



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013

Volume 8, 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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There was a lot of support this week for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge, there is a BPAC meeting and Destination 2040 announced; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. It looks like the old pedestrian bridge over I-10 is moving closer to be removed; please see *Projects Let December 6<sup>th</sup>*, not a lot of movement in Congress this week in *Legislative Updates*, and this week's *Just For Fun* is this:



For the outdoorsmen, this weekend starts another deer season. So what does that have to with transportation? Plenty. See [\[HERE\]](#) as it might surprise you. The estimated number of deer collisions in Alabama last year was 26,862 [\[HERE\]](#). Drivers have to be alert for the animal that causes more deaths than any other animal in the US!

Have a great weekend!

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



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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### I-10 Mobile River Bridge

This week sprouted a lot of support for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. Most excitingly, was the Facebook page. It gained followers at rock star rate. After years of talking and debating, there is still a lot to do. The Federal Highway Administration is currently reviewing a report on how a new bridge will impact the environment (EIS). As soon as FHWA signs off on it, a draft EIS will be out and there should be public meetings on it. The draft EIS should be out this calendar year, and when it is, they will more than likely have a preferred route. Check out the [Build the Bridge Facebook Page](#), the [Fox 10 report](#) and a [petition](#) to build the bridge. We need this project to gain more momentum as the money is not yet there to build it, it has to come from somewhere, it is the **most important project in the State of Alabama**, and there are [other big projects](#) that also don't have funding that are gaining momentum.

### Destination 2040

The Transportation staff at the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission is announcing **DESTINATION 2040**. Destination 2040 is a public relations campaign to try and encourage public input into our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). For decades we have been doing the same thing, in terms of collecting public input in our plans. Most of the time it is difficult to get attendance to a public meeting concerning a long range plan. However, this LRTP we are going to ask the public: "Where do you want the roads to be widened", "Where do you want new transit routes?", "Where do you want the bicycle routes to be?", "Where do you think the growth projections should be?"

Destination 2040 is different because normally we ask the public for input after we have done the draft plan, to basically seek their approval of the plan. However, this will be a means to get the public involved with the development of the plan, and let their concerns be addressed in the plan from the very beginning. We have done the math, and we can tell you what the travel demand forecast models tell us in terms of where growth should go and what roads need to be built or widened. Anything the public wants us to test in the model, we can do that. So whatever future projects the public can conjure, we want to address them in the LRTP.

Two Destination 2040 meetings will be held on January 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 with a web page and plenty of chances to comment. We will keep you posted; please [see brochure](#).

## MPO Board Meeting Held

The Mobile MPO Board met Wednesday November 13<sup>th</sup> at the GM&O Building. Several new members were added to the MPO Board; newly elected Mayor Brett Dungan of Bayou La Batre, newly elected Mayor Sandy Stimpson of Mobile, Mobile Councilwoman Bess Rich, and Mobile Councilman Fred Richardson. Mayor Sandy Stimpson was also elected as the new Chairman of the MPO board. Ms. Paige Walding was appointed to the TCC/CAC by Mayor Howard Rubenstein of Saraland and Mr. Carl Butler was appointed to the TCC/CAC by Mayor Brett Dungan of Bayou La Batre. We welcome them and thank them for their participation.

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## Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting December 11<sup>th</sup> @ Noon

There will be a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> at noon in the board room of the GM&O Building. This will be a bring your own brown bag lunch meeting as usual. We will be holding elections for a new Chairperson. The Vice-Chair is currently Ms. Jessica Melton. The minutes of the last meeting and the agenda will be made available soon. If you have anything you would like to add to the agenda please contact Tom Piper. These meetings are open to the public to attend.

