



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, May 20, 2016

Volume 18, Number 8

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May 31st is Rural ADA Day, 10:00 AM in SARPC Board Room. Please register if you plan on attending (*See RPO Updates*). We will have speakers discussing what is required of an ADA Transition Plan. The Mobile MPO announced the availability of its **Mobile Urbanized FY 2016 TAP funding and the (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program ; both are due June 3rd**. There will be a MPO meeting on June 1, 2016. And we have a new TCC/CAC member! (see *Mobile MPO Updates*).

Have a great weekend!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

MPO Meeting June 1, 2016

There will be a MPO meeting on June 1st to go over the Draft Unified Planning Work Program. The TCC/CAC met and reviewed the document this past Wednesday. The Draft 2017 UPWP will be provided at the meeting and members will get a final copy later this summer. The UPWP must be adopted by September 15, 2016. We did not have a quorum on March 2nd, so those items that were on the March 2nd agenda will be on the agenda at the June 1st meeting in addition to a couple of TIP amendments. We have a new TCC/CAC member, Ms. Carletta Davis was appointed to the Citizen's Advisory Committee by the City of Prichard. We welcome her and look forward to working with her.

MPO FUNDING

The Mobile MPO apportionment was increased with the passing of the new FAST ACT Transportation Funding Bill. The per capita amount was \$6.8 Million per year under the bill MAP-21. That has been increased to \$7.1 million per year, which equates to being able to program almost \$9 million per year once the 20% local match is included. Our Attributable funding schedule has been moved around a bit; however, even though we had an increase in potential funding, we are still negative in terms of budgeting projects in year 2020 and 2021.

FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Designated Recipient for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 *Urban Area Funding* for the Mobile Urban Area. Our funding under the FAST ACT has been increased to \$314,000 annually.

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) is now accepting Applications for funding consideration through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. FTA provides funding for transit related services that assist the Mobile Urban Area's population of seniors & individuals with disabilities.

The application package provides specific eligibility requirements, match requirements, and eligible activities. The application and program management plan can be found at <http://www.mobilempo.org/5310.html>.

Completed grant applications must be submitted to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission by **noon on June 3, 2016**. Applications received after the established deadline will be returned. **Postmarked submissions will not be accepted.**

ADA TRANSITION PLANS

The FHWA has required that every city and county in the state have an ADA Transition Plan, and Urban Areas will have a one year deadline (July 20th, 2016). Each City in the Mobile MPO Study Area and Mobile County now has an appointed ADA Coordinator which creates a nine member ADA Subcommittee of the MPO. The inventory is complete for all urban local governments within the Mobile MPO, and the consultant is now working with the ADA Coordinators on the text of each of the ADA documents, grievance procedures, and the potential for a full ADA Transition plan, not just Public Rights of Way. The deadline for Mobile County and the cities within the Mobile MPO to have an adopted ADA Transition Plan for public Rights of Way, is July of this year.

RPO Updates

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
Americans with Disabilities Workshop (ADA)
May 31, 2016, 10:00 AM, SARPC Board Room

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, cities and counties must remove barriers to provide access to programs and services in existing municipal / county facilities; this includes sidewalks and ramps. The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission would like to provide a workshop to its RPO member governments to educate local agencies on the importance of having an ADA Transition Plan, and being compliant with the ADA.

Some common problems local governments may have (from ADA.GOV)

- Local governments often have failed to ensure that the whole range of the city's services, municipal buildings, and programs meet Title II's program access requirements.
- Local governments may believe that they have no duty to make changes to historically significant buildings and facilities to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Local governments often do not provide necessary curb ramps to ensure that people with disabilities can travel throughout the city in a safe and convenient manner.
- Local governments often fail to provide qualified interpreters or assistive listening devices for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at public events or meetings. In addition, local governments often fail to provide materials in alternate formats (Braille, large print, or audio cassettes) to individuals who are blind or have low vision.
- Local governments may fail to consider reasonable modifications in local laws, ordinances, and regulations that would avoid discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

We will have several speakers concerning ADA Compliance as it pertains to local governments. Please register with Monica Williamson at mwilliamson@sarp or (251)706-4613. Lunch will be provided, so there will be a \$15 registration fee cash or check. Please register by 5/28/2016.

