



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Volume 9, Number 11

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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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This week the Mobile MPO met and SARPC is holding a free GPS training session next week; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*.

Please see TIGER and TAP Funding in *Funding Opportunities*. It's crazy, but they are still talking about lowering MPO thresholds in the next Transportation funding bill. This most likely will not affect the [Eastern Shore MPO](#) as they would be grandfathered; please see *Legislative Updates*. Also, we need to be walking on Water...please see *In The News*.

It's the Ides of March, so go eat some Pi and a Caesar salad... or just look at this week's *Just For Fun*.

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



[www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org) check us out on FACEBOOK  
706-1CAR

## Mobile MPO Updates

### JOINT MOBILE MPO Policy Board and TCC/CAC MEETING

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization met on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 10:00 am at the GM&O Building in the Board Room at 110 Beauregard Street. The MPO approved the following items to be included into the Transportation Improvement Program:

#### National Highway Funds

CN	Resurfacing on SR-158 from west of SR 213 to SR 13 (US 43)	FY 2014	\$1,639,613
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#### New Freedom (Rural/State)

TR	Mobile Bay Transportation, Rural, Capital	FY 2014	\$73,012
TR	Mobile Bay Transportation, Rural, Operations	FY 2014	\$164,250
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2014	\$489,060
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2015	\$513,512
TR	Mobile ARC, Rural, Operations	FY 2016	\$539,188

#### JARC Funds (Rural/State)

TR	Mobile Bay Transportation Rural, Operations	FY 2014	\$146,000
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The MPO board was also updated on the [Transportation Alternatives Program](#), [Destination 2040](#) and [Phase II the Gulf Coast Climate Change Study](#).

### SARPC HOSTING GPS WORKSHOP

The SARPC Transportation Planning Department will host a free half day GPS orientation class for users of Trimble GPS units. The class will be offered on March 19, 2014 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the SARPC Training Room on the second floor of the GM&O Building in downtown Mobile at 110 Beauregard Street.

The class will focus on GPS fundamentals using Terrasync and Pathfinder Office software workflow and will include Data Dictionary Creation, Data Collection and Attribution, Point, Line, and Polygon creation, Nesting and Segmenting, Post Processing, Data Exportation to GIS format, and File Geodatabase Creation. Seating is limited to twenty participants. If you are interested in participating

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you may register with Instructor David Wright at (256) 665-5589 email: [david\\_wright@neigps.com](mailto:david_wright@neigps.com)

## Projects Within Region Let April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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### BALDWIN COUNTY

- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on South Hoyle Avenue from CR-57 (Brady Road) to the L & N Railroad Right-Of-Way (ROW) in Bay Minette. Length 0.424 mi.
- for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-181 from near SR-16 (US-90) (MP 16.493) to the intersection of SR-3 (US-31) (MP 18.260). Length 1.070 mi.

### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- for constructing the Industrial Park Improvements (Grade, Drain, Base, and Pave) on Wind River Road Extension from CR-14 to Wind River Road South in Atmore. Length 0.093 mi..

### MOBILE COUNTY

- for constructing the Safety Widening, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-163 from the junction of SR-193 to the south abutment of the Dog River Bridge east of Theodore. Length 2.482 mi

### What's Under Construction?

## Legislative Updates

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### **Administration Releases Budget Justification Documents; Proposes to Change MPO Threshold:**

Last week, part one of the Administration budget rollout was announced, including top line numbers and some supporting information. This week, the Administration provided more detail with budget justification documents. This year's version starts to frame out the Administration's previously proposed four-year reauthorization bill, and contains some good policy: an overall funding increase, dedicated freight program, and at least a **modest increase in metropolitan transportation planning funding**. Though we are still going through the details, one thing did stand out: an administrative proposal to increase the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) threshold from 50,000 to 200,000, with smaller MPOs either being grandfathered or dissolving. There is some question as to whether this is now the Administration's policy heading into reauthorization. We are working to chase down more details, and will provide those as they become available. Click [HERE](#) for budget.

### **House Hearing: Oversight of U.S. DOTs Implementation of MAP-21 and FY15 Budget Request for Surface Transportation:**

The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit met Wednesday, to receive testimony related to implementing the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget request for surface transportation.

Chairman Tom Petri (R-WI) highlighted the consolidation under MAP-21, project delivery reforms, performance management rules, and establishment of the Public Transportation Emergency Relief program. He also mentioned the President's budget which includes the first year of a four-year \$302 billion surface transportation reauthorization proposal that increases funding for the Nation's highways, bridges, transit, and rail systems. Congresswoman Eleanor Norton (D-DC) said failure to act on reauthorization would be a disaster.

Peter M. Rogoff, Acting Under Secretary for Policy Office of the Secretary at the U.S. DOT, confirmed what we have known and feared for some time: namely, that cash management measures may be implemented as soon as July if Congress does not act before then. He stressed that "the highway account of the trust fund is likely to dip below the critical \$4 billion funding level as soon as July and the transit account will fall below \$1 billion sometime in August."

