



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, July 31, 2015

Volume 15, Number 4

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Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones
Mobile County
Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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There is a Mobile MPO meeting schedule for August 19th, and the Downtown Mobility Study Workgroup met this week; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. Congress passed another short-term extension on the Transportation Bill. Perhaps by October they will agree on a multi-year solution; please see *Legislative Updates*. The TIGER grants this year had \$500 Million to offer; almost \$10 BILLION worth of applications; please see *In The News*. Stuck on the Bayway? That's *Just For Fun*...

Have great weekend; it'll be August before you know it.

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



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

Mobile MPO Updates

ADA Transition Plans

SARPC staff is reaching out to each local government in the Mobile MPO to set up meetings next week to talk about ADA Transition Plans, funding, and requirements. Each City and Mobile County has to have an appointed ADA Coordinator. We would like this done ASAP prior to our meeting with you, your City Clerk (or County Admin), and the ADA Coordinator. The FHWA has required that every city and county in the state have an ADA Transition Plan, and we will have a one year deadline. The ADA Coordinators will create a 9 member ADA Subcommittee to select a consultant through ALDOT Consultant Selection Procedures. Please call Kevin Harrison if there are any questions.

(for areas outside the boundaries of an MPO, ALDOT is working on a time line for you, and you will not follow the same timeline as the Urban areas)

MPO Policy Board

At the June 17th Mobile MPO meeting, the Self-Certification resolution was tabled until the July 19th Meeting. The reason it was tabled involved the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plans that are a requirement of the Self-Certification process, and required for each municipality, and county in the country. The Self-Certification resolution was executed at the July 19th MPO Meeting.

Both the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be out next week at 43 locations around the County for public involvement, and mailed to the TCC/CAC and MPO Policy board. The UPWP funding tables have been discussed at length with MPO and TCC/CAC, and the TIP is the schedule of federal funds for the next four years. Please review these documents when you receive them as they are on the agenda for adoption at the **August 19th MPO Meeting**.

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FY 2015 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grants Awarded

The TAP Project Selection Committee met and three applications were recommended to be funded.

- Mobile County - Sidewalks on Old Pascagoula Rd. from Horseshoe Lane to Theodore Dawes, sidewalks on Howell's Ferry Rd. from Allentown Elementary to Snow Rd.
- City of Semmes - Sidewalks along US 98 from Illinois St. to Firetower Rd., Along Illinois St. from US 98 to Public Works Facility, along Church St. from Illinois St. to Wulff Rd., and along Park Ave. from Illinois St. to Wulff Rd.
- City of Mobile - Sidewalks along DIP from Levene Rd. to Cedar Park Drive

Six applications were received. Unfortunately, due to funding limitations, there was only enough funding available to fund three projects. We thank everyone for their submissions and congratulate those that were recommended to be funded.

This week, SARPC staff held the pre-agreement meetings with each of the project sponsors. The next step will be the funding agreements between ALDOT and the sponsor. We will keep you posted.

GIS online

We are upgrading and starting to utilize our online GIS capabilities. Please check out some of the current interactive maps we have been working on. Many more to come...

<http://mobilempo.org/maps.html>

DESTINATION 2040

The Mobile MPO [Long Range Transportation Plan](#), Destination 2040, has been adopted, subsequent comments from ALDOT, FHWA, and FTA. The DRAFT document that was out for public review and reviewed with MPO and TCC/CAC members may have some slight modifications in the FINAL Document. The FINAL will be out next week.

The plan 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. You can learn more about the plan [HERE](#).

I-10 Mobile River Bridge

ALDOT has released the I-10 Mobile River Bridge Corridor Hearing Report Summary and it is now available online at www.mobileriverbridge.com. This report summarizes all of the comments that were received during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public comment period in the Fall of 2014. The document suggests most of the support was for the B prime route. Although we are moving closer and closer to having a bridge, there are still several hurdles to cross, including funding, [tolling is an option](#).

