



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, January 10th, 2014

Volume 9, Number 2

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Hope everyone is having a good new year so far! The SARPC Transportation Planning Department is in full swing. The first round of public meetings for the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which we are calling [Destination2040](#) were held earlier this week. Also, we are hosting a Climate Change Regional Workshop on Thursday February 6th, 2014. Please see [Mobile MPO Updates](#).

The final day of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission's [Strategic Planning Session](#) is today at the Grand Hotel in Point Clear. Mr. John Cooper, Executive Director of the Alabama Department of Transportation is the lunch speaker. There is a new grant available for buses, see [Funding Opportunities](#). Also check out the new webinars coming up, and last but not least congratulations are in order for Representative Bradley Byrne for his new committee appointments in Congress!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK
706-1CAR

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 early on: "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 public meetings were held earlier this week. We thank all of those who braved the cold temperatures and took the time to attend. At each meeting Kevin Harrison gave a short presentation on the planning process and afterwards participants were asked to visit stations set up around the room. There were stations addressing Highway, Transit, Bicycle & Pedestrian, Congestion Management, and Socio-economic Forecasting. At each station, manned by a transportation planner, there were surveys pertaining to each category and maps were available for reference and for participants to indicate where they thought roads should be improved, bus routes should be, bike/ped facilities should be, where the most dangerous intersections were located, and where growth is likely to occur in next twenty-five years. The results of all of this public input will be incorporated in the Draft Long Range Transportation Plan and there will be more public meetings held in the coming year.

<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](#).

Origin of Trips on the Bayway on November 13th, 2013.



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 January 31st, 2014

BALDWIN COUNTY

- for constructing the Intersection Improvements (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, Striping, Signing, and Signals) at SR-59 and CR-48 in Robertsdale. Length 0.356 mi.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-21 from 0.2 miles south of I-65 (MP 7.947) to the south abutment of the Little River Bridge. Length 10.760 mi.

MOBILE COUNTY

- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from the Halls Mill Creek Bridge to the Pavement Joint at Pinehill Drive in Mobile. Length 5.203 mi.
- for constructing the Welcome Center Replacement (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, Demolition, Building, Lighting, Landscaping, Sewer, and Lagoon Removal) on I-10 at the Alabama/Mississippi State Line.
- for constructing the Sidewalks and Crosswalks on 12th Avenue and Kansas Street in Chickasaw. Length 0.794 mi.

What's Under Construction?

Legislative Updates

Alabama's Bradley Byrne gets two Congressional committee appointments



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio, left, administers the House oath during a ceremonial swearing-in for Rep.-elect Bradley Byrne, R-Ala., right, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2014, prior to

Byrne's official swearing-in on the House floor. At center is Byrne's wife Rebecca Byrne.
(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais) / AP

Written by
[Associated Press](#)

MOBILE — Alabama's newest member of Congress has landed seats on committees that he says will be important to his south Alabama district.

Republican Bradley Byrne was sworn in Wednesday in Washington to represent the 1st Congressional District. The House Republican Steering Committee has placed him on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee.

Byrne said those were the committees he wanted. He said the Armed Services Committee is important because AUSTAL in Mobile is a major defense contractor and provides nearly 4,000 jobs in southwest Alabama. He said the committee will also help him look out for military families.

Byrne said the Natural Resources Committee is critical because it addresses federal lands, offshore drilling, fisheries and marine policy.

Byrne was elected in a special election last month.

Committee Hearing to Launch Surface Transportation Reauthorization Process:

On Tuesday, Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) will hold the first hearing in the Committee's efforts to develop new legislation to reauthorize federal surface transportation programs. The federal programs were last authorized under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), which was signed into law in July 2012 and expires in September. More information about this hearing, entitled *Building the Foundation for Surface Transportation Reauthorization*, including testimony, additional background information, and the live webcast will be posted [HERE](#) as it becomes available.

