



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, June 5, 2015

Volume 14, Number 9

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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

## Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>  
[transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org)

Kevin Harrison, PTP  
Director of Transportation  
[kharrison@sarpc.org](mailto:kharrison@sarpc.org)  
Tom Piper

Senior Transportation Planner  
[tpiper@sarpc.org](mailto:tpiper@sarpc.org)

Monica Williamson  
Transportation Planner  
[mwilliamson@sarpc.org](mailto:mwilliamson@sarpc.org)  
Anthony Johnson

Transportation Planner  
[ajohnson@sarpc.org](mailto:ajohnson@sarpc.org)  
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission  
110 Bearegard St

The Mobile MPO TCC/CAC met this week and the Mobile MPO Policy Committee will meet next week, Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> (*please see Mobile MPO Updates*). Congress has passed a two month extension (see *Legislative Updates*). There is open application for rural FTA JARC and New Freedom and 5310 grants through ALDOT (See *Funding Opportunities*). The “gravity” of Jesu Joy of Man’s Desire is *Just For Fun*.

We hope you have a safe and enjoyable weekend!

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



[www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org) check us out on FACEBOOK

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## Mobile MPO Updates

### MPO Policy Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 10:00 am.

The first item on the agenda will be to review the 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) which is essentially our budget for next year. This is a draft document that will be adopted in August. Also, we will be reviewing the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which will include a self-certification resolution. The TCC/CAC met this week and developed a balanced STP Attributable Schedule for the 2016-2019 TIP. Those members of the Mobile MPO and TCC/CAC were mailed the schedule, and minutes of the last meetings, this week. Lastly, there will be a discussion pertaining to scheduling our Urban TAP Funds.

Both the draft UPWP and the draft TIP are being submitted to ALDOT by June 15th for comment prior to public comment. Once we receive comments from ALDOT, both documents must be go through the public involvement process, and the TCC/CAC and MPO Policy board will see these documents again this summer. A final item on the agenda will be an update on the Downtown Mobility Study.

### 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](http://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](#).

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



Stayed Tuned for all of the details [http://mobilempo.org/Mobility\\_Study.html](http://mobilempo.org/Mobility_Study.html)

## Projects Within Region Let May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### Mobile County

- **for constructing the Historic Whistler Bike Trail (Bike Path along an abandoned Railroad Corridor) along SR-17 from a point near the I-65 Interchange to a point near the SR-158 Interchange in Prichard. Length 1.293 mi.** The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$623,244 to \$761,743 .
- **For constructing the Intersection Improvements on CR-19 (Irvington-Bayou La Batre Highway) at the intersection of CR-24 (Half Mile Road). Length 0.148 mi.** The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$805,388 to \$948,363 .

### Baldwin County

None at this time

### Escambia County

- **for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on Medical Park Drive/Martin Luther King Drive from the junction of West State Line Road to the junction of Johnson Street. Length 2.975 mi.** The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$641,982 to \$784,645 .
- **for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-3 (US-31) from north of the intersection of old US-31 (MP 64.710) to the south end of the Burnt Corn Creek Bridge (MP 68.954) in East Brewton. Length 4.244 mi.** The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,330,991 to \$1,626,767 .

### [What's Under Construction?](#)

## Legislative Updates

### **House Transportation Appropriations Nears Completion**

The Transportation-Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill (HR 2577) was on the House floor this week. The bill provides \$70.6 billion for Department of Transportation functions for fiscal year 2016, including \$41 billion for highways, \$10.7 billion for transit, and \$1.1 billion for Amtrak. After debating late into the night on Wednesday, the House began voting Thursday morning on an extensive list of bill amendments, but recessed early in the afternoon and will resume consideration on Tuesday. Final passage is expected after amendment votes have concluded. President Obama issued a veto threat, citing flat highway funding and cuts to Amtrak, transit, and TIGER grants, in addition to a long list of additional provisions with which the Administration disagrees.

### **NARC President testifies to Senate on behalf of NARC And NACo**

NARC President Gary Moore, Judge/Executive in Boone County, KY, testified at a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing this week, expressing concerns over the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to tighten the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone. President Moore spoke on behalf of both NARC and National Association of Counties (NACo). President Moore's testimony focused on the economic impacts on regions and counties of a more stringent ozone standard and highlighted the fact that the most recent standard, established in 2008, has not yet been fully implemented. President Moore received a welcome surprise when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) introduced his friend and political ally. NARC and NACo issued a joint press release about the event, a full-length webcast of the hearing is available, and President Moore's testimony can also be viewed separately.