A selection committee chose the Mobile-based firm Thompson Engineering Thursday to oversee the design process for the Interstate 10 bridge and Bayway widening projects. Thompson will assist the Alabama Department of Transportation with completing the environmental impact study required by the federal government in order to build the bridge, in addition to other structural design work. That will include studying storm surge for the two-lane widening of the Bayway, termination points in Baldwin County, a vibration analysis for historic structures and providing information for a bicycle-pedestrian path, said Vince Calametti, region engineer for the department of transportation.

Transportation officials interviewed the first round of six candidates, which was winnowed down to the final three. In addition to Thompson, Volkert, Inc and Michael Baker International each made it to the last round of the selection process. The local selection committee included Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson; Cartledge Blackwell with the Mobile Historic Development Commission; Mobile County Commission President Jerry Carl; Baldwin County Commissioner Chris Elliott; Jimmy Lyons, executive director for the Alabama State Port Authority and Casi Callaway with Mobile Baykeeper.

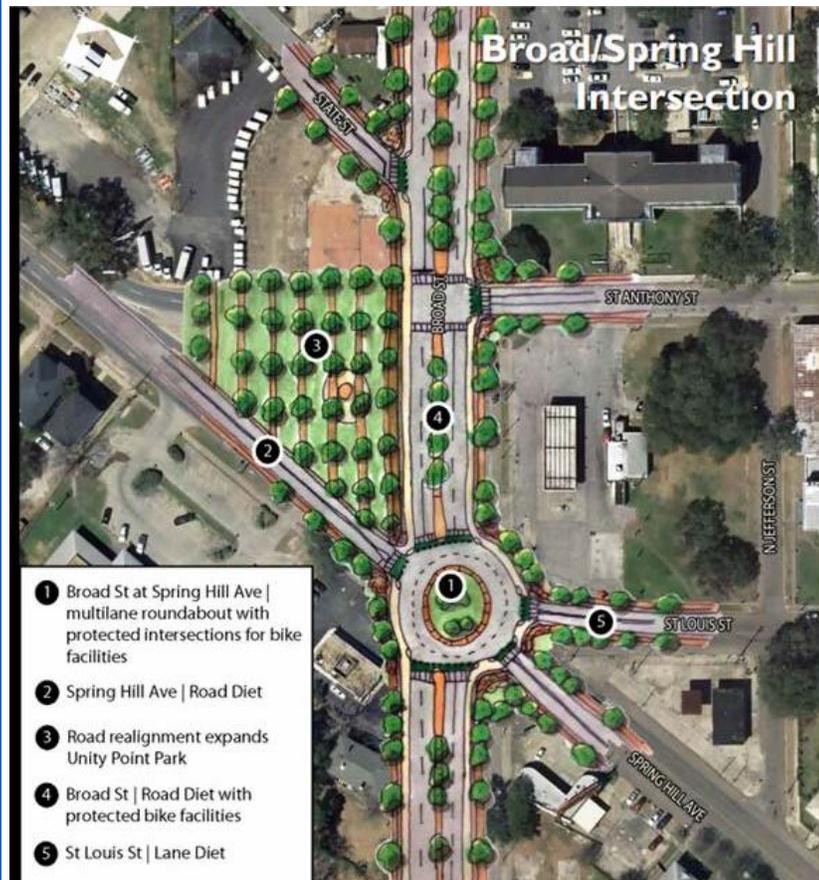
For more information on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge:

ALDOT'S Web Site: <http://www.mobileriverbridge.com/>

Build The I-10 Bridge Coalition Web Site: <http://www.buildthei10bridge.com/>

Downtown Mobile Non-Motorized Mobility Study

The Downtown Non-Motorized Mobility Study met on Tuesday, July 28th at the Downtown Alliance offices. Toole Design Group laid out some recommendations with the Steering Committee. There are some pretty interesting ideas that have come out of this study, and they will be briefly presented to the MPO at the August 19th meeting. For anyone interested in the Power Point given by Ernie Boughman with Toole Design Group, please see [HERE](#)



Projects Within Region Let July 31st, 2015

Mobile County

for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Guardrail, Cable Guiderail, Bridge Rail Retrofit, Weigh Station Improvements, and Weigh-In-Motion Station Installation on I-10 from the Mississippi State Line to Exit 10 (CR-39/McDonald Road) Interchange north of Irvington. Length 10.081 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$8,749,344 to \$10,693,642

for constructing the Slide Repair on the Westbound Lane of I-10 at Exit 17 (Range Line Road) in Mobile. Length 0.056 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$109,742 to \$134,130 .

