



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, November 14, 2014

Volume 12, Number 7

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## Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones

Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

## Contact Us

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The Mobile MPO Attributable Schedule is out of balance because of carry over funds, again.... Also, we have given [Toole Design Group](#) Notice To Proceed on the *Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile*. Please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. Omnibus Spending Bill Tops Priority List, and there may be TIGER cuts; please see *Legislative Updates* and today's *Just For Fun* is for the dogs.. 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

### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Out of Balance

The funding category STP Attributable in the TIP is once again out of balance. Our carry over funds from previous years was reduced by almost \$2 Million from cost over runs on a project. We will have to schedule a TCC/CAC meeting to rebalance and an MPO meeting to follow. We have some other items to put on the agenda, but we may getting close to the Holidays.

### Non-motorized Mobility study for Downtown Mobile

We have given Toole Design Group Notice to proceed on the Non-motorized Mobility study for Downtown Mobile. The kick-off meeting (teleconference) is this Wednesday and there is a lot of work to be done and they have one year to complete it. If you would like to be stakeholder, please let me know. There is going to be plenty of time for public input as laid out in the scope of work [HERE](#).

### I-10 Mobile River Bridge

**Although the comment period is over, please stay tuned to the following web sites for details and information about the I-10 Mobile River Bridge.**

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/>

### DESTINATION 2040

The MPO Staff is continuing to develop the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan titled Destination 2040. The objective of the plan is to identify, to the maximum extent feasible, the multi-modal transportation improvements which will be needed in the Mobile urban area between now and the year 2040 in order to maintain an acceptable level of mobility. 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](#).

### Light at the end of the Tunnel

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I'm not talking about the I-10 Wallace Tunnels, I am talking about the FTA 5310 process. Our grant has received all the final stamps of approval and has been forwarded to DOL and they will:

[certify the grant on the proposed terms and conditions set forth in Attachment A unless it receives a sufficient written objection within 15 calendar days of the date of this referral. See 29 C.F.R. § 215.3(d).]

This is good news for those that were awarded FTA 5310 Urban Area funding through us. I know we are new at it, but I think it was a learning process for everyone....

## Projects Within Region Let November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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### Mobile/Baldwin County

- for constructing the Various Repairs to Bridges over the Delta River on I-10 . Length 6.079 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$10,770,562 to \$13,164,020 . A Bidding Proposal may be purchased for \$5.00. Plans may be purchased for \$110.00 per set.
- for constructing the Permanent Restoration of Damaged Sites at Various Locations as indicated in the plans.

### Baldwin County

- for constructing the Roundabout Installation on CR-64 at the intersection of CR-13 in Daphne. Length 0.132 mi.
- for constructing the Resurfacing, Guardrail, Traffic Stripe, and Signal Upgrades on I-10 (to include the ramps and side roads) from the east end of the Bayway Bridge to east of the SR-59 Interchange in Loxley . Length 9.221 mi.
- for constructing the Intersection Improvements to include Additional Turn Lanes (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, and Signals) on CR-65 at the intersection of SR-42 (US-98) west of Foley. Length 0.220 mi.

### Mobile County

- for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-17 (US-45) from north of the I-65 Interchange in Prichard to north of the intersection of SR-158. Length 5.240 mi.
- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-158 from just west of the I-65 Overpass to the intersection of SR-13 (US-43) in Saraland. Length 2.229 mi.

### Escambia County

- for constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on Sunset Drive from the junction of CR-1 to the junction of Virginia Drive in Atmore (Site #1); on Martin Luther King Junior Avenue from the Atmore City Limits to the junction of Northgate Drive (Site #2); on Virginia Drive from the junction of East Sunset Drive to the intersection of Northgate Drive in Atmore (Site #3); and on Northgate Drive from the intersection of SR-21 to the intersection of Virginia Drive in Atmore (Site #4). Length 4.877 mi.

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

## Legislative Updates

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### House Dems Push for Transit Tax Break:

Many U.S. House of Representatives Democrats plan to push for an increase in a tax break for commuters who take public transportation to work. Reps. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Tom Downs from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

(WMATA) urged Congress to increase the transit tax benefit to make it level with parking benefits. A Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) report indicated that setting the benefit at \$235 a month in 2015, with indexing for inflation thereafter, "is the proposal that is closest to being revenue neutral."

