



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, May 8, 2015

Volume 14, Number 5

## In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET APRIL 24th, 2015
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

## 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

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## PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS FOR DOWNTOWN MOBILE NEXT WEEK

Toole Design Group will be here all next week to conduct public meetings / charrettes to gain input on how to improve walkability/bicycling ability in downtown Mobile as part of the Downtown Mobile Mobility Study, please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. A **new round of FTA 5310 grants** through ALDOT (See Funding Opportunities). Only eight legislative days remain until Congress takes an extended Memorial Day break, what are they going to do about out Transportation Bill? (see *Legislative Updates*). [Map for Mobile](#) meetings announced and next week is Bike to Work Week, see *In The News*. It's Mother's Day weekend, so make them feel special, because they are...

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



## Downtown Design Workshop Offers Opportunity to Participate

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, in close coordination with the City of Mobile, the Downtown Alliance, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee, has embarked on a study focusing on non-motorized mobility for Downtown Mobile, Alabama. The purpose of the study is to consider bicycle and pedestrian safety and connectivity within the downtown area and along the radial connections to the Henry Aaron Loop.

Toole Design Group, the nation's leading planning, landscape architecture, and engineering firm specializing in bicycle and pedestrian transportation, has been hired to lead the Downtown Mobile Non-Motorized Mobility Study and will hold a Downtown Design Workshop May 11-14, 2015. The workshop will begin with a drop-in public meeting from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on Monday, May 11, 2015 to seek public input. The public meeting will be held at the Government Plaza Media Center, located at 205 Government Street, Mobile, Alabama 36644. Meeting participants will be provided several interactive opportunities to provide input regarding their desires for non-motorized transportation in downtown.

The Downtown Design Workshop will continue throughout the week with the design team performing fieldwork, conducting traffic analysis, developing concept solutions and associated graphics, holding stakeholder meetings, and interacting with the public throughout downtown. Emphasis will be on improving intersection safety, walkability and bikeability of downtown, connections between major destinations, and the character and functionality of the Broad Street Corridor. The workshop will culminate on Thursday, May 14, 2015 with a public presentation of the design products that have been developed throughout the week. This summary meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at The Temple Downtown located at 351 St. Francis Street, Mobile, Alabama

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36602.

Please contact the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission at [transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org) or 433-6541, or visit [www.mobilempo.org/Mobility\\_Study.html](http://www.mobilempo.org/Mobility_Study.html) as the Study progresses.

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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>

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### **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](#).

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### **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/>

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

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

[What's Under Construction?](#)

## **Legislative Updates**

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### **Congress Inching Toward Extension**

Only eight legislative days remain until Congress takes an extended Memorial Day break, leaving limited time to extend the nation's expiring transportation program. Prospects for a "free extension" through July remain in play, as money for the program will not run out until August. Some House members, however, want an extension that lasts through the end of the calendar year to give lawmakers time to write and pass a new, long-term bill. This idea gained currency this week when Senate Finance Committee Chair Orrin Hatch (R-UT) indicated that he is looking for the \$11 billion necessary to keep the program operating through the end of the year. Hatch also indicated that an extension may not happen until June. Some Senate Democrats voice opposition to this approach. Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) earlier this week threatened to hold up work on a free trade bill until a highway bill extension is in place.

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## Wyden-Hoeven Infrastructure-Bond Plan

Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) introduced the Move America Act of 2015 (S 1186) as a plan to facilitate private investment in public infrastructure by using private-activity debt for transportation projects. While companies use private-activity bonds to borrow in the municipal market, there is a debt limit of \$15 billion for states and localities to issue on behalf of companies responsible for constructing and operating transportation infrastructure. The Move America bill would amend that limit to authorize up to \$180 billion in tax-exempt bonds over ten years. Similarly, Representative Todd Young (R-IN) is formulating legislation that would double the cap on bond issuance from \$15 to \$30 billion. The bill would also provide up to \$45 billion in infrastructure tax credits to match private-equity investment, which would give states the leeway to either sell the credits for capital or allocate the credits to private infrastructure project sponsors. According to Senator Hoeven's staff, the Move America measure would cost \$10-\$15 billion over ten years.

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## White House: Prepare for climate change in infrastructure planning

The Obama administration is convened local and state leaders and experts Tuesday to encourage infrastructure planning to incorporate climate change preparation.