Baldwin County

for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31) from just east of the junction of Eastern Shore Boulevard (MP 3.950) north of Malbis to just west of the junction of SR-3 (US-31) and SR-59 (MP 9.670) south of Stapleton. Length 5.720 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$990,659 to \$1,210,806 .

Escambia County

None at this time.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

Senate sends three-month highway bill to Obama

The Senate on Thursday approved an \$8 billion extension of federal transportation funding, sending it to President Obama's desk with just one day to go before the nation's road and transit spending expires.

The bill, which extends infrastructure spending until Oct. 29, passed in a 91-4 vote, pushing the debate into the fall.

Obama, who has advocated for long-term extension of highway funding, is expected to sign the patch to prevent an interruption in funding during the busy summer construction season.

The vote Thursday came after the Senate passed its preferred fix, a six-year highway bill negotiated by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.).

House Republicans refused to take up that bill and left town on Wednesday, forcing the Senate to accept the three-month stopgap.

Republican leaders in the Senate sought to downplay the squabbling between the chambers as they punted the highway debate to the fall.

"We all want the House to have the space to develop its own bill, because we all want to work out the best possible legislation for the American people in a conference later this year," McConnell said ahead of the vote.

McConnell touted the earlier vote to approve three years of funding as a victory.

"Many thought we'd never get there, but we have indeed," he said, saying the Senate's long-term highway bill "doesn't raises taxes by a penny."

"This is more than just another accomplishment for the Senate. It's a win for our country because the bill would cut red tape and streamline regulation. It would modernize infrastructure and advance research and innovation," McConnell said.

Democrats in the Senate complained about the House's rejection of its long-term highway bill even as the chamber approved the temporary patch. Wednesday was successful, so debate began. You can find the most recent version of the bill. Continue [HERE](#)

Senate Passes Long-Term Reauthorization...

Yesterday, the Senate passed its long-term transportation authorization legislation by a vote of 65 to 34. The so-called DRIVE Act authorizes the nation's transportation program for six years, while providing just three years of Highway Trust Fund transfers. The bill provides more funding than was originally anticipated, but still increases federal transportation investments by a few percentage points, far less than what is needed to maintain and improve the nation's transportation system. The bill contains a number of items that NARC and its coalition partners worked hard to secure: 100% suballocation of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), funding for bridges not on the National Highway System, and a fix to the MAP-21 requirement regarding transit representation on MPO boards.

The bill also contains an increase in the share of STP funding that is distributed by population – the highest priority for NARC and its partners – but due to other changes, it represents a decrease in STP for local areas. As many of you are aware, we worked hard to encourage passage of amendment #2289 by Senators Wicker (R-MS) and Booker (D-NJ). The amendment would have increased STP funding and increased the share distributed by population, which would have meant an additional \$1 billion in STP for local governments. Many of you were essential to securing support for this amendment. Unfortunately, amendments were not allowed. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) used a procedure called “filling the amendment tree” to prevent non-germane amendments from bogging the bill down, which blocked all amendments from the floor. While certainly a disappointing outcome, this is only the first step in a long process. More details about the Senate package will be available soon, along with a longer update on amendment #2289.

... And Short-Term Extension

While the Senate was completing work on its long-term reauthorization package, it was also gearing up for a vote on a short-term extension to keep the program operating beyond the July 31 expiration, a deadline created by a previous short-term extension. By a vote of 91 to 4, the Senate approved H.R. 3236, which the House passed earlier this week. Earlier, the House passed a five-month extension but Senators felt that was too long, so the House responded by passing a shorter version. Interestingly, both bills contain approximately \$8 billion in funding, so despite the shorter duration, the three-month extension will not require additional funding to be identified. The hope is that the House will take up its reauthorization bill after the August recess and that the two bills can be conferenced in advance of the program's new expiration date, October 29.