Projects Within Region Let May 27th, 2016

Mobile County

For constructing the Demolition of Building Structures and Site Improvements on Old Water Street, Eslava Street, Royal Street, and Water Street in Mobile. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$163,960 to \$200,396

Baldwin County

There are no projects at this time.

Escambia County

There are no projects at this time.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

FHWA Publishes Policy Revision to Allow More Flexibility in Roadway Project Design

Just as Federal Highway Administrator Greg Nadeau had told state officials to expect, the FHWA has now finalized a trimmed-down list of design criteria for roads on the National Highway System in a change that will simplify many projects and give more design flexibility to state and local governments.

Instead of the 13 design criteria it had applied to all NHS roads since 1985, the FHWA said it will now apply just 10 criteria to design of high-speed roads like interstate highways and other major routes. For low-speed NHS routes, such as urban roads or rural roads that become main streets through smaller cities, it will require designers to use just two criteria.

Nadeau addresses the 2015 AASHTO annual meeting.

In doing so, the FHWA said its revisions "help reduce cost and speed up the design of roads and streets located in smaller towns and cities ... [and] allow state and local engineers to develop flexible design solutions that meet local travel needs and goals."

Nadeau, in a speech to AASHTO's 2015 annual meeting in Chicago on Sept. 28, had [told state department of transportation officials to expect a review](#) of the longstanding design criteria.

On Oct. 7, his agency published a Federal Register notice that [formally launched the review](#) and opened it for two months of public comments, saying it proposed "to refine the focus on criteria with the greatest impact on road safety and operation." Now, in a [May 5 Register notice](#), it has ended the process and altered decades of regulatory policy.

The FHWA also issued [guidance to clarify when design exceptions are needed](#), along with documentation requirements, in a guidance memorandum that transmits the policy to its field offices.

Bud Wright, AASHTO's executive director, said the change in FHWA policy "is a welcome move toward more flexibility for state and local agencies to design roads that fit into their surroundings, balancing safety and operational goals for all modes of travel."

In the Register notice last October, the FHWA had proposed eliminating three criteria – bridge width, vertical alignment and lateral offset to obstruction – from its list of controlling design criteria. It also proposed renaming three others.

After reviewing comments, the FHWA said the result is that it will apply 10 controlling criteria to the design of "high-speed" roads on the NHS for traffic operating at 50 mph or faster. Those criteria are design speed, lane width, shoulder width, horizontal curve radius, super-elevation rate, stopping sight distance, maximum grade, cross slope, vertical clearance and design loading structural capacity.

On "low-speed," non-freeway NHS roads designed for traffic below 50 mph, the FHWA will now require only the criteria of design speed and design loading structural capacity.

The FHWA added: "The overwhelming support for changes to the controlling criteria indicate that the changes will support agency and community efforts to develop transportation projects that support community goals and are appropriate to the project context."

Senate aims to get back on track to pass the FY2017 funding bill

In its third attempt, the Senate aims to get back on track to pass the FY2017 funding bill and return to so-called "regular order" rather than pass last minute omnibus bills to avoid end of the fiscal year deadlines. This afternoon, the Senate cleared the last procedural hurdle and voted to approve the FY2017 Energy-Water appropriations funding measure after dropping a controversial amendment impacting the US –Iran nuclear arms deal.

Up next will be the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies budget bill, which currently includes another controversial provision requiring a 34-hour break from driving after 73 hours of work. The change modifies language contained in the 2016 THUD bill and could hold up debate on the legislation. Lawmakers may try to include money to combat the Zika virus, as well.

Also in appropriations, the [Senate subcommittee agreed](#) to let the U.S. Department of Homeland Security shift funding to help TSA manage long summer airport lines.

On the House side, the FAA bill has made no further progress and Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) is continuing to stick to his goal of privatizing air traffic control.

