



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, November 21, 2014

Volume 12, Number 8

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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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The Transportation Planning Staff at SARPC would like to wish you all a very happy and safe Thanksgiving Holiday next week. As a reminder we will not be publishing a newsletter next Friday. We'll be back in your inbox the first Friday of December.

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



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 get 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 was this past Wednesday. Thank you to those who participated. If you would like to be stakeholder, please let us 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

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:

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[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 7th, 2014

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

McMillan Takes Step Toward Confirmation:

President Obama's nominee to run FTA, Therese McMillan, had a confirmation hearing before the Senate Banking Committee last week. She did not face any opposition during the hearing. Her confirmation is all but assured, and the only remaining question is whether it will happen during the lame-duck session or after the 114th Congress is seated in January. McMillan, who has served as Acting Administrator since January and has been with the agency since 2009, will play a key role in pressing Administration priorities as Congress undertakes reauthorization of highway and transit programs.

Rep. Shuster to Return as T&I Committee Chairman

Wednesday, Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA) was selected by the U.S. House of Representatives Republican Conference to serve again as Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I). The Democrats selected Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) to serve as the Committee's Ranking Member, which became necessary when Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) failed to win reelection. The Committee also released a document championing its successes during the 113th Congress, including a complete list of enacted legislation. You can read that document [HERE](#).

Executive Order on Immigration Could Impact Omnibus

President Obama's executive action on immigration is likely to impact passage of a broad fiscal year 2015 omnibus spending package. Senate Appropriations Ranking Member Richard Shelby (R-AL) said Obama's action "poisons the waters" on the omnibus. Republicans would likely attach an amendment to an omnibus attempting to prevent the President from acting, which would put passage of such a package in serious doubt. This executive action makes it more likely Congress will pass a shorter-term continuing resolution instead of a full omnibus.

Funding Opportunities

TD Green Streets: Urban Forestry Grants

Application Deadline: December 1

Members looking to implement urban forestry initiatives in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods are encouraged to apply for the recently announced *TD Green Streets Grant*. Communities can qualify for up to \$20,000 in funding to support the purchase of trees, planting assistance, maintenance, and education activities. To be eligible, your municipality must be a current [Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA-designated community](#). Click [HERE](#) for eligibility information.

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.

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.

HUD – Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants

Applications Due: February 9, 2015

The Choice Neighborhoods program supports locally driven strategies to address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Choice Neighborhoods is focused on three core goals:

Housing: Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood;

People: improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth with services and supports delivered directly to youth and their families; and

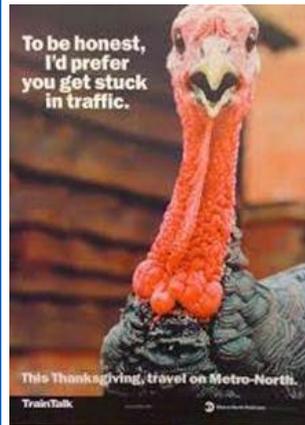
Neighborhood: Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices about their community.

Click [HERE](#) for more information

Just For Fun

Auto club AAA projects that 46.3 million people will travel at least 50 miles from home during the Thanksgiving weekend, a 4.2% increase over last year and the highest volume since 2007. Stay safe.

There's one turkey doing his best to stop traffic.....the Lansing Turkey! Watch his traffic stopping methods! [HERE](#)



In the News

Dauphin Island officials pitch \$58 million beach restoration project through oil spill funds

By [Dennis Pillion | dpillion@al.com](mailto:dpillion@al.com)

DAUPHIN ISLAND, Alabama -- Hoping to make one of Alabama's barrier islands a bit more of a barrier to winds, tides and major storms, Dauphin Island officials are hoping to secure oil spill restoration funding for a major beach rejuvenation project on the west end of the island.

"This is something that we've been looking at for over a decade," Dauphin Island mayor Jeff Collier said. "Knowing that the island is subject to erosion, we've been looking for ways to shore up and stabilize Dauphin Island proper."

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley announced Monday that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation had **funded a \$3.6 million study** to examine options for restoring Dauphin Island, in a step Collier called a "pre-requisite" for the type of major beach restoration project the island has been seeking for years.

"I think this study will get us to a point where we can find exactly what types of remedies we can employ to ensure that the island is here for the long term," Collier said. "Projects such as this have to be based on the best available science, that's part of the criteria. In talking with our state representatives and those with NFWF, this is something that will have to take place to meet those criteria."

Collier has his own ideas about what might be needed. He submitted a project proposal to the **Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council** for a beach restoration project estimated to cost \$58.6 million that would add up to 4 million cubic yards of sand dredged from the Gulf to a 4.25-mile stretch of beach on Dauphin Island's west end. It would extend the medium high-water shoreline more than 400 feet seaward and rebuild lost sand dunes and vegetation to add stability to the island.

"We fully understand the scope of (the proposal)," Collier said. "We know it's a very substantial type of a project to look at, but we also know that this is something that goes beyond the shores

of Dauphin Island."

"We protect, as a first line of defense, the Mobile County mainland communities. We also protect the oyster beds, the salt marshes that are critical to the juvenile shrimp, fish and crab communities which translates into our Gulf-wide seafood industry which translates into jobs and the economy."

Dauphin Island has shifted over the years due to natural erosion forces and man-made dredging of the Mobile Ship Channel by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The town recently created a web site www.restoredauphinisland.com, to promote its cause for a major restoration effort.

Coastal engineer Scott Douglass has studied Dauphin Island extensively, and performed some of the studies on which the proposal is based. He said the island is "sand-starved" because the depth of the ship channel prevents the natural sand replenishment that would otherwise occur.