Funding Opportunities

Funding opportunities from the ADECA Energy Division

Funding opportunities from the ADECA Energy Division are listed below. All proposals are due by Friday, August 21, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Eligibility should be verified before submitting a proposal.

 [Energy Codes Training RFP](#) *Soliciting proposals from qualified applicants to provide training on the statewide commercial and residential energy codes*

 [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of Agriculture Facilities RFP](#)  [Addendum - Agriculture Facilities RFP](#) *Soliciting proposals from agriculture facilities and farms in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements in their facilities*

 [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of Non-Profit Organizations RFP](#)  [Addendum - Non-Profit Organizations RFP](#) *Soliciting proposals from non-profit organizations in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements to their buildings*

 [Energy-Efficient Retrofits of K-12 Schools RFP](#)  [Addendum - K-12 Schools](#) *Soliciting proposals from public school systems in Alabama for the purchase and installation of energy-efficient improvements in K-12 schools located within their jurisdiction*

NOTE: The documents in this .zip folder apply to all Energy Division RFPs above. Click here:  [Attachments](#)

Just For Fun

MADE EXCLUSIVELY FOR BALDWIN COUNTY RESIDENTS THAT WORK IN MOBILE

Imagine sitting on the Bayway, stuck in traffic. You have been there before, wondering why you did not leave earlier, or better yet, take the Causeway. Now you are going to be late. BUT WAIT A MINUTE, you are driving the Terrafugia TF-X.... AND it's a hybrid.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHJT7k0BXU&feature=youtu.be>

In the News

Substantial Demand Underscores Need for TIGER Grants

TIGER 2015 applications totaled \$9.8 billion, far exceeding the \$500 million for the program

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced that applications to the U.S. Department of Transportation for its seventh round of Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants totaled \$9.8 billion, almost 20 times the \$500 million set aside for the program, demonstrating the continued need for transportation investment nationwide. The demand for infrastructure investments from across the nation, and for all types of transportation projects, has been overwhelming. Among the 625 applications received this year, 60 percent are road projects, 18 percent are transit projects, and 8 percent are rail projects; with port and bicycle-pedestrian applications each representing 6 percent of the total. The Department received 625 eligible construction applications from all 50 states and U.S. territories. There were 565 such applications in 2014.

“The consistent number of high quality projects we’re unable to fund through TIGER every year demonstrates the need for Congress to act to give more communities access to this vital lifeline,” Secretary Foxx said. “That is why we proposed doubling TIGER in the GROW AMERICA Act.”

Earlier this year, the Department reintroduced an improved surface transportation reauthorization bill, the GROW AMERICA Act. The bill would provide \$7.5 billion in funding over six years for the TIGER grant program. Under the GROW AMERICA Act, the TIGER grant program will be available for another six years, extending a proven track record of helping communities coordinate innovative, multi-modal transportation projects that serve the diverse travel needs of their residents and businesses in the 21st Century.

The highly competitive TIGER program, which began as a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, offers federal funding possibilities for large, transformative multi-modal projects. These federal funds leverage money from private sector partners, state and local governments, metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies. The \$584.1 million awarded under TIGER 2014 supported 72 capital and planning transportation projects in 46 states and the District of Columbia.

Congress provided the most recent funding as part of the bipartisan Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, signed by President Obama on December 16, 2014.

Since 2009, the TIGER grant program has provided a combined \$4.1 billion to 342 projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Demand has been overwhelming, and during the previous six rounds, the Department received more than 6,000 applications requesting more than \$124 billion for transportation projects across the country.

More information about previous years' TIGER grantees as well as this year's application process can be found at <http://www.transportation.gov/tiger>

Driving around the unfamiliar: Large roundabout opening in Daphne next month



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on July 27, 2015 at 1:43 PM, updated July 27, 2015 at 1:55 PM

Dr. Angie Truett of the Jubilee Pet Hospital is eager to see the motorists return to Baldwin 13 and 64 near Daphne, but she has concerns.

The intersection, which is a stone's throw from the 9-year-old pet hospital, will reopen with a much different configuration than when it closed on March 16.