Funding Opportunities

FRA Announces \$25 Million Available for Rail Infrastructure Safety Upgrades Administration has requested \$2.3 billion in FY2017 budget: due June 14th

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) today announced that it is accepting applications from local governments, states and railroads for \$25 million in competitive grants to increase rail safety. Applicants can request funds for safety improvements to railroad infrastructure, including railroad crossings, track, tunnels, bridges, yards and other areas. The funding is made available from the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act that funds DOT.

"As the country's population increases, rail will play a larger role in transporting more people and more freight. To do that safely, we must invest in our rail infrastructure," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "These funds will help address some of the improvements that are essential for safe, reliable, and efficient railroad operations, and I encourage applications that achieve the maximum benefits possible with this limited funding."

FRA will accept applications until 5 PM EDT on June 14, 2016.

"To safely move tons of freight and millions of passengers each day in this country, we need to continually invest in safety. These dollars will help get us closer to that goal," FRA Administrator Sarah E. Feinberg said. "We hope to receive applications that can make these limited funds go as far as possible."

The Railroad Safety Infrastructure Improvements Grant program can fund safety improvements to railroad infrastructure, but the focus of a project must be safety improvements. This includes the acquisition, improvement, or rehabilitation of intermodal facilities; improvements to track, bridges, and tunnels; upgrades to railroad crossings; and the separation of railroad crossings and roads.

FRA requested a total of \$2.3 billion for rail infrastructure safety upgrades as part of the President's Fiscal Year 2017 budget proposal. This includes \$520 million for competitive local rail facilities and safety project grants and \$1.8 billion for competitive rail infrastructure and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance grants.

2016 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Announcement - due June 3, 2016

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as the recipient of Urban Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, is announcing the availability of the FY 2016 TAP funding. The maximum amount that can be applied for with Mobile Urbanized TAP funds is \$200,000 (federal) and the minimum match is 20%. Due to limited funding, only one application per entity will be accepted, and **only cities and counties that are members of the Mobile MPO may apply.**

New this round of funding is that estimates for the application's budget must be developed by a professional engineer registered in the State of Alabama.

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.

Ten (10) copies of the application are due no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, June 3, 2016. Applications (paper only) are due to the Transportation Planning Department of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) at:

SARPC
110 Beauregard Street, Suite 207

Mobile, AL 36602

You can pick up an application at our offices, or we can mail you the application and guidelines. Electronic versions of the applications are available online at www.mobilempo.org. Click the Mobile MPO tab, then the Transportation Alternatives tab.

EVERY PLACE COUNTS DESIGN CHALLENGE- Deadline June 3, 2016

The Ladders of Opportunity **EVERY PLACE COUNTS DESIGN CHALLENGE** seeks to raise awareness about bifurcated neighborhoods, identify innovative practices to reconnect communities, and inform the transportation life cycle.

Community Teams led by local and tribal government officials will compete to receive on-site technical assistance in a 2-day design session that seeks to improve access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for disconnected communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas with DOT and experts in the field.

Official Challenge Notice

Download the challenge notice with complete application information [HERE](#):
www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge/notice.

EDA releases FY 2016 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Funding Opportunity, announces new grant process to stream application process

EDA recently released the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) notice announcing the availability of funding through the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. The Public Works program is designed to provide funding for design, construction, or renovation of critical public infrastructure needed to create or retain jobs in a locality. The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides resources for both design, construction and renovation as well as technical assistance to support long-term job creation/retention in cases of sudden and severe economic events.

This funding solicitation also announced that EDA is moving towards a two-step application process where applicants can submit a proposal at any time to determine alignment with EDA priorities before submitting a full application. This means there are **no longer any quarterly deadlines for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs**. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact EDA's state representative to develop their project and EDA application. To learn more about EDA's grant programs and opportunities, please feel free to contact Diane Burnett at dburnett@sarpc.org.

Federal Highway Administration Announces \$60 Million in Grants for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies- Deadline June 3rd

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today announced \$60 million in grants to fund cutting-edge transportation improvement technologies that will improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure return on investment.

"This program will take technological innovation to a new level and help to make the entire transportation network more reliable for commuters, businesses, and freight shippers," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "An efficient transportation system is the foundation of a strong economy."