"I'm convinced that if we don't do this, Dauphin Island is just going to continue to fall apart," Douglass said. "When the island breaches -- and it will breach in the next big hurricane, like it did in Katrina and Ivan -- the breaches will be bigger and deeper and eventually it will be multiple islands.

"That's the fate of all barrier islands that are starved for sand."

Hurricane Katrina divided the island in 2005, creating a gap that widened to 1.5 miles before it was patched with rock during the Deepwater Horizon spill response. The **sand has finally filled in** around that wall of rock, making it possible to walk along the beach to the west end of the island for the first time in nine years.

Douglass said that when Katrina split the island, the salinity of the water increased behind the island, damaging the oyster industry.

"We do know one thing about barrier islands, and that is that they can adapt very well to everything Mother Nature throws at them, if there's enough sand in the system and we don't cut off the long-term sand supply," Douglass said. "You can't cut off the sand supply without having long-term negative impacts."

Douglass believes that a successful restoration effort will have to add sand to the system.

"Sand would be put in that first four miles west of the **little red schoolhouse**," Douglass said. "It will continue to flow west forever, so it will be a long-term addition to the system.

"People say 'it's going to wash away,' but it's not going to wash away very fast, and it's going to wash right where we want it to. It's not really washing away, it's just moving down the beach the way sand is supposed to."

Alabama would not be alone if it decides to use oil spill recovery funds to restore barrier islands. Louisiana is using **\$320 million in Natural Resource Damage Assessment funds** to rebuild barrier islands off its coast, which is rapidly **losing land to the Gulf**.

"I don't understand why we would let our only barrier island fall apart," Douglass said. "And that's what we're doing."

Mayor Sandy Stimpson looks to next three years in office

LAGNIAPPE COVER STORY By: [DALE LIESCH](#) | November 19, 2014

The city (of Mobile) will look to make sections along Three Mile Creek into a greenway, or series of bike and pedestrian pathways, Stimpson said. The city hopes, at least, a portion of the greenway can be funded through money set aside because of the oil spill and would make the city accessible for cyclists and pedestrians from nearly the University of South Alabama campus to downtown. Read the full article [HERE](#).

Here are the Coastal Alabama traffic areas to avoid during your commute on Friday, Nov. 21

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

MOBILE, Ala. -- A look at the road projects underway in Mobile and Baldwin counties that drivers could run into during their commute.

Mobile:

Royal Street: Between Dauphin Street and Conti Street, work on the Van Antwerp building continues to hamper traffic from time to time. Be cautious of pedestrians and workers.

Roundabout: The intersection of Three Notch Road at Dawes Lane and Dawes Lane Extension could reopen to traffic by Nov. 25 according to Nancy Johnson with Mobile County.

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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.

ALDOT Mobile County:

Jackson Creek Bridge: Old Pascagoula Road is closed between Ramsey Road and March Road. Bridge being replaced. Project estimated to last a year.

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.

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.

An inspired idea for downtown Mobile: opinion

By [Mobile Editorial Board](#)

on November 21, 2014 at 6:30 AM, updated November 21, 2014 at 6:36 AM

For a while now, the green space called Mardi Gras Park in downtown Mobile has been an urban field ripe with the potential for something special. A proposal for an open-air market, unveiled this week by Mayor Sandy Stimpson, appears to be just what this property needs.

The mayor's plan calls for a permanent structure that would house as many as 40 vendors and would be flexible enough to host a variety of community gatherings and events. This would be no flea market, but would draw its inspiration from the New Orleans French Market and the Charleston City Market, described as the "cultural heart" of Charleston since 1804.

This park, though, would have a unique Mobile flavor. As envisioned by Holmes and Homes Architects, [Mobile Mardi Gras Market and Park](#) would draw on the city's rich Carnival history for statuary and naming opportunities throughout the space. Already, Mobilians have demonstrated that they will visit; the Market on the Square draws a good number of families to Cathedral Square on Saturdays throughout the fall.

The mayor deserves credit for inviting community input during the project's sneak peak at the History Museum of Mobile. Suggestions ranged from adding a playground and movie screen to the addition of food trucks. These ideas can be sorted out with an eye toward maintaining the park's family friendly tone.

Viewed more broadly, a bustling market could help lasso the southeastern edge of the downtown district, connecting the History Museum, Fort Conde, the Gulf Coast Exploreum and the Mobile Maritime Museum more closely to high traffic areas on Royal and Dauphin streets. Imagine the positive energy created when pedestrians pause between visits to attractions to shop at the market or picnic at the park.

Another beauty of the proposal is the absence of any real financial burden. The \$2 million initially needed would come from previously earmarked city funding and a Hearin-Chandler Foundation grant, demonstrating the wisdom of a public-private partnership.

For the last few years, the best use of Mardi Gras Park has been as a playground for families attending Mardi Gras parades downtown. The mayor's plan takes into account this natural use and builds upon it, with the potential to create something truly great for Mobile.

Transportation Research

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

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:
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ONLINE DIALOGUE: FTA Hosts Conversation on Private Sector Participation

October 22- November 26

The private sector participation provisions of MAP-21 require FTA to undertake actions, including a rulemaking, to promote more effective utilization of private sector expertise, financing, and operational capacity to deliver costly and complex new fixed guideway capital projects. FTA is conducting an online dialogue to engage grantees and other stakeholders to inform the rulemaking, as well as obtain feedback on FTA's proposed guidance on assessments and model contracts. Click [HERE](#) to include your remarks by the November 26 deadline.