Replacing a four-way stop will be the continuous flow of a roundabout, a much larger circle than Baldwin County's first roundabout at nearby Whispering Pines and Pollard roads.

"Hopefully, I'll be surprised and things will go smoothly," Truett said Monday. "But I am concerned. I don't know how people will use the roundabout. They still don't know how to use (the roundabout at Whispering Pines and Pollard)."

Engineers are confident that motorists will catch on quickly. The roundabout is anticipated to open on Aug. 10, or one week before the 2015-2016 school season begins.

"If the weather holds and everything stays the same, they expect a one-week time for folks to acclimate themselves to it before school starts," Daphne Public Works Director Richard Johnson said.

Belforest residents and people traveling westbound from Ala. 181, construction will be happy to see the new roundabout, construction officials say. Among the welcoming features, they said, is a "slip ramp" or a right-turn lane leading motorists northbound on Baldwin 13 toward Daphne's elementary and middle schools.

"It helps the school traffic and makes the turning movement more efficient," Joey Nunnally, a construction manager with the Baldwin County Highway Department, said. "We have Belforest and the school here and that movement is predominate."

The roundabout, when opened, will be large. The radius is built to handle traffic that is more than double the amount of vehicles that travel through the Whispering Pines/Pollard roundabout. Last year, the average daily traffic county on Baldwin 64 was 14,000 vehicles; 5,000 traveling on Baldwin 13.

"We did it that way on purpose," Nunnally said. "The bigger the radius, the more efficient it works. The smaller the radius, the turns are much sharper. The turns will be more gradual and makes the whole thing work with more efficiently."

The following Eastern Shore Metropolitan Planning Organization video shows the flow of traffic through the roundabout when it opens next month. [VIDEO HERE](#)

Transportation Research

U.S. Driving Nears 1 Trillion Miles In First Four Months of 2015 Nation's Driving Increases for 14th Month in a Row

WASHINGTON – New estimates released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) show that Americans drove 987.8 billion miles for the first four months of the year, topping the previous record – 965.5 billion – set in April 2007.

The new data, published in FHWA's latest "Traffic Volume Trends" report, a monthly estimate of U.S. road travel, show that Americans drove 267.9 billion vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) in April – the most ever driven in April and the highest mileage for the first quarter of any year – underscoring the need for greater investment in transportation infrastructure.

The April estimates show that the nation's driving has increased steadily for 14 consecutive months.

The April 2015 report also includes seasonally-adjusted data, which enable VMT comparisons with March and any other month in any year, from the USDOT's Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Analysis of seasonally-adjusted VMT is an alternative to analysis of unadjusted VMT, which traditionally uses comparisons of a month to the same month in previous years to determine trends.

The seasonally-adjusted vehicle miles traveled for April 2015 were 262.4 billion miles, a 3.7 percent increase – or 9.5 billion more VMT – compared to the previous April and a 1.1 percent increase – or 2.9 billion more VMT – compared with March 2015. The estimates include passenger vehicle, bus and truck travel.

- See more at: <http://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/us-driving-nears-1-trillion-miles-first-four-months-2015#sthash.JasIPCI7.dpuf>

Citizen Reporting of Current Road Conditions By Ms. Michelle Birdsall

In recent years, DOTs have increasingly used the practice of crowdsourcing to gather real-time information on weather and road conditions as a supplement to other road condition reporting techniques (e.g., field personnel reports and ITS devices). In a new report, [Citizen Reporting of Current Road Conditions](#), the Road Weather Management Program has documented five DOTs' experiences with a particular type of crowdsourcing: one in which the DOTs build the interface and train citizen reporters. Because these citizen reporting programs involve the training of recruited reporters, the quality and frequency of the road condition data is often more usable relative to data from other crowdsourcing techniques, such as mining social media. Moreover, because the data ingest system is built by the DOT, the reports can often be seamlessly ingested and disseminated through existing internal data management systems or traveler information outlets. An upcoming report (expected in the fall) will document key similarities and differences between three different crowdsourcing approaches: citizen reporting, social media mining and third-party smartphone applications.