Greg Nadeau, FHWA Acting Administrator; Therese McMillan, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Acting Administrator; Anne S. Ferro, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Administrator; and David Friedman, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Acting Administrator, all highlighted the President's FY15 budget request, making the case that their agencies are in need of the extra funding the budget contains.

## Funding Opportunities

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**President Obama, DOT Secretary Foxx Announce \$600 Million for Sixth Round of TIGER Funding**  
[Notice of Funding Availability](#) now available.

ST. PAUL – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx will join President Barack Obama today to announce that \$600 million will be made available to fund transportation projects across the country under a sixth round of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s highly successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program. The announcement will be made at the Union Depot in St. Paul, which received \$35 million in the first round of TIGER to renovate the facility and restore tracks. Combined with roughly \$480 million in federal funding for the Central Corridor light rail transit line, St. Paul’s Union Depot is proof of the impact that transportation investment can make, leading to job creation, downtown revitalization and economic growth.

“President Obama knows that transportation means opportunity for so many Americans,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “TIGER investments answer the President’s challenge to expand opportunity through a strong transportation system that connects Americans with a better way of life.” [\[HERE\]](#) <http://www.dot.gov/tiger>

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**FY 2014 Transportation Alternatives Program –TAP FUNDS**

**Deadline:** *May 2, 2014*

Only cities and counties can apply for TAP funds, and your jurisdiction will determine your application for TAP Funds. If you are in the Mobile Urbanized Area, you are eligible for the Urban Area TAP Funds available through the Mobile MPO at South Alabama Regional Planning Commission. If you are outside of the Mobile Urbanized Area you will apply to ADLOT for TAP funds (see below).

The applications, guidelines and funding limits between the STATE TAP and the URBAN TAP *are slightly different*. Please be aware, and if there are any question please do not hesitate to call us. The federal guidance on TAP funds is here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>

**MOBILE URBANIZED TAP FUNDS**

The Mobile MPO announces the availability of the FY 2014 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The maximum amount that can be applied for with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$200,000 (federal). The TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. Applications for Mobile Urban Area TAP Funds can be found [\[HERE\]](#).

**ALDOT TAP FUNDS**

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) announced application availability for the FY 2014 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. ***ALDOT TAP Funding applications can only come from ALDOT*** [\[HERE\]](#).

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**GRANT: FHWA's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration**

**Open until the Program Ends or Funding is No Longer Available**

FHWA announced on February 19 the availability of \$30 million (M) in funding and requests grant applications for FHWA's Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration authorized within the Technology and Innovation Deployment Program under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). On a rolling basis, AID Demonstration funds will award multiple projects that meet eligibility, requirements, and selection criteria. [\[HERE\]](#)

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**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

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Today (3/14) is *National Pi Day* [Man(3) I(1) need(4) a(1) drink(5) alcoholic(9) of(2) course(6)], AND it is the Ides of March. The death of Caesar made the Ides of March a turning point in Roman history, as one of the events that marked the transition from the historical period known as the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire. He was assassinated around March 15<sup>th</sup> in 44 B.C. What's *Just For Fun*, is to see how the Romans thought big on their colossal buildings, and their thousands of miles of roads. I am sure they used Pi (3.1415926). *Did you know that Pi cannot be expressed as a fraction, and it's decimal place never settles into a permanent repeating pattern!*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8lcwFwNlr8&list=PLDECFDDDE2A9928E8>

## In the News

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### Walking across Water: City officials discuss improving walkability in downtown Mobile



By [John Sharp | jsharp@al.com](mailto:jsharp@al.com).

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

on March 11, 2014 at 5:55 PM, updated March 11, 2014 at 9:42 PM

MOBILE, Alabama – A social media question posed by Carol Hunter about seven years ago sparked an interesting discussion that continues to this day.

"I did a Facebook question and asked, 'what is your favorite park or green space in downtown Mobile?'" Hunter, communications director with the Downtown Mobile Alliance, said. "The biggest response I got was, 'I want Cooper Riverside Park to be my favorite but I can't get there.' There is a real desire ... that we want to get to our riverfront."

She added, "The desire has not gone away but the opportunity is here now."

The opportunity publicly surfaced Monday and was discussed by the Mobile City Council on Tuesday as city officials began embracing the possibility of moving forward with some changes to Water

Street that would better connect downtown Mobile to its developing waterfront.

Council members responded to comments from Mayor Sandy Stimpson -- who gathered from a group of seven mayors and assorted planners and professionals during a seminar on city design in San Antonio, Texas, last week -- that the city's No. 1 challenge in connecting its assets is the current configuration of the six-lane Water Street.

"It took them a half-second to recognize the problem is Water Street," Stimpson said. "It comes down to walkability. We are not walker-friendly in my mind." Continue reading [\[HERE\]](#)

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The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Highway Policy Information is gearing up for the [2015 NHTS \(http://nhts.ornl.gov\)](http://nhts.ornl.gov). Since 1969, FHWA has collected nationwide travel behavior data, most recently with the 2009 NHTS. Since 2001, FHWA has offered an opportunity for state highway agencies, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other federal, state, and local government agencies to join the NHTS Add-on program. This unique partnership grants Add-on participants the opportunity to purchase additional household samples in their jurisdictions, which enhances data resolution in terms of geographic, social and demographic coverage.