The administration is hoping that along with factors like population and economic growth, local and state governments can think of a changing climate when they build highways, bridges, transit and other projects.

Jeffrey Zients and Christy Goldfuss, advisers to President Obama on economic and environmental policy respectively, explained the effort in a Tuesday blog post.

"It's not just population and economic growth that will put pressure on U.S. infrastructure," they wrote. "Climate change will also test the strength and endurance of the highways we drive on, the airports we fly out of, and the dams, reservoirs, canals and water facilities that provide water to our homes, businesses and farms."

The event fits in with a key strategy in Obama's second-term climate change push: to show Americans how climate change will affect their everyday lives and their backyards, and to either help them cope with the effects or show them the great effort that is necessary to cope with rising sea levels, hotter weather and other changes that scientists are forecasting.

It also comes as the Obama administration and Congress once again try to find a way to pay for the hundreds of billions of dollars of infrastructure improvements, maintain and new facilities are needed to help the country thrive.

## Funding Opportunities

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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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### 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.

## Just For Fun

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**Don't text and walk... you might get ticket....**



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0i4vQVP\\_B6U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0i4vQVP_B6U)

This is actually meant to be a spoof, BUT apparently these lanes really exist in Asia.... Here are a couple of examples why: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjVAC\\_vpzSI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjVAC_vpzSI)

## In the News

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### **Gulf Shores to pursue grant for \$13.5M project to add pedestrian bridge over canal, enhance Waterway District**



By [Marc D. Anderson | manderson@al.com](mailto:manderson@al.com)

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

on May 05, 2015 at 3:37 PM, updated May 06, 2015 at 9:27 AM

Seeking to open new routes for drivers and pedestrians, and stabilize its economy for the long haul, Gulf Shores hopes to net federal grant dollars to underpin an estimated \$13.5 million infrastructure project along the Intracoastal Waterway.

On Monday, the City Council is expected to authorize staff members to pursue \$6.7 million through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant program, which goes by the name TIGER.

The city would apply the grant to a project encompassing and connecting the two sides of the [Waterway Village District](#). The grant would pay half of the project cost; the city, state and a private landowner would pay the rest.

Among the project elements:

- A new pedestrian bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway would link to the Alabama 59/Dr. W.C. Holmes Bridge.
- A new road would unite Waterway Village's north side with the Gulf Shores Business and Aviation Park.
- Improved streets and sidewalks would course throughout the village district, and better tie together the Alabama 59 bridge and Baldwin County 4.
- Property owner Jim Mattei would provide a 100 percent funding match for a private road opening the way for further development on the waterway's north side on tracts that he controls.
- There would be two new turn lanes south of the Alabama 59 bridge, and an extension of the southbound lane. Continue reading [HERE](#)

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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)



## Dig it: Daphne bay park founders invite public to celebrate 20th anniversary



By [Marc D. Anderson | manderson@al.com](mailto:manderson@al.com)

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

on May 07, 2015 at 6:13 PM, updated May 07, 2015 at 6:27 PM

A small, tenacious group that helped preserve one of Baldwin County's most historic spots is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

After forming in 1995, the Village Point Foundation worked with Daphne to save the city's last expanse of undeveloped bayfront land. Archeologists digging there have unearthed artifacts from native American times and from English, British and French settlements.

The acreage is also home to the two-century-old D'Olive Cemetery and to the famed Jackson's Oak. Standing over 90 feet high, with a crown spread of 125 feet, the tree is believed to more than 300 years old. According to local lore, Gen. Andrew Jackson stood there to rally his troops before marching to Pensacola in 1814.

The name Village Point comes from the 1702 French settlement in Daphne called The Village, itself a place of distant drumbeats. In 1781, Spanish allies of the fledging U.S. fought the English there

during the Revolutionary War. The War of 1812 and the Civil War brought more military activity.

"I was just telling somebody the other day when you look at that site, and you look at all the history, that is Daphne," said City Councilman John Lake, who helped establish the foundation.

The Village Point Foundation lobbied the city to begin buying property along Mobile Bay, pitching a vision to preserve it for future generations. In 1995, the city enacted its first lodging tax for just that purpose.

A year later, the city purchased 18 acres in two separate deals, totaling \$826,000, to create Bayfront Park, which sits not far from today's Publix shopping center. The purchase opened up more than 600 feet of shoreline for the public.

