



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 24, 2014

Volume 12, Number 4

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET NOVEMBER 7TH, 2014
- 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

<http://www.mobilempo.org>

transportation@sarpc.org

Kevin Harrison, PTP
Director of Transportation
kharrison@sarpc.org

Tom Piper
Senior Transportation Planner
tpiper@sarpc.org

Mr. Cooper, ALDOT Director, was in town for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge Debriefing,; Please see *Mobile MPO Updates* . The Mobile County Pay-As-You-Go program is up for vote November 4, please see *In The News* . Here's your sign, in this week's *Just For Fun* .

Have a great weekend!

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



www.mobilempo.org

check us out on FACEBOOK

706-1CAR

Mobile MPO Updates

SARPC assisted with Coastal Alabama Partnership's I-10 Mobile River Bridge Washington D.C. Trip debriefing to an audience of about 50 attendees, most of which were elected officials. Mr. Cooper was in attendance and as always offered some straight answers. "There is no magic pot of money to build the bridge, someone is going to have to pay for it". He continued to say that "there is a process that has to be followed, and even if we did have all the money for the bridge, it would take years to accomplish". Mr. Cooper concluded with a positive attitude that "we are going to build this bridge".

Some of our take aways from the trip to D.C. was getting the project on the National and Regionally Significant Projects (NRSP) list, and we should have a 2 day workshop with FHWA Innovation Program Delivery to discuss innovative funding programs available for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. ALDOT Metropolitan Planning (Jim Doolin), together with Atkins, is working diligently for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge to be on the List of National and Regionally Significant Projects. I want to thank them, the ALDOT Tunnel Control Center and ALDOT Southwest Region folks for helping compile the data needed for the application. The 2 day workshop will be sometime in early 2015; we will keep you posted.

Monica Williamson
Transportation Planner
mwilliamson@sarpc.org

Anthony Johnson
Transportation Planner
ajohnson@sarpc.org

South Alabama Regional
Planning Commission
110 Beauregard St
Mobile, Alabama 36602
(251) 433-6541



Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile

Toole Design Group (TDG) out of Washington D.C. was selected by a consultant selection committee to conduct the Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile for the Mobile MPO. The study has an extensive Scope of Work and work should begin sometime in November. The focus of the Study is on non-motorized issues that we have in Downtown Mobile. Toole Design Group has conducted several of these around the country and authored several AASHTO and federal manuals on the subject. The Tasks of the Scope of Work include:

Task One -Project Coordination

Task Two- Existing Conditions

Task Three-Pubic and Stakeholder Input

Task Four-System Appraisal and Evaluation

- ADA Assessment
- Downtown Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Recommendations

Task Five-Water Street Corridor Study

- Truck Traffic Evaluation
- Downtown Design Workshop
- Water Street Design Vetting

Task Six-Traffic Data Collection and Analysis

- Data Collection
- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Future Conditions Analysis
- Summary Memorandum

Task Seven- Draft Report

Task Eight-Final Report

Task Nine-Optional Downtown Streetscape Design Guide.

The consultant will have a year to finalize the study. An important component is the Design workshop, of which Toole will come down for several days and solicit extensive public outreach. The Water Street Design Vetting and Truck Traffic Evaluation will allow the consultant to produce recommendations in terms of how to get pedestrians safely from downtown to the waterfront, and the implication of prohibiting heavy trucks “through” on Water Street. We will keep you posted on this important study.

Mobile Urban Area FTA 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Update

Because of the new fiscal year, FTA closed out 2014 and sometime soon we will be ready to continue the approval process. After a rather lengthy game application/process tennis, we have finally been approved and are just waiting for FTA to open the software “TEAM” back up to submit the grant. Once this happens, we will be able to begin the procurement process for those awarded FTA 5310 vehicles and operating assistance. We will keep you posted.

Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge Information Site



The I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Widening project is a proposal to increase the capacity of I-10 by constructing a new six-lane bridge with 215 feet of Air Draft Clearance (ADC) across the Mobile River and widening the existing I-10 bridges across Mobile Bay from four to eight lanes.

The proposed project would be located in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, Alabama. The official comment period for the proposed Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Widening Draft Environmental Impact Statement is [HERE](#).

