



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

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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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South Alabama Regional

Toole Design Group has finished a Baseline Review for the Downtown Mobile Study, please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. A new round of [TIGER grants](#) has been announced and today is the Deadline for State and Urban TAP applications (See Funding Opportunities). Short Term Extension of the Transportation Bill is likely, see *Legislative Updates*. [Map for Mobile](#) meetings announced, see *In The News*. This is the weather for some Spring Cleaning.... Check out this Week's *Just For Fun* some incredible cleaning of a regular car engine....

Run through the Bankhead Tunnel? Tomorrow is The [Tunnel Vision Run](#), and the Criterion. Have a good weekend!

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



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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile

Toole Design Group has completed the draft Baseline Review for the Downtown Study. Many of you have a stake in Downtown Mobile, so take a look at it and tell us what you think. There will be a series of public meetings and charrettes the week of May 11-14. Starting with one at the Gov't Plaza media room on May 11<sup>th</sup>, and the final charrette at the Temple on Thursday May 14<sup>th</sup>. From what I have seen from the Baseline Review [HERE](#), we are going to have a pretty good product from Toole.

**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 in a couple of weeks as we are still receiving comments from ALDOT.

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:

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

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

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## Projects Within Region Let April 24<sup>th</sup> , 2015

There are no federal projects in our 3 county region to be let this month.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

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## Legislative Updates

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### Short-Term Funding Extension Likely

In the first acknowledgement by House leaders that Congress will not meet the May deadline for a long-term transportation bill, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy told reporters this week that Congress would likely pass a short-term extension of the program. McCarthy suggests that a short-term extension would give Congress more time to find funding for the program when the current funding expires. USDOT warned that it will reduce reimbursements for transportation programs as early as June if Congress does not specify new funding for the program. For the past several years, transportation tax revenue flowing into the highway trust fund is \$13 billion less than actual federal transportation spending, requiring Congress to supplement the program. If Congress does not want to use Treasury funds to make up the different between tax revenues and expenditures, they will need to find another source of funds to continue transportation spending at current levels or impose major cuts, as threatened by USDOT.

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### Foxx Announces Ladders of Opportunity Pilot

USDOT's Ladders of Opportunity Program examines the transportation infrastructure choices made at the federal, state, and local levels and how they can impact community vitality and create employment opportunities. Secretary Foxx announced the launch of a Ladders of Opportunity Empowerment Pilot Program called [LadderStep](#), which will provide [technical assistance](#) to seven cities to help them foster sustainable economic development through transportation projects.

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### House Appropriations Released THUD Bill

The House Committee on Appropriations released the FY 2016 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) funding bill, which includes funding for USDOT. The bill allocates a total of \$55.3 billion in discretionary funds to USDOT, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies, which represents a \$25 million increase from current spending. While the Federal Aviation Administration, the Maritime Administration (MARAD), and various transportation safety programs throughout USDOT would benefit from an increase in funding allocation set forth in this bill, other grant programs and agencies like the Federal Railroad Administration and FTA would suffer a severe cut in allocated funding compared to FY 2015. House THUD Subcommittee Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) explained the decreases in allocations as "cutting wasteful programs" and supporting "critical infrastructure and housing needs by focusing on core operations."

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## Funding Opportunities

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### Gateway Grant Applications

The **Alabama Power Foundation** is accepting Gateway Grant Applications through June 26, 2015. Cities, towns and communities of all sizes can apply for up to \$2,000 toward the purchase of community signage. Access the online application [HERE](#). Suitable locations must be highly visible and a logical entry to the community. The funding must be used for signage only and cannot be

used for landscape materials or design services. If the cost of the project exceeds \$2,000, you will be asked to provide sources of other funding to ensure the project is a success. Photos of the site and a drawing or representation of the proposed sign are also required. Applicants may also apply to have a sign refurbished.

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### **New Round of TIGER Announced**

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**

Spring cleaning...; It's fascinating to think of the technologies of the modern fossil fuel engine. This guy made a video, of sorts, of an engine he bought on ebay, and cleaned it up. You have to watch the entire video, and to think this is the heart and lungs of what we drive around in every day, and that's *Just for Fun*.



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

## In the News

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### Bill would open doors for services like Uber in Alabama



By [Mike D. Smith | msmith@al.com](mailto:msmith@al.com)

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

on April 28, 2015 at 3:36 PM, updated April 28, 2015 at 4:02 PM

A bill proposed in the Alabama Legislature would clear the way for online-based, rider services such as Uber and Lyft to operate in the state and prevent local governments from imposing additional regulations.