The new program—Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program (ATCMTD)—is aimed at addressing the concerns outlined in *Beyond Traffic*, the USDOT report issued last year that examines the challenges facing America's transportation infrastructure over the next three decades, such as a rapidly growing population and increasing traffic. Gridlock nationwide is expected to increase unless changes are made soon.

"Innovative technologies offer exciting solutions that can help meet the challenges outlined in *Beyond Traffic* and can improve safety and efficiency of transportation across the nation," said Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau. "This new program will help harness and support these technologies and push the boundaries of what is possible for the future of transportation in our country."

ATCMTD technologies are intended to improve the return-on-investment of safety, efficiency, system performance and infrastructure improvements, including the enhanced use of existing transportation capacity. The awards may be used for projects that use real-time traveler information, traffic data collection and dissemination, vehicle-to-infrastructure and an array of other dynamic systems and intelligent transportation system technologies.

ATCMTD was established under the "Fixing America's Surface Transportation" Act. State departments of transportation, local governments, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations and other eligible entities are all invited to apply under the program.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published today is available at www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/funding.cfm

For more information, click [HERE](#).

Transit Core Capacity Improvement Projects

FTA announced the availability of \$20.5 million in competitive grant funds to support comprehensive planning associated with new fixed guideway and core capacity improvement projects that are seeking or have recently received funding through FTA's Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program. The grant funds are provided through FTA's Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning. Please see the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) and a summary of the funding opportunity with links to

application materials is available on the [FTA website](#). **Applications are due at midnight Eastern time on June 13, 2016.**

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces \$266 Million Funding Opportunity to Improve Bus Service Nationwide - deadline May 31st, 2016

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the opportunity to apply for approximately \$266 million in competitive grant funding for bus programs nationwide. The funding consists of \$211 million in grants for buses and bus facilities projects, as well as \$55 million specifically for FTA’s Low and No Emission (Low-No) bus program, which promotes technologically-advanced and environmentally-friendly buses. These investments will help advance the President’s vision for a cleaner, 21st century transportation system that reduces carbon emissions while expanding transportation options for families.

“Transit buses are a lifeline to opportunity for countless Americans, but too often these buses are outdated and unreliable,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “As demand for transit grows and our nation’s population continues to expand, these much-needed funds will help bring communities the latest technologies to strengthen and improve their bus infrastructure.”

Eligible projects include those that replace, rehabilitate, lease, and purchase buses and related equipment as well as projects to purchase, rehabilitate, construct or lease bus-related facilities, such as buildings for bus storage and maintenance.

“Our state and local partners across the country will benefit from the increased funding and flexibility available through this program,” said FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan. “With a large and growing maintenance backlog throughout the public transportation industry, it is vital for local agencies to have additional resources to address their community’s needs.”

FTA will award the grants to eligible transit agencies, state transportation departments, and Indian tribes on a competitive basis. Projects will be evaluated by criteria outlined in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), including the need for investment in bus transit systems, benefits to the community (including economic and workforce development), implementation of low and no-emission technologies, and integration with local and regional long-term planning.

Transportation contributes about 27 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, and the Administration has committed to major reductions in emissions. The FTA funds to help public transportation agencies purchase advanced technology, clean and efficient buses will help to reduce transportation emissions.

The Low-No Bus Program is a down payment on the administration’s 2017 budget proposal. Over a 10-year period, the “21st Century Clean Transportation Plan” invests an average of nearly \$20 billion per year in new funds to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide new ways for families to get to work, to school, and to the store. The Budget would expand transit systems in cities, fast-growing suburbs, and rural areas; make high-speed rail a viable alternative to flying in major regional corridors; modernize our freight system; and expand the successful Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program to support high-impact, innovative local projects.

The [Fixing America’s Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#), passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in December 2015, restored FTA’s competitive Bus & Bus Facilities Program, authorizing it through 2020. The FAST Act also made the Low-No program, previously funded and managed under FTA’s research programs, a subset of the larger competitive bus program.