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## Freight Surveys

Staff is currently updating our freight data. This consists of surveying over 200 businesses and industries in the Mobile area that use freight, or generate freight. This is no easy task, but it is data that is not available from any other resource. ***If you have any issues concerning the movement of heavy trucks, we want to hear about them.***

Several years ago, in partnership with the University of Alabama at Huntsville (UAH), SARPC layered freight into our existing Long Range Plan. The original intent was to create a single, comprehensive, multi-dimensional, multi-modal, and predictive tool for transportation infrastructure planning. The project hit some pitfalls including data availability. The trip generation and projection methodology for freight was very robust and required a lot of data. The Industry Cluster Analysis, although seemed to be a perfect match for the SARPC freight model, did not produce results that met the validation expectations of SARPC.

Today, with the availability of the much improved Freight Analysis Framework (FAF3), the percent trucks are derived from FAF3 data. ALDOT has conducted vehicle classification counts for SARPC at over 40 stations within our study area. The FAF3 base year data is more in line with the vehicle classification counts data provided by ALDOT. Although the FAF3 data does provide a year 2040 truck count, it is based on a percentage of the total overall volume for year 2040 projected for each facility. These projections derived by the FAF3 are grossly overestimated and are unusable; the SARPC freight component to the model only uses the TADT (a percentage of trucks) derived from the FAF3.

A portion of the trip generation component to the industry cluster analysis of the model that was to be produced by the UAH study, was freight surveys conducted by SARPC. These freight surveys began in 2008 and continue today. Staff maintains and updates a database of these surveys that not only try to develop a local sense of where freight is coming from and going to locally, how much freight is generated locally, but it gives the MPO a sense of infrastructure needs in terms of our freight providers (turning radius, capacity issues, etc.).

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## GOOGLE IT

Mobile MPO staff is now up and running with our Google Earth application. All surface transportation projects are listed, by funding categories of the Mobile Transportation Improvement Program, and are now available on Google Earth; please check it out. This will be a great tool for the public to be informed as to where the federal dollars are being spent in Mobile... [\[HERE\]](#)



## DON'T FORGET TO CARPOOL

The CommuteSmart program began as a solution to growing traffic congestion. As an alternative to a single occupied vehicle, the program provides commuters with the tools for ridematching and starting carpools. The various services available help commuters lower their personal commuting expense, reduce the wear and tear on their personal vehicles, and lessen their level of stress traveling back and forth to work each day.

In 2005, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham and the [Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization](#) (MPO) began looking at expanding the CommuteSmart program to the entire State of Alabama. Mobile was one of the first cities to join the program.

CommuteSmart offers commuters free online ridematching, carpool services, the Emergency Ride Home program and more. Find out how this local rideshare program supports and encourages working commuters in their efforts to find a smarter way to work! Check out the website <http://www.commutesmart.org/mobile/> or call (251) 706-1CAR for more information.

## Projects Within Region Let December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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#### BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-180 from 0.28 miles west of the Foley Beach Express to east of SR-161 in Orange Beach. Length 3.3 mi.
- For constructing the Maintenance Dredging at Little Lagoon Pass in Gulf Shores.

#### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- None at this time

#### MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Video Wall Upgrades at the Traffic Management Center and at the Southwest Region Construction Office in Mobile.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Guardrail, Bridge Jacking, Pedestrian Bridge Removal, Signals, and Bridge Rail Retrofit on I-10 from Halls Mill Creek to the west end of the George Wallace Tunnel. Length 8.6 mi

[What's Under Construction?](#)

## Legislative Updates

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*The House and Senate are both in session this week. Nothing on the floor in either chamber to report here, but the conference committee for the water resources bill held its first meeting.*

**Senate Proposal Would Establish New Financing Tool for Infrastructure Projects:** Last week Senator Mark Warner (VA) and a bipartisan group of nine other senators introduced the Building and Renewing Infrastructure for Development and Growth in Employment (BRIDGE) Act, which would establish an Infrastructure Financing Authority (IFA), separate from the federal government, aimed at helping local and state governments leverage private investments to spur infrastructure investments. The IFA is intended to be an independent, nonpartisan financing authority to complement existing methods of infrastructure funding that would provide loans and loan guarantees to help states and localities fund regionally significant infrastructure projects. The proposal would require an initial federal investment of \$10 billion and faces significant political obstacles. A summary of the BRIDGE Act is available [HERE](#).