An Uber representative applauds the uniform regulations of the bill, but a mayor said bypassing local government participation removes control of which services operate from citizens.

HB 509, filed by Rep. Jack Williams, R-Vestavia Hills, would allow the companies to operate as "transportation network companies" -- separate from taxi or limousine services.

Such companies would be subject to Alabama Public Service Commission oversight.

The bill would require annual safety inspections for vehicles used, third-party background checks on drivers and a zero-tolerance policy for drug and alcohol use. The companies would also have to maintain trip records for a year, and keep driver records for at least one year.

However, the bill also would not allow municipalities to impose any fees or requirements on those companies, their drivers or the vehicles they use.

Within the past year, Uber has had a high-profile struggle to gain a foothold in Alabama cities.

In Birmingham this past summer, city council updated its ordinances for services like Uber and Lyft, much to the ire of Uber supporters who launched an aggressive social media campaign targeting the city.

The company entered the Auburn market but left after that city also tightened its requirements for vehicle-for-hire drivers including insurance and vehicle inspection. Continue [HERE](#).

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### National Bike Month has officially begun!

And it is so much more than 31 days in May. It's a celebration of bikes; a reminder to get rolling again; a gateway to riding more often; a time to evangelize the beauty of bikes; and much, much more.

Some dates this month should you keep in mind:

- **May 6:** [Bike to School Day](#)
- **May 10:** [Cyclofemme](#)
- **May 11-15:** [Bike to Work Week](#)
- **May 15:** [Bike to Work Day](#)
- **May 20:** [Ride of Silence](#)
- **May and beyond:** [National Bike Challenge](#)

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### MAP FOR MOBILE WORKSHOPS ANNOUNCED

# DESIGNING THE FUTURE WORKSHOP

MAY 18-21

Take part in a multi-day design event that will build off the Focus on the Future Workshop held in March, which drew nearly 500 participants. Help turn community ideas into a plan for Mobile.

**May 18**

(Monday)

6:30-8:30pm

## HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Come out and draw your vision for the future of Mobile.



**May 19-20**

(Tues.-Weds.)

9am-6:30pm

## OPEN DESIGN STUDIO

Drop-in to talk with the planning team and see the work in progress.



**May 21**

(Thursday)

6:30-8:30pm

## WORK-IN- PROGRESS PRESENTATION

See work completed during the week.



**THE GREATER GULF  
STATE FAIRGROUNDS**  
1035 CODY RD. NORTH  
MOBILE, AL 36608

Attend one or both programs at 6:30pm on May 18 and 21. You can also stop by during drop-in hours on May 19 and 20.

For more information visit:  
[MapForMobile.org](http://MapForMobile.org)



## Birmingham to Launch Electric-Assist Bike Share

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham announced the launch of the city's first bike share this fall, with a quarter of the 400-count bicycle fleet using electric-assist technology. The electricity provides pedaling assistance in hilly terrain, mainly outside of the downtown area. Birmingham was able to initiate the program with a \$2 million Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) federal grant.

## Transportation Research

### Policy Guidance on FTA's Capital Investment Grant Program

FTA invites public comment on [interim policy guidance](#) for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. This guidance provides a deeper level of detail on CIG's methods for applying rating criteria; evaluating New Start, Small Start, and Core Capacity Improvement projects; and proceeding through the process required by law. Comment period closes May 8<sup>th</sup>.

### A Sneak Peek ...

at a few of the technical sessions on the program at the ITE 2015 International Annual Meeting & Exhibit. For more session descriptions, an agenda, information on guest and technical tours, visit [the meeting website](#).

## **Free Webinar on Agency Leadership and Pedestrian Safety**

**CHAPEL HILL, NC** — The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) announce a free webinar about shifting agency culture to prioritize pedestrian safety:

### **Agency Leadership and Pedestrian Safety**

**Tuesday, May 5**

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time**

To register, click [HERE](#).

The session will focus on how state, local, and regional agencies have raised the profile of pedestrian safety issues and launched programs to prioritize pedestrian safety as a focus area and influence cultural changes within their agencies and departments. Panelists representing a variety of agencies will describe how pedestrian safety became a priority, the ways in which their departments have begun to shift attention to this issue, and how other agencies can follow a similar path to prioritize pedestrian safety issues.

The webinar will focus on what agencies have done to shift priorities and influence agency-wide culture, including information about programs and policies that have resulted from this culture change. Panelists will include Billy Hattaway (Florida Department of Transportation), Kevin Kokes (North Central Texas Council of Governments) and Chava Kronenberg (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency).

All of the panelists will then participate in a closing discussion.