The previous round of Low-No funding was [announced](#) in September 2015, and project selections are expected in the coming months.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces \$5.3 Million Funding Opportunity to Improve Mobility Focused on Healthcare

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced the availability of \$5.3 million in competitive grant funds to improve public transportation options that increase access to healthcare for those who lack good transportation choices.

“We know it can be challenging for many people to travel to medical appointments, and missing them can lead to re-hospitalizations and poorer health,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “This new grant opportunity sets the stage for transit agencies and community organizations to develop local solutions that provide ladders of opportunity, improve health outcomes, and reduce health care costs.”

FTA’s Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants will help build partnerships between health, transportation and other service providers to develop strategies that connect patients with public transportation options. A [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) appeared in today’s Federal Register.

The grants will further FTA’s Rides to Wellness initiative, which emphasizes public transportation as a strategy for people to access health services, resulting in greater preventive care, fewer unnecessary hospital readmissions, and lower costs. The initiative focuses on improving outcomes for those with chronic conditions and ensuring that at-risk populations can get to wellness visits, healthy food, and community services.

In part to help people take advantage of the healthcare expansion made possible by the Affordable Care Act, Rides to Wellness Coordinated Access and Mobility grants will encourage partnerships between public transportation agencies and the healthcare industry to devise solutions to access challenges.

“We’re excited at this opportunity to fund creative ideas that will result in solutions to the healthcare transportation puzzle,” said FTA Acting Administrator Therese McMillan, who launched the Rides to Wellness initiative last year. “We know that when people have consistent, affordable transportation options to get to their healthcare providers, they receive appropriate preventive care instead of using emergency rooms and suffer fewer costly setbacks.”

The grants will focus on communities demonstrating mobility management, technological solutions, and effective partnerships. Grant

applicants must include participating groups with stakeholders from the transportation, healthcare and human service sectors.

The [Fixing America's Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#), signed into law in December, authorizes a pilot program for innovative coordinated access and mobility that augments FTA's Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program. The FAST Act initiated the program with an initial \$2 million in first-year funding, expanding to \$3.5 million per year by Fiscal Year 2019. FTA supplemented the pilot program with funds from FTA's Research Program.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx Announces Notice of Funding Availability for Infrastructure Projects

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced the availability of credit assistance for critical infrastructure projects across the country through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. Secretary Foxx encouraged states and cities across the country to submit letters of interest for direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit through TIFIA as a result of the recently enacted Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

"The TIFIA credit program has a strong record of success in stimulating local economies and bringing critical transportation projects to communities that need them," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "This year, the added flexibility and streamlined review process should make it easier for a variety of applicants to take advantage of the funding opportunities, and to bring significant infrastructure developments to their neighborhoods."

The FAST Act authorizes \$1.435 billion in capital over five years for the TIFIA credit assistance program. Historically, one dollar of TIFIA Program funds supported a TIFIA loan of approximately 14 dollars and resulted in infrastructure investment of up to 40 dollars, when taking into account other state, local and private sector investments.

A wide range of surface transportation infrastructure is eligible for TIFIA credit assistance, including highways, passenger and freight rail, public transit, intermodal freight facilities, and international bridges and tunnels. The FAST Act expands eligibility to include transit-oriented development and the capitalization of a rural projects fund within a state infrastructure bank.

In addition, for eligible small projects, the FAST Act allows TIFIA to reserve funding to offset the fees charged to applicants by TIFIA for financial and legal services. Because of the flexibility provided by the TIFIA programs, many qualified, small-scale and large-scale projects that might otherwise be delayed or shelved can move forward quickly, providing an immediate boost to jobs while laying a foundation for continued economic growth.

To date, the TIFIA program has provided \$22.7 billion in credit assistance to support more than \$82.5 billion in transportation infrastructure investments to help build 56 major transportation projects around the country. Updated information regarding TIFIA's loan portfolio is available [here](#).

DOT's Build America Transportation Investment Center (BATIC), which was announced in 2014, has expanded TIFIA's ability to meet the needs of the nation's transportation system. BATIC serves as a single point of contact and coordination for states, municipalities, and project sponsors looking to utilize federal transportation expertise, apply for federal transportation credit programs, and explore ways to access private capital in public private partnerships (P3s). Since BATIC's formation, DOT has closed over \$8 billion in financing to support \$21 billion in projects.