## Funding Opportunities

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*(note: I am not sure the ICM funding opportunity below should even be shared; however, it is interesting what an Integrated Corridor Management System is. No Mobile, AL does not have the population and density problems of Dallas, TX or San Diego, CA, but this is the direction of traffic operations. IF we wanted to deploy such a technology, there would be help, and I'm not so sure that our [Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study](#) would not fall under an ICM project...)*

#### **GRANT: Integrated Corridor Management Deployment Planning (DOT/FHWA) Grants**

**Deadline:** *December 31*

Eligible Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are those that intend to initiate or continue Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) development with their partners, such as arterial management agencies, tolling authorities, and transit authorities, to apply for deployment planning grants. This notice seeks applications for available funding for this program. This funding will be provided to cover a maximum of 80 percent of each proposed program/project. Total costs of each proposed program/project should not exceed \$200,000. Up to 10 awards are anticipated, but not guaranteed. Additional information can be found [HERE](#). Applications should be submitted through <http://www.grants.gov>. For questions about the program discussed herein, contact Mr. Robert Sheehan, FHWA Office of Transportation Management, (202) 366-6817, or via email at [Robert.Sheehan@dot.gov](mailto:Robert.Sheehan@dot.gov); Mr. Brian Cronin, Team Leader, Research, Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) ITS-Joint Program Office, (202) 366-8841 or via email at [Brian.Cronin@dot.gov](mailto:Brian.Cronin@dot.gov).

#### **Round 3 of the Implementation Assistance Program SHRP2, Deadline February 14, 2014:**

FHWA recently released the recipients of [Round 2 grants](#) and announced the schedule for rounds 3 and 4. These grants are intended to help transportation agencies deploy new products developed under the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). If you would like additional information or have questions about the program, please contact Carin Michel, FHWA SHRP2 Implementation Manager at [goSHRP2@dot.gov](mailto:goSHRP2@dot.gov) or 410-962-2530. Click [HERE](#) to read the release about the upcoming rounds.

#### **Economic Development Administration**

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

EDA provides strategic investments that foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas of the United States. Under this FFO, EDA solicits applications from both rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. Link to Additional Information: [EDA's website](#) Please contact Diane Burnett of SARPC staff

for questions 706-4621. Also, don't forget SARPC has a revolving fund loan program. <http://www.sarpc.org/rlf.asp>  
The RLF is a locally controlled source of capital used to finance small business start-up and expansion whose projects will create permanent jobs. By combining RLF and bank financing the borrower can realize an effective rate well below market rates.

## Just For Fun

### Have you heard about this?



Do you know what this is? ..... OHHH, the Iron E.

## In the News

### DOT Requests Public Comment on Primary Freight Network

This week, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) released a notice and request for public comment on the MAP-21 required designation of a Primary Freight Network. The draft network would consist of 27,000 miles of primary routes and a total of 41,000 miles in all. The designations of these routes were based on a series of eight criteria established in MAP-21 itself:

1. Origins and destinations of freight movement in the U.S.;
2. Total freight tonnage and value of freight moved by highways;
3. Percentage of annual average daily truck traffic in the annual average daily traffic on principal arterials;
4. Annual average daily truck traffic on principal arterials;
5. Land and maritime ports of entry;
6. Access to energy exploration, development, installation, or production areas;
7. Population centers; and
8. Network connectivity.

### WEBINAR: Talking Freight Seminars

*December 6, 2:00 – 3:30 PM EST*

DOT will hold a webinar to discuss the newly released draft freight network. For more information on the webinar, go [HERE](#).