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#### **Tax Reform Becoming an Early Favorite:**

As a result of the new Republican majority, President Obama has already pitched funding a transportation bill with repatriated tax dollars. At a news conference on Wednesday, President Obama said "I think we can hone in on a way to pay for it through tax reform that closes loopholes and makes it more attractive for companies to create jobs here in the United States." Since Tuesday's election, the idea of using tax reform to pay for transportation has gotten some renewed attention; however, striking such a deal would require the kind of bipartisan cooperation that has eluded Congress recently. Many lawmakers believe that one-time revenue from a tax overhaul to fund infrastructure would not solve the country's long-term transportation funding needs. The current transportation reauthorization expires on May 31, 2015, so there is hope that an infrastructure agreement might be one of the early successes of the 114th Congress.

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#### **Republicans Urge President Not to Use Executive Authority:**

Last Friday, President Obama engaged in a "frank discussion" as Republicans urged the president not to use executive authority to act alone on significant issues in advance of the Republican-controlled 114th Congress. Sen. John Thune's (R-SD), expected to become Chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science, & Transportation Committee, talked with the president about a federal highway bill, Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, cybersecurity legislation, and telecommunications measures. Thune also mentioned rail congestion caused in part by trains transporting oil from North Dakota that makes it harder for South Dakota farmers to ship their crops to market.

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#### **Omnibus Spending Bill Tops Priority List:**

As Congress returns this week for a lame duck session, an omnibus spending bill is at the top of the priority list. The current continuing resolution expires December 11. Appropriators are likely to seek middle ground between the House and U.S. Senate versions of the Transportation-HUD spending bills, if leadership can gain support in the lame duck. The House measure, which passed the chamber in June, would provide \$70.2 billion for the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) but would slash the popular TIGER grant program from \$600 million this year to \$100 million. The Senate bill would fund U.S. DOT at \$71.7 billion and would appropriate \$550 million for TIGER.

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## Funding Opportunities

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#### **EPA – Assistance for Building Resilience in Your Community**

Applications Due: November 20, 2014

The Build Blocks for Sustainable Communities program aims to help communities adopt sustainable growth strategies. Through the program, communities will work to increase resilience to natural disasters and strengthen their economy, while protecting health and the environment. Communities may apply for assistance on the following topics: equitable development; infill development for distressed cities; bikeshare planning; sustainable strategies for small cities and rural areas; and flood resilience for riverine and coastal communities. Click [HERE](#) for details.

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#### **U.S. Forest Service – Community Forest Program Funding**

Deadline: January 16, 2015

The Community Forest Program is a grant program that authorizes the U.S. Forest Service to provide financial assistance to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. Click [HERE](#) for the funding opportunity.

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#### **HUD \$1 Billion National Disaster Resilience Competition**

Application Deadline: March 2015

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently launched a National Disaster Resilience Competition, which makes \$1 billion available to communities that have been struck by natural disasters in recent years. The competition promotes risk assessment and planning, and will fund the implementation of innovative resilience projects to better prepare communities for future storms and other extreme events. Representatives from eligible communities will have the

opportunity to attend Rockefeller-supported Resilience Academies across the country to strengthen their funding proposals. Click [HERE](#) to apply.

## Just For Fun

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Having a RUFF day, but a funny “tail” indeed....

Even though it is no longer the dog days of summer, you should never leave your pet in the car. Fern, an 18-month-old boxer, was filmed leaning back in the driver seat with her left paw resting on the steering wheel and repeatedly pressing the horn for 15 minutes after its owner spent too long in an art gallery. Maybe Fern was afraid someone was going to “boxer” in, but people passing by had to “paws” for a moment and take pictures and videos; and that’s *Just for Pun*.

CTRL + click on pic



## In the News

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**Here are the Coastal Alabama traffic areas to avoid during your commute on Thurs., Nov. 13**



By [Angela Levins | alevins@al.com](#)

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

on November 13, 2014 at 5:30 AM, updated November 13, 2014 at 5:35 AM

Mobile:

Roundabout: The intersection of Three Notch Road at Dawes Lane and Dawes Lane Extension could reopen to traffic by next week.

Satchel Paige Drive: Satchel Paige Drive between Government and Bolling Brothers Boulevard is closed to traffic. The road is being widened to a four-lane divided road. Work is expected to take about three months. The road project is part of the McGowin Park Shopping Center construction.

Pipe replacement project in downtown Mobile: The bypass pipe is being dismantled and should be cleared from the streets by week's end.

ALDOT Mobile County:

I-10: Resurfacing and bridge work from Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George C. Wallace Tunnel. Drivers should expect nighttime closures Sunday to Thursday from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. Work is expected to be completed next summer.

U.S. 90: From Halls Mill to Pine Hill Drive. Lane closures will be at night. Work is expected to be complete by December.

Welcome Center: The Welcome Center at the Alabama/Mississippi line is shut down until at least spring 2016.

ALDOT Baldwin County:

I-10: CR 68 connector to Baldwin Beach Express. Work is about 95 percent complete. Drivers may see an occasional lane closure on CR 83 for completing remaining work.