BATIC has also increased the number of non-traditional DOT credit program applicants, most significantly TIFIA-eligible inside-the-gate port projects. BATIC has facilitated interdepartmental coordination for mega-projects that need to access multiple DOT credit programs. It is also providing project finance capacity building resources for states and municipalities in conjunction with the BATIC Institute: An AASHTO Center for Excellence, which includes best practices papers, a P3 case study webinar series, and peer to peer exchanges on finance and development.

The TIFIA Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is available [here](#). Additional information about the TIFIA program is available at <http://www.transportation.gov/tifia>.

For more information, click [HERE](#).

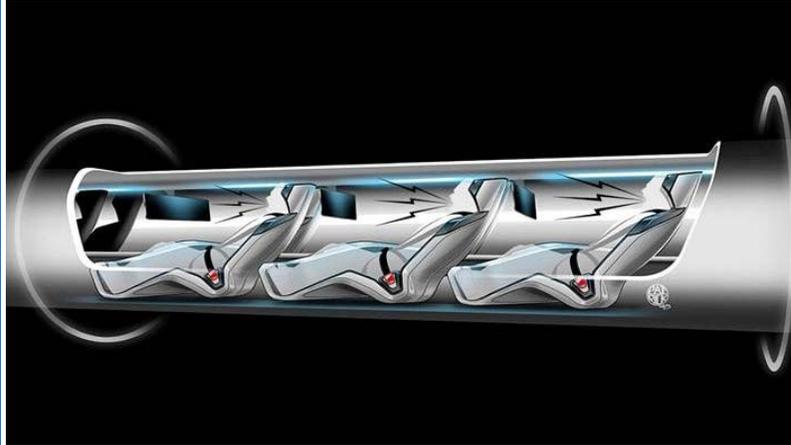
Industrial Access Road and Bridge

Industrial access funds are intended to provide adequate public access to new or expanding distribution, manufacturing and industrial firms. The industry must be committed to new investment and the creation of new jobs. The new access must be on public right of way for public use (state, city or county) and the project sponsor (city or county) must maintain the completed facility unless the facility consists of turn lanes, crossovers, etc., that are located on state highways. Industrial access funds are limited to construction, construction engineering and inspection costs. The project sponsor is responsible for all preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation costs.

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

Just For Fun

New Super-Fast Transport System Powered By Passengers' Screams



SAN FRANCISCO—Entrepreneur Elon Musk recently conducted the first test run for a revolutionary Hyperloop transportation system, which would seat riders in vacuum-like tubes, launch them from Los Angeles to San Francisco, and would be powered solely by the screams of its terrified passengers. “With zero negative effects on the environment, the Hyperloop could cut travel times in half, or even by two thirds, depending on how loud passengers’ shrieks and pleas for help are,” said Musk, adding that special turbines will convert the horrified screams of its riders into kinetic energy, which would then propel the capsule at record speeds toward its final destination. “If passengers are terrified enough to scream in abject terror the entire duration of the ride—and they probably will, knowing that even the slightest malfunction will cause their flesh to peel off their bodies—an hour-and-a-half trip from New York City to San Francisco could be a reality.” Musk added that his team is still working on technology that would power the rapid transportation tubes with both crying and silently praying for the trip to be over.

In the News

Proposed I-1- Mobile River Bridge considered on the five infrastructure emergencies for the country

Advocates for investing in the nation’s infrastructure are hesitant to single out certain projects as deserving priority over others, arguing that sustained funding and attention is needed equally across the board. But there are some crumbling structures threatening both the economy and public safety that are just too urgent not to point out. Here are five transportation projects around the country that experts believe are in dire need of repair:

- The Brent Spence Bridge
- Washington’s Metrorail system
- The Gateway Rail Tunnel project
- The I-10 Bridge**
- San Francisquito Creek bridges

<http://thehill.com/policy/transportation/279878-five-big-infrastructure-emergencies>

FTA Releases Asset Management Guide for Small Providers

SOURCE: FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) MAY 19, 2016

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the U.S. transit industry are working to improve the understanding and practice of Transit Asset Management (TAM), which is now a national effort. In keeping with the shift to balance building transit infrastructure with maintaining transit assets, TAM is a strategic approach to managing capital assets. TAM focuses on enabling better decision-making based on quality information and well-defined objectives. By leveraging data to improve investment decisions, TAM improves reliability, safety, cost management, and customer service.