### **Democrats steer toward highway funding cliff**

**Harry Reid: "It's horrible that they're even thinking about the short-term extension."**

By Burgess Everett and Heather Caygle  
6/3/15 6:50 PM EDT  
Updated 6/3/15 9:13 PM EDT

Democrats are threatening an aggressive confrontation with Republicans over federal highway money, foreshadowing yet another round of brinkmanship with the GOP and raising the specter of a temporary shutdown of transportation construction sites nationwide.

House and Senate Democrats are weighing a hard-line strategy that would force Republicans to stumble through a series of painful short-term highway extensions if they don't fix the program's long-term funding woes, with the Highway Trust Fund slated to run out of money after July 31.

Democrats have long insisted that Congress needs to put the highway fund on firm financial footing for years to come, but bipartisan antipathy to new taxes has produced a series of stopgaps and patches under the leadership of both parties.

"I think it's horrible that they're even thinking about the short-term extension," said Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) in an interview. "I think it's ridiculous."

Unless Republicans can come up with tens of billions of dollars in new tax money or spending cuts, the GOP could be forced to acquiesce to Democratic demands or risk a shutdown of infrastructure projects in the middle of the summer construction season. Still, the strategy could also blow up in Democrats' faces, as the GOP is sure to paint them as obstructionists, particularly if a shutdown comes to pass in July.

## Funding Opportunities

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### **CALL FOR PROJECTS FOR FUNDING TRANSIT SERVICES FOR FY 2016 (July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline)**

**Proposed budgets must be emailed to ALDOT no later than June 12, 2015.**

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), Modal Programs Bureau is now accepting Applications for funding consideration through the Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program and the Section 5317 New Freedom (NF) Program. These Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs provide funding for transit related services that assist the state's population of low income and disabled individuals.

The following organizations are eligible to apply for the Sections 5316 & 5317 programs:

1. Private nonprofit organizations
2. State or local governmental bodies; and
3. Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services.

Federal funds administered through ALDOT are only extended to organizations providing transit services in the small urban and rural areas of the State.

Available federal funds for the Section 5316 JARC program are approximately \$550,762 for small urban areas and \$1,023,502 for the rural areas. Available federal funds for the Section 5317 NF program are approximately \$611,584 for small urban areas and \$690,884 for the rural areas.

A 50% local match is required for operating funds and a 20% local match is required for capital and planning funds.

The selection process will be based on the following criteria: statement of need and organizational capacity; project budget and cost effectiveness; coordination and program outreach; implementation plan; and customer service and accessibility. Projects funded through these programs must be derived from a locally regional coordinated transportation plan.

The application package provides specific eligibility requirements, match requirements, and eligible activities. The application and state management plan can be found at <http://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/transit.htm>.

Completed grant applications must be submitted to the appropriate Regional Planning Council in the respective geographic areas of the state in which Sections 5316 and/or 5317 transportation services are proposed. Each Regional Planning Council must review grant applications to ensure compliance with federal coordination requirements prior to formal submission to ALDOT. Only those grant applications submitted for funding consideration by the Regional Planning Councils will be considered for funding. The deadline for submissions to the appropriate regional planning council in the respective geographic areas of the state in which Sections 5316 and/or 5317 transportation services are proposed is **5:00 P.M. on July 1, 2015**. Applications received after the established deadline will be returned. **Postmarked submissions will not be accepted.**

After applications are reviewed, prioritized, and approved by ALDOT, applications will be submitted to the FTA Region IV office for funding consideration.

For questions or comments concerning the grant application or if the information is needed in another language contact: Sharon Coats, ALDOT, Modal Programs Bureau, 1100 John Overton Drive, Montgomery, AL 36110; (334) 353-6443 or [coatss@dot.state.al.us](mailto:coatss@dot.state.al.us).

**Proposed budgets must be emailed to ALDOT no later than June 12, 2015.**

ALDOT does not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, or national origin.

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### **FY 2016 SECTION 5310 NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (June 17<sup>th</sup> deadline)**

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), Modal Programs Bureau, is now accepting Applications for funding consideration through the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides funding for transit related services that assist the state's population of seniors & individuals with disabilities. The following organizations are eligible to submit an application for the Section 5310 program:

1. Private nonprofit organizations

2. Governmental agencies that provide certifications to ALDOT that transit services furnished by nonprofit organizations are not readily available in the area
3. Governmental agencies approved by the ALDOT to coordinate transit services for seniors and individuals with disabilities Federal funds administered through ALDOT are only extended to agencies providing transit services in the small urban and rural areas of the State.

