobile United Executive Director

We have enjoyed working with Sandi Forbes throughout the years, and we wish her the best into her retirement. Katherine Pitman is the new Executive Director for Mobile United.

Mobile United's mission is to develop, support and encourage a comprehensive network of trained and engaged leadership that is inclusive and adaptable to community needs, taking action on programs and projects that lead to a better quality of life for our citizens.

Transportation Research

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

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

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

ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit

ITE is pleased to invite you to attend our 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit, taking place March 9-12, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Miami, Miami, FL, USA. This is a not-to-be missed conference of 2014 for anyone in the transportation profession seeking to learn about how to address the critical topics in our industry and grow their professional skills.

This year's conference – *Applying Innovation and Technology to Transportation* - will focus on the challenges and opportunities of working with multidisciplinary teams to meet customer, community and political expectations for the creation of vibrant regions to safely live, commute, work, and play. The program will include plenary sessions from nationally recognized transportation and policy professionals as well as presentations, peer-to-peer exchanges, technology showcases and workshops focused on safety, design, operations and planning considerations.

The ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit delivers significant return on investment. Over four days, attendees will receive the immediately actionable tools and techniques and hear about latest industry trends and topics shaping and transforming the transportation landscape. As a focal point of the conference, the ITE Exhibit Hall showcases the latest technology, products, and services for the transportation industry. In addition, technical tours allow participants to see first-hand the practical application of some of the topics presented in the sessions. These technical tours are being finalized. Watch your inbox for an email update shortly.

Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning

A new set of tools and other resources for financial planning and determining fiscal constraint for transportation plans and programs is now available. You can access these resources on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program [website](#), under the "Peer Learning" tab or through the [Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning](#) "TPCB Focus Areas" tab. With support from the Volpe Center and review and feedback from several FHWA Field Office Planners, these materials were developed to provide State DOTs, MPOs, and transit agencies with additional methods to develop realistic financial plans for transportation system planning, programming, and project development.

The key component of these resources is the set of spreadsheets that allow agency staffs to test and clearly demonstrate fiscal constraint over a few or several years. The spreadsheets can also be used to develop various transportation revenue and project expenditure scenarios or otherwise assist in broader financial planning. The recently posted resources also include an overview description of the tools, a guide to help transportation agencies cooperatively develop revenue forecasts, and a literature scan of noteworthy financial planning practices. We ask that you share this information with your State DOT and local transportation partners. If you have any questions about the Financial Planning and Fiscal Constraint Tools, please contact Robin Smith at robin.smith@dot.gov or 720-963-3072. If you have any feedback on the "FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Update" Newsletter or would like to suggest topics for future issues, please contact Rae Keasler at rae.keasler@dot.gov or 202-366-0329 or Ben Williams at ben.williams@dot.gov or 404-562-3671.