FTA’s recently published “Asset Management Guide for Small Providers” describes what TAM means for small providers and is designed to help agencies develop plans to improve the management of transit assets while meeting the intent of federal requirements. The guide includes a template for small providers to help develop their TAM plans according to best practices.

In the most recent National State of Good Repair Assessment, FTA found an estimated backlog of more than \$86 billion in deferred maintenance and replacement needs. Helping transit agencies maintain bus and rail systems in a state of good repair is one of FTA’s highest priorities. In 2012, FTA published a companion report, the Asset Management Guide, which focuses on the management of transit investments and provides guidance for how agencies can apply appropriate asset management business processes.

FASTLANE Grant Applications Totalling Nearly \$9.8 Billion 212 Applications Received for Infrastructure Projects

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation has received 212 applications totaling nearly \$9.8 billion for grants through the newly-created Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant program.

The huge wave of interest in the first year of this program – with states and localities requesting over 13 times more funding than was available through FASTLANE – underscores the continuing need for infrastructure investment across the country.

“Transportation creates jobs and makes jobs of the future possible. We know there is pent up demand for projects that will speed up the delivery of goods and make America even more competitive. Today, we have even more evidence,” said Secretary Foxx. “We’re going to do our best to support high impact transportation projects that will lay a new foundation for job creation and exporting American made goods throughout the world.”

Of the 212 applications received, 136 represent projects in urban areas, while the remaining 76 would support rural projects. The deadline for submitting applications was April 14, 2016. The Department of Transportation is currently reviewing all eligible applications.

The FASTLANE program was established in December 2015 as part of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act to fund critical freight and highway projects across the country. FASTLANE grants provide dedicated funding for projects that address major issues facing our nation’s highways and bridges. For the first time in the U.S. Department of Transportation’s 50-year history, the program establishes broad, multiyear eligibilities for freight infrastructure, including intermodal projects.

FASTLANE grants will address many of the challenges outlined in the USDOT report Beyond Traffic, including increased congestion on the nation’s highways and the need for a strong multimodal transportation system to support the expected growth in freight movement both by ton and value. It is also in line with the Department’s draft National Freight Strategic Plan released in October 2015, which looks at challenges and identifies strategies to address impediments to the efficient flow of goods throughout the nation.

For more information about FASTLANE grants, please visit <https://www.transportation.gov/FASTLANEgrants>

Transportation Research

Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development

Posted on: May 20, 2016 by Carrie Kissel

In March 2016, the NADO Research Foundation held a focus group on the link between transportation and economic development, and how state departments of transportation and regional planning and development organizations can work together to better plan for those issues in an integrated way. The focus group participants included regional, state, and federal agency staff and others with experience in both transportation and economic development programs. During the conversation, the focus group participants developed a definition of economic development that emphasizes doing economic development and transportation planning differently, and can be used to help frame related planning efforts:

Economic development in transportation involves deliberate interventions to produce tangible benefits that are specific to the context, are sustained over time, and make a place more resilient.

This new report, [Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a National Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development\(PDF\)](#), explores how the participants’ definition of economic development can be applied in transportation planning. The report documents the themes of the focus group discussion, including economic development impacts, resilience, and state department of transportation (DOT) and regional planning and development organization roles in working together. Read about the highlights of the discussion and about noteworthy practices shared by participants that can institutionalize consideration of transportation and economic development together.

Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning

FHWA released a new [report](#) for transportation practitioners and decision-makers on considering equity in transportation planning. The paper defines equity in the bike and pedestrian program context, highlights recent research, and shares best practices and resources for fixing inequity.

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