Available federal funds for the Section 5310 program are approximately \$2,218,584 for small urban areas and \$3,187,286 for the rural areas. A local match of 20% is required for this capital program. The selection process may be based on the following criteria: financial and management capability; service needs; proposed services; utilization of requested equipment; and service coordination. Projects funded through these programs must be derived from a locally regional coordinated transportation plan. The application package provides specific eligibility requirements, match requirements, and eligible activities. The application and state management plan can be found at <http://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/transit.htm>. Completed grant applications must be submitted to the appropriate regional planning council in the respective geographic areas of the state in which Section 5310 transportation services are proposed.

Each regional planning council must review grant applications to ensure compliance with federal coordination requirements prior to formal submission to ALDOT. Only those grant applications submitted for funding consideration by the Regional Planning Councils will be considered for funding. The deadline for submissions to the appropriate regional planning council in the respective geographic areas of the state in which Section 5310 transportation services are proposed is 5:00 P.M. on June 17, 2015. Applications received after the established deadline will be returned. Postmarked submissions will not be accepted. All applications will be reviewed, evaluated, prioritized, and approved by ALDOT prior to the development and submission of a consolidated grant application to the FTA Region IV office for funding consideration. If there are questions or comments concerning the grant application or if more information is needed in another language or alternative formats, contact Sharon Coats, ALDOT, Modal Programs Bureau, 1100 John Overton Drive, Montgomery, AL 36110; (334) 353-6443 or [coatss@dot.state.al.us](mailto:coatss@dot.state.al.us)

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### **New Round of TIGER Announced (June 5<sup>th</sup> deadline)**

Pre-Applications Due: May 4 (required)

Final Applications Due: June 5

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has announced \$500 million in available funding for transportation projects across the country under a seventh round of the highly successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program. Click [HERE](#) for more information. The USDOT will host a [TIGER summit](#) at its headquarters on April 16, and a [series of webinars](#) to assist applicants on a number of facets of the process.

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### **Incentive Opportunities**

As the third round of the Every Day Counts initiative moves into high gear, the Federal Highway Administration is offering incentives and technical assistance to help the highway community mainstream innovations.

Fiscal year 2015 assistance is now available from the [State Transportation Innovation Council Incentive program](#). The program provides resources—technical assistance and funds—to help STICs make innovations standard practice. States can get up to \$100,000 a year for activities such as implementing system process changes, organizing peer exchanges and developing guidance and specifications. Contact the state FHWA Division Office or Mary Huie at (202) 366-3039 for information.

The Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program continues to accept applications through Grants.gov. Incentive funding of up to \$1 million may be awarded for projects using innovation on any aspect of highway transportation, including planning, financing, environment, design, construction, materials, pavements, structures and operations. See the [AID Demonstration Web page](#) or contact Ewa Flom at (202) 366-2169 for details.

[Section 1304](#) of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act allows an increase in the federal funding share of up to 5 percent on eligible projects that use innovations.

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### **Just For Fun**

Our travel demand forecast model is run on the premise of gravity....we can bore you with gravity formulas and explain how the gravity model illustrates the macroscopic relationships between places, but it would be *Just For Fun* if we could illustrate it. There is a wooden ball. It has an origin, it has a destination, and it has a trip, all based on "sound" principles.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c84C6YZirzE>

This Bach's Cantata 147, aka "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desire" is having a ball.....

## In the News

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### City leaders seek federal transportation grant for 'Bring Back Broad Street' initiative



By [Michael Finch II | mfinch@al.com](mailto:mfinch@al.com)

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on June 02, 2015 at 1:40 PM, updated June 04, 2015 at 8:47 AM

Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson wants to revive a stale effort to redevelop Broad Street using funds from a popular federal transportation grant. For more than a decade, the "Bring Back Broad Street" initiative, a plan to increase pedestrian mobility along the road that circles most of downtown, has been a part of the abstract vision for the city.

After receiving unanimous approval from the City Council Tuesday, the Stimpson administration will apply for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant, in hopes of finishing what others couldn't.

In its application, the city will seek \$13.6 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation. If Mobile succeeds at edging out other municipalities to win one of the prized grants, the city will be on the hook for a \$3.3 million match.