Please take a moment to fill out a comment form, due by 5 pm on November 7. You may include additional pages but you must fill out and submit the comment form as well.

[COMMENT FORM](#)

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Mobile MPO study area is complete and is a rather large document. This TDP summarizes the existing Wave Transit system and provides a series of phased recommendations that comprise the ten-year TDP. The chapters of the TDP include:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction
- Chapter 2 – Market Analysis
- Chapter 3 – Existing Transit Services
- Chapter 4 – Transit Standards
- Chapter 5 – Transit Improvement Program Summary
- Chapter 6 – Phased Transit Improvements
- Chapter 7 – Public Participation
- Chapter 8 – Evaluation of Existing Routes
- Chapter 9 – FTA Section 5311 Program

The TDP is going to be the focus of the Transit Element of the *Destination 2040* Long Range Transportation Plan, and will be adopted as part of LRTP. The document is over 300 pages and 75 mb on disk. If you would like a copy of the TDP, just let us know, copies are available.

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](#).

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

Senator Carper Seeks Long-term Funding Solution:

During the lame duck session, Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) hopes Congress will use this time to find a long-term solution for the Highway Trust Fund. Carper, Chair of the EPW Committee Highways Subcommittee, is meeting with stakeholders to drum up support and coordinate efforts for a lame-duck funding deal. On Wednesday, Carper met with the Americans for Transportation Mobility Committee. EPW Chair Barbara Boxer (D-CA) is also actively working to find solutions and support for such an approach

Joe Biden is very angry at us for scrimping on our infrastructure

By [Emily Badger](#) October 21



(Kate Patterson for the Washington Post)

To listen to Joe Biden lecture on the importance of infrastructure in America is to feel a bit like

you're being personally scolded. Which may in fact be what we need in a country where politicians can't figure out how to save the Highway Trust Fund, where many voters can't fathom kicking in more to repair our roads or expand mass transit.

"It is just not acceptable that the greatest nation in the world does not have — across the board — the single most sophisticated infrastructure in the entire world," Biden said Tuesday in a speech at the Post's America Answers conference on transportation. "It is not acceptable."

A famously avid Amtrak rider, Biden sounds like he's disappointed in all of us that we've settled for low-speed rail, that we've let our airports fall out of date, that we've lost the edge America had when it built massive cross-country rail and highway systems. His voice rises like an angry dad. He reminds us that the U.S. found a way to invest in big transportation projects in the past even when it felt like we didn't have the money. We long had the most innovative, forward-thinking transportation in the world, he says. "Until recently. Until recently."

The tone — more harsh reality check than pep talk — is probably appropriate for our current gridlock on the topic. It's true that the American Society of Civil Engineers has given our infrastructure a D+. And it's true that Congress so far hasn't been able to come up with more than stopgap bills to keep the Highway Trust Fund afloat.

For the full Biden experience, here's a clip from his talk Tuesday, sounding very, very disappointed in the state of our ports, and New York's LaGuardia Airport in particular.

Funding Opportunities

Senior Transportation Grant Opportunity

Proposals Due: November 7

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST) is seeking applications for a new Ladders of Opportunity Grant Program – Connecting Seniors to Public Transportation. To support successful aging of older adults, this grant program was created to provide funding to communities to develop and test interventions designed to encourage and facilitate increased access and usage of public transportation and mobility options. Each funded project will be required to partner with one of several national initiatives that support aging in place and currently operate in numerous local communities nationwide. Grants will be awarded to 5 communities at a maximum of \$20,000 each for approximately 5 months (late December 2014-May 31, 2015)

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

DRA Workforce Development Capacity Building & Technical Assistance Fund

Round 2 Submissions Close: August 25 – November 4

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) has announced that it will establish a competitive, technical assistance and capacity building investment program, which will allow rural counties/parishes and states to develop a connected workforce development system at the local level. DRA will make funds available as a first step in economic development which is needed for growth in the Delta region. Click [HERE](#) for application instructions.