Funding Opportunities

GRANT: U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Availability of \$24.9 Million to Put More Zero-Emission Buses into Service Across America



1/9/2014

Contact: Angela Gates
202-366-3669

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today [announced the availability of \\$24.9 million](#) through its brand new Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program (LoNo) that will put a new generation of advanced, non-polluting transit buses on the road in communities nationwide. The funds are intended to encourage more widespread adoption of reliable "green energy" buses into transit fleets. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

GRANT: Projects to Improve Air Quality at Ports 2013 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Funding Opportunity

Deadline: February 13, 2014

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is soliciting proposals that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced by diesel engines and diesel emissions exposure, from fleets operating at marine and inland water ports. Eligible diesel emission reduction solutions include verified emission control technologies such as exhaust controls and engine upgrades, verified idle reduction technologies, certified engine repowers, and/or certified vehicle or equipment replacement. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

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/rif.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

The man who painted the Mona Lisa, was the first to sketch out the helicopter, submarine, flying machine and army tank. Would the helicopter and submarine be invented if not sketched out first by Leonardo da Vinci? Probably so. But the great mind of the 15th century also dabbled in music. So here's the question: What musical instrument did Leonardo da Vinci design? He drew a sketch of an absolute engineering marvel: the Viola Organista:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS9c76V4RDE>

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/deceptivecadence/2013/12/01/247543086/da-vinci-s-string-organ-must-be-heard-to-be-believed>

In the News

PUBLIC NOTICE

Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organization

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS REGARDING THE AMENDMENT TO METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES

The Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board will consider amending the MPO Bylaws at its January 22, 2014 meeting. The amendment would expand the Metropolitan Planning Area boundaries to include the causeway and the bayway in Spanish Fort up to the Baldwin County/Mobile County line.

The Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organization will conduct a public meeting to receive comments on the expansion of the Metropolitan Planning Area:

MEETING INFORMATION:

- **Date:** January 10th, 2014
- **Time:** 3-4 PM
- **Location:**

Spanish Fort United Methodist Church

The Gathering Place

6530 Spanish Fort Boulevard, Suite D

Spanish Fort, Alabama 36527

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or those requiring language translation services should contact the Eastern Shore MPO at 251-990-4643.

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.

Transportation Research

Communities Have a New Tool to Help Build Resilience

The RAND Gulf States Policy Institute has released some new research that may be of interest to some of you:



Katrina, Rita, Wilma, Sandy: Significant storms in the past decade have required the nation to build **resilience** — the ability to withstand day-to-day stressors and enhance the ability of citizens and infrastructures to weather negative events. Today, city planners, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropists, and government leaders are grappling with the challenge of creating disaster-resilient cities.

RAND's new easy-to-use, self-guided online training, designed by Anita Chandra and Joie Acosta, shows organizations and communities how to strengthen their resilience — for free. Users have an opportunity to develop an action plan to build resilience, bolstering their community's capacity to respond to and recover from disaster.

[Access the Training](#) [Related Infographic](#)

WEBINAR: Reshaping Rural Highways for Livability

January 21, 3:00 – 4:30 PM EST

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty *and* Project for Public Spaces will focus this webinar on the U.S. Route 50 project in Virginia, to discuss how Virginia DOT and stakeholders worked together to balance the role of Route 50 as a major national highway with the reality that it is also the heart of the rural communities it binds together. Register [HERE](#).

Free Webinar Ped/Bike Facility Costs

CHAPEL HILL, NC — The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) is pleased to announce the next free webinar in its Livable Communities Webinar Series:

Countermeasure Costs: Putting a price on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2014

2:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time

To register, please visit: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/877877642>.

Nationwide, the demand for walkable and bikeable communities is growing, and creating such communities starts with the built environment.

Having appropriate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure reduces the risk of crashes and injuries, as well as encourages healthier lifestyles through more walking and biking for health and transportation.

Yet, with transportation budgets continually stretched, finding dollars to build walking and bicycling facilities and improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety can be a challenge.

This webinar provides an overview of the cost for installing a variety of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and facilities. It provides meaningful estimates of infrastructure costs based on up-to-date cost information from states and cities across the country. With this information, researchers, engineers, planners, and the general public can better understand the cost of pedestrian and bicycle treatments in their communities and, in doing so, make more informed planning, prioritization, and budgeting decisions.

Presenters include Mike Griffith and Shari Schaflein with the Federal Highway Administration, Deborah Lou with Active Living Research at the University of California, San Diego, and Charlie Zegeer and Bryan Poole with the UNC Highway Safety Research Center.

PBIC offers free, public webinars approximately every month. To register for upcoming webinars and to access archived presentations, please visit www.pedbikeinfo.org/webinars.

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 \[www.sdite2014.org\]\(http://www.sdite2014.org\).](#)

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.