This would be the second year in a row city officials apply, and will face competition from similar roadway projects from around the region. The application deadline is June 5.

City officials want to create so-called "complete streets," a thoroughfare "designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities," according to Smart Growth America.

The envisioned plan would extend to the entire length of Beauregard and Broad streets, replacing stormwater drainage systems, roads and sidewalks, adding bike lanes, medians, street lighting and landscaping.

The TIGER grant would give the city enough financial power to change an area that's deficient in economic development and streets that have more than a few cracks and bumps.

City officials believe that have a better chance by linking the initiative to other federal spending projects in the area, like the U.S. Housing and Urban Development funding allocated for the Roger Williams Homes and Thomas James Place and a U.S. Interior Department grant to create a walking trail along Three Mile Creek. Continue [HERE](#)

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### Mayor Stimpson reopens free, downtown parking lot

June 03, 2015

MOBILE, Ala. - Mayor Sandy Stimpson today reopened the CSX parking lot located on Water Street. The city-owned lot, on the east side of Water near the foot of Government Street, is free and open to the public.

It will provide convenient parking for the nearby Mobile History Museum and the Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center, as well as Cooper-Riverside Park and other downtown attractions.

"Accessibility to these museums is the key to their success," said Mayor Stimpson. "We want to make it easy for our citizens and guests to enjoy a visit to downtown Mobile."

The parking lot, which is adjacent to the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center, was previously gated and vacant under the previous administration. The City of Mobile removed the fencing and placed signage designating the property as public parking.

Drivers can enter through the north driveway and exit on the south driveway. Overnight parking is not allowed.

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### **Alabama Senate approves 5-foot safety margin for passing bikes**

By Mike Cason | [mcason@al.com](mailto:mcason@al.com)

Cars would have to keep a distance of at least five feet when passing bicycles under a bill passed by the Alabama Senate today.

Sen. Gerald Allen, R-Tuscaloosa, the bill's sponsor, proposed a distance of three feet.

Sen. Bill Holtzclaw, R-Madison, had Allen's bill amended to change it to five feet.

Allen said he is a cyclist who has experienced close brushes with vehicles.

He said the bill, in addition to specifying a safe distance, would promote public awareness about safety for cyclists.

Current law says that vehicles overtaking another vehicle must pass at a "safe distance" but does not define that.

The current law does not specifically refer to passing bicycles.

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## **Transportation Research**

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### **FHWA 37-15**

**Wednesday, May 20, 2015**

**Contact: Doug Hecox**

**Tel: 202-366-0660**

#### **Driving Topped 262 Billion Miles In March, New Data Show**

*U.S. Drivers Set New Record with Miles Traveled*

WASHINGTON – New estimates released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) show that Americans drove 261.7 billion vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) in March of this year, which is the most ever driven in March. Throughout the first quarter of the year, the nation drove 720.1 billion VMT – the highest for any year's first quarter. The increase in travel on America's roads underscores the need for greater investment in transportation infrastructure.

Earlier this year, the Obama Administration announced a plan to help build and maintain America's roads with a \$478 billion, six-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal, the [GROW AMERICA Act](#). The plan would increase state funding levels to \$317 billion; an increase of about 29 percent over current levels, and makes critical investments in infrastructure needed to promote long-term economic growth, enhance safety and efficiency, and support jobs for the 21st century.

The 720.1 billion VMT driven on U.S. roads in the first quarter of the year beats the previous record of 705.7 billion set in 2006, and doubles the 345.5 billion VMT of the first quarter of 1982. Continue [HERE](#)

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### **Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool**

June 3, 3:30 – 5:00 PM ET

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will provide one more webinar to overview and demonstrate their new [EJSCREEN](#) tool, which is designed to highlight places in the U.S. that may have higher environmental burdens and vulnerable populations. The tool offers powerful data and mapping capabilities that display environmental and demographic information at a high geographic resolution across the entire country.

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### **Advancing a Sustainable Highway System**

June 25, 2:00 PM ET – Linking Asset Management and Planning

July 29, 2:00 PM ET – Sustainable Pavements

The Sustainable Transport and Climate Change Team within FHWA's Office of Natural Environment will present a series of webinars based on the [Advancing a Sustainable Highway System: Highlights of FHWA Sustainability Activities](#) report produced by the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center last year. The report illustrates how sustainability is incorporated into a wide variety of FHWA programs, projects, policies, processes, and partnerships. Each webinar will focus on a particular section of the report and will feature specific FHWA activities that advance sustainability.