### Coyote Crossing christened on Backcountry Trail in Gulf Shores, extending trail network to 20 miles



Baldwin County, state and local officials, as well as representatives from Coastal Alabama Business Chamber, pose for a standard ribbon-cutting photo during the unveiling ceremony for Coyote Crossing, a new 2-mile trail that joins the Backcountry Trail network in Orange Beach, Gulf Shores and Gulf State Park, on Friday, Nov. 15, 2013. (Marc D. [Anderson/manderson@al.com](mailto:Anderson/manderson@al.com))

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[Print](#)



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

on November 15, 2013 at 7:32 PM, updated November 15, 2013 at 7:48 PM

**GULF SHORES, Alabama** -- State, county and city officials joined together with more than 100 people on a rainy Friday to witness the unveiling of the newest addition to the [Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail](#) -- Coyote Crossing.

With a name derived through a [contest publicized on the trail's Facebook page](#) in October, the new 2-mile trail highlights its importance in connecting the existing 11 miles of paved paths through Gulf State Park, starting in Orange Beach, to the 6.5 miles of trails on Fort Morgan Road in Gulf Shores. It's also a nod to the extensive wildlife in the park.

"This is a very important, critical link between two great trails and it links two great communities and Gulf State Park," said Phillip West, the coastal resources manager for Orange Beach and an officer with the Alabama Trails Commission who played a key role in developing the trail system 10 year ago. "I'm greatly looking forward to what it can turn into in the future."

Coyote Crossing, which meanders through maritime forest alongside State Park Road 2 to Ala. 59 near Walmart, was made possible by a \$485,000 trail enhancement grant awarded to Gulf Shores by the Alabama Department of Transportation with a required 20 percent match from the city.

"I think our state park here is, of course, the jewel of all our state parks," said Gulf Shores Mayor Pro-tem Carolyn Doughty, "and we're fortunate in the state of Alabama to have such diversity. ... This will allow the visitors and citizens to be able to have closer up appreciation of it and help them learn more about the importance of our environment and how to help us to continue to protect and grow our environment."

[Continue reading HERE](#)

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#### **FHWA and PBIC Announce Free Webinar on Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities**

CHAPEL HILL, NC — The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) announce a free webinar on the maintenance of pedestrian facilities, highlighting the new FHWA *Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities for Enhanced Safety*.

#### **Pedestrian Facility Maintenance Webinar**

**Friday, December 6, 2013**

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

To register, visit <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/621744754>.

This webinar will provide a review of the new FHWA *Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities for Enhanced Safety*. The development of the guide relied on research of the common, accepted and exceptional maintenance practices in the United States. During the session, participants will learn about common and successful approaches to sidewalk and shared use path maintenance in the U.S., including winter and summer maintenance, basics of a well-rounded maintenance program, and barriers to maintaining facilities.

The forthcoming *Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities for Enhanced Safety* identifies best practices and barriers for sidewalk/shared use path maintenance, provides examples and experiences from jurisdictions that have developed effective policies for selecting and maintaining pedestrian facilities, and includes a research report with a literature review, review of local maintenance programs including discussions with 50 municipalities and state agencies, and an overall assessment of the current practice of pedestrian facility maintenance.

Both documents will be available for viewing and downloading at: [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/tools\\_solve/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/) by November 25.

This webinar is one of the free webinars that FHWA offers quarterly as part of its Pedestrian Safety Focus States and Cities initiatives. FHWA's Safety Office is trying to aggressively reduce pedestrian deaths by focusing extra resources on the states and cities with the highest pedestrian fatalities and/or fatality rates. Webinar archives for this series, as well as listings of upcoming sessions, can be found at [http://www.walkinginfo.org/training/pbic/pedfocus\\_webinars.cfm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/training/pbic/pedfocus_webinars.cfm).

PBIC offers free, public Webinars approximately every other month. To register for upcoming Webinars and to access archived presentations, please visit [www.walkinginfo.org/webinars](http://www.walkinginfo.org/webinars).

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## **Transportation Research**

### **ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit**

ITE is pleased to invite you to attend our 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit, taking place March 9-12, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Miami, Miami, FL, USA. This is a not-to-be missed conference of 2014 for anyone in the transportation profession seeking to learn about how to address the critical topics in our industry and grow their professional skills.