In following few years, the developer of Harbor Place subdivision planned a new phase of construction on 51 acres next to the city's waterfront acquisitions. On the acreage set for more homes and roads were Jackson's Oak and the cemetery that once served the old D'Olive Plantation. Continue reading [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 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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## **Transportation Research**

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### **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>.

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### **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](#).

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### **Register for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Webinar on Rides to Wellness: Creating Healthy Communities**

**When: Thursday, May 28th, 3-4PM EDT**

**What:** The goals of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) "Rides to Wellness" Initiative are to: increase access to care, improve health outcomes, and reduce healthcare costs. Approximately 3.6 million Americans miss or delay medical care due to transportation issues. By improving access we may be able to reduce hospital readmissions, as 18 percent of patients discharged from the hospital are readmitted within 30 days, one third within 90 days.

Rural residents tend to be poorer. On average, per capita income is \$7,417 lower than in urban

areas, and rural Americans are more likely to live below the poverty level. The disparity in incomes is even greater for minorities living in rural areas. Nearly 24% of rural children live in poverty. In addition, only about ten percent of physicians practice in rural America despite the fact that nearly one-fourth of the population lives in these areas. Given these challenges, FTA is focusing much of the Rides to Wellness activities on rural areas. Key initiatives include: Healthcare Access Design Challenge Grants, Technical Assistance, and more.

**Who:** Danielle Nelson, 5310 Program Coordinator at the Federal Transit Administration, will speak and answer your questions in a live Q&A session.

[Register Now!](#)

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

May 12, 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

May 28, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

June 3, 3:30 – 5:00 PM ET

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will provide three webinars 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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### **Linking Communities Together Through Innovative Regional Transportation Planning**

May 12, 5:30 PM ET

The American Planning Association will provide an overview of the innovative practices MPOs have adopted in how they work with communities to create long-range plans and how they work with local jurisdictions to implement land use, transportation, and development decisions that support regional outcomes. Mariia Zimmerman of MZ Strategies, LLC, will speak to emerging best practices found in research conducted through her company and highlighted in [The Innovative MPO](#) report published by Transportation for America. NARC's own Transportation Director Erich Zimmermann will focus on how MPOs and regional planners are innovating to provide better value to the communities they serve.

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### **Economic Competitiveness: Transit's High-Value in the Knowledge Economy**

May 13, 12:15 – 1:30 PM ET

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute and the American Public Transportation Association will host this [luncheon briefing](#) to discuss how transit investments affect American global economic competitiveness. Speakers Linda Watson, President and CEO of Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Joanna Turner, NARC Executive Director, will call on their experience to answer key questions such as "What role does transit play in the location choices of high-value technology firms, and why?" and "Does transit help these firms attract the workforce they want?" The briefing will be available on [live webcast](#).

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### **Innovative Approaches to Infrastructure Funding**

May 15, 2:00 – 3:15 PM ET

With federal transportation funding in jeopardy, regions and localities are exploring new options to address their infrastructure challenges. In collaboration with the Center for Transportation Excellence and the National League of Cities, NARC will host this [webinar](#) to highlight innovative and replicable approaches that regional and city leaders have taken to fund infrastructure projects. Speakers will explore ballot measure successes, user fee models, and VMT pilots, among other approaches best practices, and lessons learned.

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## **Accessible Transportation Technology Research Initiative (ATTRI) Applications Workshop**

May 18-19, 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM ET

The USDOT will inform and engage stakeholders on the progress of its [Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative](#) (ATTRI), which conducts research to improve the mobility of travelers with disabilities through the use of intelligent transportation systems. This workshop will identify technology solutions to address the travel needs of people with disabilities, older adults, and veterans, and will utilize participant feedback to identify specific technology applications for further development through the ATTRI program.

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## **Bridging the Gap between Freight, Infrastructure Protection and Traffic Incident Management**

May 28, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

FHWA and the Transportation Incident Management (TIM) Network will sponsor this [webinar](#) to examine the multi-agency traffic incident management practices being conducted in the Philadelphia area, and discuss how TIM stakeholders are working to engage freight transportation stakeholders in that region. Presenters will also share information about the New Jersey State Police's unique, federally funded Incident Management Unit and the important role it has played in dramatically reducing incident clearance times in the state.

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## **Advancing a Sustainable Highway System**

May 28, 2:00 PM ET – Access and Affordability

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.