NHTS data support a wide range of transportation decision-making, including travel demand modeling, transportation conformity, highway safety, travel reliability, alternative transportation, public health, economic vitality, performance measures, and customer satisfaction issues. For more information on the many uses of NHTS data, please visit <http://nhts.ornl.gov/usersAndUses.shtml>.

With the 2015 NHTS already underway, once again interested state highway agencies (e.g., planning and research offices), MPOs, and other federal, state, and local governmental agencies have an opportunity to benefit from the Add-on program.

For more information on how to be part of the Add-on program, please visit FHWA Pooled Fund Program at <http://www.pooledfund.org/Details/Solicitation/1349>. For any further information, please feel free to contact NHTS Program Manager Adella Santos ([Adella.Santos@dot.gov](mailto:Adella.Santos@dot.gov), 202-366-5021) or Deputy Program Manager Brad Gudzinis ([Brad.Gudzinis@dot.gov](mailto:Brad.Gudzinis@dot.gov), 202-366-5024).

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### Mayor Stimpson: Walkable Water Street key to revitalization of Mobile's waterfront



By [Theresa Seiger | tseiger@al.com](mailto:tseiger@al.com)

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

on March 10, 2014 at 3:29 PM, updated March 10, 2014 at 3:56 PM

MOBILE, Alabama -- Following a three-day, mayors only meeting in Texas, Mayor Sandy Stimpson has concluded that a major key to developing Mobile's waterfront area lies in making Water Street walkable and easier to navigate, he said on Monday.

The comments were made after Stimpson attended the Mayors' Institute on City Design in San Antonio from March 5 through March 7, an annual gathering of mayors and urban planning experts from across the country.

Mayors from places as far flung as Santa Rosa, Calif., and Somerville, Mass., were asked to present an issue in their cities for the group to consider.

Stimpson's presentation focused on one of the Port City's most frustrating dilemmas: the

underutilization of multiple waterfront properties, including the Alabama Cruise Terminal.

"What they saw was the lack of connectivity between all of our venues -- the lack of signage -- probably the biggest problem is Water Street," Stimpson said. "The problem with Water Street (is) you have a six lane major thoroughfare that does not have the perception of safe crossings to get pedestrians across."

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#### **President offers a four-year vision for American rail**

The President's plan includes a blueprint for a \$19 billion rail reauthorization that builds upon current rail policy and the \$23 billion portfolio of investments we've made since 2009. For the first time, rail will have its own source of dedicated funding as part of a Rail Account within the Highway Trust Fund, finally placing rail on par with other forms of transportation.

Earlier this week we heard APTA announce the latest statistics proving that it's time for Congress to support the President's proposal. That is, in 2013, Americans took 10.7 billion trips by public transportation, the most since 1956.

That's more people "boarding public buses, trains and subways," AP reported, "since the suburbs began booming," not to mention since the year President Eisenhower authorized the building of the Interstate Highway System and established the Highway Trust Fund to ensure stable Federal funding.

And that ridership includes growth across all types of transit, including light rail, commuter rail, and subways. When you combine those stats with our October announcement that Amtrak set its 10th ridership record in 11 years, we're talking about a solid body of evidence that rail ridership of all kinds is booming and that travel choices have fundamentally shifted since the Highway Trust Fund was created.

The President's four-year plan both stabilizes the Highway Trust Fund and applies it to DOT's goal of building a high-performance rail system as part of a more integrated, connected multimodal transportation network.

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#### **Connie Hudson Named New County Commission President**

March 12, 2014

Mobile County Commissioner Connie Hudson this week rotated to the presidency of the Mobile County Commission, a leadership position that rotates every 16 months. She will chair meetings of the commission as well as serve as chief elected official of the county during a declared emergency or disaster in the county.

Hudson replaces District 1 Commissioner Merceria Ludgood in the role of president. At the same time, District 3 Commissioner Jerry Carl rotates into the position of Commission vice president.

## **Transportation Research**

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#### **Combined Intelligence - Working Together for Smarter Transportation**

In September of 2014 the Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society (GRITS), the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida (ITSFL) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Georgia (ITSGA), will come together for a joint annual meeting. Join us in 2014 for the ITS 3C Summit.

#### **ITS 3C Summit**

The conference will be held **September 14-17, 2014** at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center along the waterfront in Mobile, Alabama.

***Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center***

One South Water Street

Mobile, AL 36602

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#### **U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Offers Talking Technology and Transportation (T3) Webinars and On-line Training Opportunities**

Did you know the USDOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO) offers FREE training and web-based resources?



Throughout the year, the ITS JPO's Professional Capacity Building (PCB) Program offers on-line training opportunities and regularly hosts T3 Webinars on a wide range of topics related to ITS planning, design, procurement, deployment, operations, noteworthy practices, and lessons learned. [\[HERE\]](#)

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