Little Lagoon Pass bridge remains under construction. ALDOT reports that the work is about 50 percent complete. There is a detour bridge next to the Little Lagoon Pass bridge. Expect minimal traffic delays.

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### **Crepe Myrtle Trail Awarded National Park Service Grant Grant to Mobile United will create a strategic plan for the implementation of the Crepe Myrtle Trail (CMT)**

Mobile, Ala. - Mobile United is pleased to announce that they are the recipient of a two-year planning and assistance grant through the National Park Service's Rails, Trail and Conservation Assistance Program. The grant will jump start planning and implementation of the Crepe Myrtle Trail.

Awarded through the National Park Service's Rails, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, the grant will provide staff assistance to engage stakeholders, plan the trails routes, create funding plans, and identify groups, individuals, business, local government officials, and nonprofits that will spearhead the project.

"The momentum and support behind the creation of a permanent Crepe Myrtle Trail is higher than it has ever been," said Mobile United Executive Director Katherine Pitman.

"More than a dozen organizations and 150 people participated in the inaugural Crepe Myrtle Trail Ride in June of this year and we're thrilled to be able to continue our work on this great project for Mobile. Mobile United is grateful for the assistance from the RTCA program to undertake this critical first step in engaging all stakeholders in this planning process," Pitman said.

What started as an idea in the 1990's, the Crepe Myrtle Trail arose as a solution to the lack of waterfront access in a waterfront City that aims to stretch a minimum of 14 miles worth of dedicated paths and shared lanes. The route begins at Three Mile Creek, runs through Downtown Mobile, hugs Mobile River, traverses the Peninsula of Mobile neighborhood and the beautiful shores of Mobile Bay and ends at the Dog River, while connecting at least seven existing parks, and other natural areas that have access.

## Transportation Research

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### **FHWA is offering an 8 hour workshop on the New FHWA Roadway Lighting Handbook.**

The purpose of the event is for participants to learn about roadway lighting design and the requirements from the new Handbook. Presentations and discussion will focus on:

*The impact of New Solid State LED Lighting technology*  
*Lighting Design Standards from the FHWA, AASHTO and the IES*  
*Warranting and the Impact of Lighting on Roadway Safety*  
*New Innovative approaches to Roadway Lighting Design*

The workshop presenters will be:

*Dr. Ronald Gibbons, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute,*  
*Paul Lutkevich, Parsons Brinckerhoff and*  
*Don McLean, DMD and Associates*

Date/Time: January 20th, 1pm – 5pm,  
January 21st, 8am to Noon

Questions? Joseph Cheung - FHWA Office of Safety  
202-366-6994 [Joseph.Cheung@dot.gov](mailto:Joseph.Cheung@dot.gov)

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The 2nd Annual Automated Vehicles Summit will be held on December 15-16 in Orlando.

<http://www.automatedfl.com/event/2014summit/>

**For questions and more information please contact:  
Ed Hutchinson [Ed.Hutchinson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Ed.Hutchinson@dot.state.fl.us)**

**Florida DOT  
Transportation Statistics Office Manager  
605 Suwannee Street MS 27  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0445**

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### **Webinar Invite: Using the ACS for Local Area Planning and Analysis: The 2014 Planning Database**

**WHEN: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014, 1–2 p.m. (EST) (GMT-5)**

**Space is limited.**

**Click the "Register Now" button below or go to:**

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/285409201>

**After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.**

The Census Bureau recently released the 2014 Planning Database (PDB) with selected 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS) and 2010 Census data for census tracts and block groups. These small area demographic, housing, and socioeconomic data may be useful to a wide range of ACS data users for planning and analysis. The PDB includes the 2010 Census mail return rate and a new "Low Response Score" (LRS) for each tract and block group, which measures the likelihood of census or survey participation.

In this webinar, Census Bureau staff will provide an overview of the 2014 Planning Database, describe how to access it, and discuss practical applications of the new LRS. The presentation will be followed by 10-15 minutes of questions and answers.

**Presenters:**

Nancy A. Bates, U.S. Census Bureau  
Julia Coombs, U.S. Census Bureau  
Travis Pape, U.S. Census Bureau  
Barbara C. O'Hare, U.S. Census Bureau

**Joining the online webinar is free.** Participants who choose to listen to the audio via telephone are responsible for their own standard long-distance rates.

**System requirements for attending the webinar:**

*PC-based attendees*

Required: Windows® 8, 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server

*Mac®-based attendees*

Required: Mac OS® X 10.6 or newer

*Mobile attendees*

Required: iPhone®, iPad®, Android™ phone or Android tablet

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