New! NOFA for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Pilot Program

Proposal Deadline: November 3

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is making \$19.98 million in funding available for its Pilot Program for TOD Planning. This program helps support FTA's mission of improving public transportation for America's communities by providing funding to local communities to integrate land use and transportation planning with a transit capital investment that will seek funding through FTA's *Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Program*. Proposals must be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov website by midnight Eastern Time on November 3, 2014. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

USDA – Grants for Increased Economic Opportunity and Improved Quality of Life

in Rural Areas

Deadline: November 12

On August 13, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a press release announcing the availability of nearly \$6 million in grants to qualified organizations under the *Rural Community Development Initiative*. These grants will be offered to qualified intermediary organizations that will provide financial and technical assistance to recipients to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will support the community. Submissions must be made to the USDA Rural Development state office where the applicant's headquarters are located. Click [HERE](#) to apply.

Just For Fun

There is a reason for the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices). Sometimes these signs are made by Captain Obvious, sometimes they are installed incorrectly, and sometimes they just don't make sense. It's all *Just For Fun*.



<http://guff.com/road-sign-fails>

In the News

Pay-As-You-Go up for a countywide vote on Nov. 4



Pay-as-you-go is up for a vote on Nov. 4. (Photo via MCC)

[Print](#)



By [Cassie Fambro | cfambro@al.com](mailto:Cassie.Fambro@al.com)

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

on October 23, 2014 at 3:04 PM, updated October 23, 2014 at 4:22 PM

MOBILE, Alabama-- In Sept., The Mobile County Commission voted to approve a \$54 million pay-as-you-go road improvement program geared toward updating roads in Mobile County. On Nov. 4, voters will get a chance to vote either for or against the program.

The total program would include \$12 million of state contributions, bringing the project to \$66 million.

The proposal is the 15th pay-as-you-go program since the county inaugurated the program in

1977. All previous 14 programs have been approved by voters.

The pay-as-you-go program is literal. It allows improvements to be financed without new taxes or borrowed money and financed by funds collected in advance of each project.

"It is an essential program to assure that transportation throughout the county flows smoothly and safely," Commissioner Merceria Ludgood said.

The upcoming program will bring upgrades to 94 miles of roadway and will include the reconstruction of two new bridges, one on Padget Switch Road over Carls Creek in Bayou La Batre and the other on Wilmer-Georgetown Road over Big Creek.

The city of Mobile, the biggest of the cities in Mobile County, will see improvements on 33 miles of roadway.

Mobile County Commission president Connie Hudson said that the proposal is "proactive," and Commissioner Jerry Carl said potential improvements are "exciting."

Mobile County voters will see the proposal on their Nov. 4 ballots

Alabama Association of Regional Councils Annual Training Conference

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils (of which SARPC is one) is having the Annual Training Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach October 26-29, 2014. This conference is open to anyone associated with SARPC. There are training sessions for Planning and Transportation, Economic Development, Medicaid Waiver and Aging, and Local Leaders. For more information and to register click [HERE](#).



Three Mile Creek Open House Expo

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program is hosting a meeting to celebrate the completion of the Three Mile Creek Watershed Management Plan and learn about the restoration efforts.

Location: Dearborn YMCA: 321 North Warren St. Mobile, AL 36603

When: October 27, 2014 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Free and open to the public

For more information visit: www.mobilebaynep.com

Gas prices fall to lowest average since 2011

By Laura Barron-Lopez - 10/15/14 01:36 PM EDT

The average price of a gallon of gasoline is at its lowest level in the U.S. since 2011, according to AAA.

The auto group said on Wednesday that the current average of \$3.17 is roughly 17 cents per gallon cheaper than a year ago.

Additionally, AAA said, gas prices are "falling at the fastest rate since October 2012," and prices have dropped 51 cents per gallon since July of this year.

One-third of all gas stations in the U.S. are selling gas for less than \$3, and 10 states are currently charging less than \$3 per gallon.

That means drivers are spending roughly \$5 to \$15 less to fill up their tanks than they were in early July.

The Future of Toll Roads in the U.S.

The Diane Rehm Show this week had an in depth conversation on toll roads in the U.S. Toll road mileage is increasing nationwide as cash-strapped states try to relieve traffic congestion without raising taxes. But some transportation officials are facing a political backlash. Diane and her guests discuss the future of toll roads in the U.S.