This year's conference – *Applying Innovation and Technology to Transportation* - will focus on the challenges and opportunities of working with multidisciplinary teams to meet customer, community and political expectations for the creation of vibrant regions to safely live, commute, work, and play. The program will include plenary sessions from nationally recognized transportation and policy professionals as well as presentations, peer-to-peer exchanges, technology showcases and workshops focused on safety, design,

operations and planning considerations.

The ITE 2014 Technical Conference and Exhibit delivers significant return on investment. Over four days, attendees will receive the immediately actionable tools and techniques and hear about latest industry trends and topics shaping and transforming the transportation landscape. As a focal point of the conference, the ITE Exhibit Hall showcases the latest technology, products, and services for the transportation industry. In addition, technical tours allow participants to see first-hand the practical application of some of the topics presented in the sessions. These technical tours are being finalized. Watch your inbox for an email update shortly.

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#### **Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning**

A new set of tools and other resources for financial planning and determining fiscal constraint for transportation plans and programs is now available. You can access these resources on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program [website](#), under the “Peer Learning” tab or through the [Fiscal Constraint and Financial Planning](#) “TPCB Focus Areas” tab. With support from the Volpe Center and review and feedback from several FHWA Field Office Planners, these materials were developed to provide State DOTs, MPOs, and transit agencies with additional methods to develop realistic financial plans for transportation system planning, programming, and project development.

The key component of these resources is the set of spreadsheets that allow agency staffs to test and clearly demonstrate fiscal constraint over a few or several years. The spreadsheets can also be used to develop various transportation revenue and project expenditure scenarios or otherwise assist in broader financial planning. The recently posted resources also include an overview description of the tools, a guide to help transportation agencies cooperatively develop revenue forecasts, and a literature scan of noteworthy financial planning practices. We ask that you share this information with your State DOT and local transportation partners. If you have any questions about the Financial Planning and Fiscal Constraint Tools, please contact Robin Smith at [robin.smith@dot.gov](mailto:robin.smith@dot.gov) or 720-963-3072. If you have any feedback on the “FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Update” Newsletter or would like to suggest topics for future issues, please contact Rae Keasler at [rae.keasler@dot.gov](mailto:rae.keasler@dot.gov) or 202-366-0329 or Ben Williams at [ben.williams@dot.gov](mailto:ben.williams@dot.gov) or 404-562-3671.

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#### **Is Adaptive Signal Control Technology Cost Effective and Operationally Effective?**

Wednesday, December 4, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Eastern

#### **Course Credit: 1.5 PDH/0.2 IACET CEU**

##### **Background:**

There are serious differences of opinion among practitioners regarding the effectiveness of adaptive signal control technology (ASCT), and serious concerns about the difficulty in analyzing these systems. This webinar will allow experts with varying perspectives to present their opinions on the cost-effectiveness and operational effectiveness of adaptive control, followed by vigorous discussion and/or debate among all participants.

##### **Learning Objectives:**

- 1) Learn about operational effectiveness results from multiple recent evaluations of ASCT
- 2) Discuss most frequent mistakes and unrealistic expectations when deciding to deploy ASCT
- 3) Recognize the connection between ASCT effectiveness and their settings, detection, communication infrastructure, and traffic patterns (typical commuter vs. event conditions)
- 4) Recommend signal control strategies for conditions where ASCT costs are believed to outweigh ASCT benefits
- 5) Identify benefits of the FHWA system requirements for ASCT

##### **Instructors:**

Dr. Aleksandar Stevanovic, Assistant Professor, Civil, Environmental & Geomatics Engineering, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL, USA; Shaun Quayle, Senior Engineer, Kittelson & Associates, Inc., Portland, OR, USA; Dr. Gregory Brodski, President, AGA Group, Inc., Boston, MA, USA; Miranda Wells, Traffic Lead, HDR Engineering, Inc., Portland, OR, USA

**Fee:** \$75 ITE Individual Member/ \$100 Non-member Individual Fee (Per person rate)

\$125 ITE Member Group/\$150 Non-member Group Fee (Per site fee for training of 4 or more people at one site)

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