Toll roads make up a fraction of America's highways, but their number is growing. More than 5,000 miles of U.S. roads require tolls today, up 15 percent over the past decade. One reason: The highway trust fund is in crisis. It's currently financed by a federal gas tax that has not risen since Bill Clinton was president. So states are looking for other ways to pay for much needed transportation projects. Current laws prohibit the tolling of existing interstate highways. But many infrastructure advocates would like to change that. Others argue public roads should be accessible to all Americans. Diane and her guests discuss how best to pay for highways and the future of toll roads.

Guests

Robert Puentes senior fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution.

Chris Edwards economist and editor of DownsizingGovernment.org, Cato Institute.

Donald Cohen executive director, In The Public Interest. It's a resource center on privatization and responsible contracting.

Ed Rendell Building America's Future Co-Chair; former governor of Pennsylvania.

Bill Graves president and CEO, American Trucking Associations; former governor of Kansas.

Click to listen

<http://thedianerehmshow.org/audio-player?nid=20065>

Transportation Research

U.S. Census Bureau Releases 2011-2013 ACS 3-Year Estimates

The U.S. Census Bureau just announced the release of the 2011-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 3-Year Estimates, the most relied-upon source for up-to-date socioeconomic information every year. The release covers a three-year period from 2011 to 2013 and more than 40 topics, such as educational attainment, income, health insurance coverage, occupation, language spoken at home, nativity, ancestry and selected monthly homeowner costs.

The statistics are available in detailed tables for the nation, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, every congressional district, every metropolitan area, and all counties and places with populations of 20,000 or more.

Visit the Census Bureau's American FactFinder to find statistics for your area. For more information about the ACS Data Release Schedule, new ACS products, documentation, and a list of new tables for the 2011-2013 ACS 3-Year release, please visit the 2013 Data Release page.

2013 ACS 1-Year PUMS

The PUMS files are a set of anonymized untabulated records that data users can access to create custom tables that are not available through pretabulated (or summary) ACS data products. To read more about how the PUMS files are created, browse code lists, or look up subjects, please visit our

PUMS Documentation Page. To access PUMS data, please visit American FactFinder, our FTP site, or DataFerrett.

The ACS provides reliable statistics that are indispensable to anyone who has to make informed decisions about the future. These statistics are required by all levels of government to manage or evaluate a wide range of programs, but are also useful for research, education, journalism, business and advocacy. If you have questions about this survey, please call the Customer Services Center at 1 (800) 923-8282.

See the latest Stats In Action videos showing how statistics from the ACS are used to make decisions and future plans in communities across the U.S..

FHWA releases new BIKESAFE guide as part of DOT's effort to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released its new Bicycle Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System (BIKESAFE). This resource helps support the U.S. Department of Transportation's new [pedestrian and bicycle safety initiative](#).

BIKESAFE is an online guide for implementing countermeasures to improve the safety and mobility of bicyclists. It provides practitioners with information and tools to review and select engineering and roadway infrastructure improvements to reduce bicyclist injuries.

BIKESAFE is comprised of four sections: A guide of basic information, specific countermeasure details, case studies, and an expert system tool for countermeasure selection, as well as links to dozens of other helpful web resources.

Guide: This section helps practitioners better understand the issues facing bicyclists, how to analyze crashes, and how to implement new treatments.

Countermeasures: The Countermeasures section includes a comprehensive list of 46 engineering, education, and enforcement countermeasure options, as well as details of each countermeasure, including its description, purpose, considerations, safety effect, and cost.

Case Studies: There are 34 case studies, or success stories, that document one or more of the countermeasures that have been implemented, along with the background of the problems, bicycle safety solutions selected, and the results of the treatments.

Selection Tool: The expert countermeasure selection system allows users to input the basic safety problem and site conditions. The expert system will propose a "short list" of candidate treatment options that likely would be suited to address the specific bicyclist safety problem for that situation.

This online version of BIKESAFE updates an eight-year-old version and is now available as an interactive tool, usable on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. BIKESAFE can be found at <http://www.pedbikesafe.org/BIKESAFE>.

CDC Report on Cost of Car Crashes

A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the 2.5 million people who visit emergency rooms following car crashes each year cost the economy more than \$50 billion. In the report, the CDC urges states to enact and enforce seat belt laws and sobriety checkpoints, and to push the use of booster seats for children. Click [HERE](#) for the report.
