



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 31, 2014

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Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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This coming Tuesday is election day for several offices, but more importantly the [Mobile Pay-As-You-Go](#). Click [HERE](#) for other items on the ballot, and [HERE](#) is a summary of the Amendments, including where the money comes from for [Amendment 2](#). GO VOTE! Next Friday is the last day to comment on the Draft EIS for the Mobile River I-10 Bridge and Baldwin County contemplates a tag fee; please see *In The News*. It's Halloween (*snicker, snicker*) in this week's *Just For Fun*.

Have a great weekend and look out for trick or treaters!

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



www.mobilempo.org check us out on FACEBOOK
706-1CAR

Mobile MPO Updates

Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile

Hopefully by the end of today we will have a signed contract for the Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile. Toole Design Group (TDG) 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. The City of Mobile recently conducted traffic vehicle classification counts for SARPC, and there are a significant amount of trucks on Water Street. **About 40% of traffic on Water Street is some form of medium to heavy truck** (not including city buses) most of which are taking a short cut through downtown.

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 match, we have finally been approved and FTA just opened the software "TEAM" yesterday. We are going to officially submit the grant in TEAM today. Once officially approved in TEAM, we can start the procurement process. We will keep you posted.

Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge Information Site

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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

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

New AASHTO Funding Matrix Released:

As the search continues for ways to fund a new surface transportation authorization, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) today released an updated matrix of 38 funding options. This update has new easy-to-understand graphics that provide a bubble display and a bar chart allowing viewers to see how much revenue, or how little, some measures would provide based on the illustrative rates provided. This matrix could make it easier for legislators to analyze funding options to achieve desired levels of surface transportation investment. Click [HERE](#) for details or pic below for video.



Foxx Reminds Voters That Congress Failed on Transportation Bill:

Secretary Foxx spoke at the SmartRail USA Congress and Expo in Charlotte, reminding voters that Congress failed to pass a long-term high funding bill during the final days before midterms. Foxx hopes that the election will spur Congressional action on transportation, with polls indicating voter unhappiness with the gridlock that has dominated Washington. Click [HERE](#) for details

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

IT'S HALLOWEEN...



Halloween is the season for little ghosts and goblins to take to the streets, asking for candy and scaring one another silly. Amid all the commercialism, Halloween is much more than just costumes and candy; in fact, the holiday has a rich and interesting history. Halloween, also known as All Hallows' Eve, can be traced back about 2,000 years to a pre-Christian Celtic festival held around Nov. 1 called Samhain (pronounced "sah-win"), which means "summer's end" in Gaelic, according to the Indo-European Etymological Dictionaries.

It is the eve of All Saints Day. The current date of November 1 was instituted by Pope Gregory III (731-741), when he consecrated a chapel to all the martyrs in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and ordered an annual celebration.

But what makes Halloween *Just For Fun* for transportation geeks? Corn Syrup and milk are the only American ingredient in Snickers (made in New Jersey by Mars, Inc.). Please enjoy Snickers responsibly this weekend, and think about the network it took for you to enjoy it....

INGREDIENTS

- Paper
- Sugar
- Peanut
- Corn Syrup
- Chocolate/Cocoa
- Vanilla
- Milk

ORIGIN

- Canada
- Brazil
- Argentina
- Iowa
- Guyana
- Mexico
- Wisconsin

In the News

Baldwin County officials contemplating \$30 vehicle tag fee to fund road projects



Contact the Commissioner

Baldwin County Commissioner Tucker Dorsey wants to know your thoughts on a proposal to add a \$30 fee to Baldwin County tags. The money collected would be used for road projects in the county.

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“I really do want to hear what people think about it or if there are any other concepts or ideas.”



By [Thyrie Bland | tbland@al.com](mailto:tbland@al.com)
Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)
on October 31, 2014 at 9:17 AM, updated October 31, 2014 at 9:28 AM

Gulf Shores resident Cindy Holcomb says she wouldn't mind paying a \$30 vehicle tag fee if the money went toward improving roads in Baldwin County.

"I live on the island, and we have a lot of traffic problems there in the summertime," said Holcomb, 49. "I might be biased."

Some Baldwin County politicians are floating the idea of a recurring \$30 tag fee to generate money for road projects in Baldwin County. The fee will have to be approved by the Alabama Legislature. Officials have come up with a list of projects that the money initially would be used for. The projects will cost \$140 to \$150 million. They are:

- Widening Alabama 181 between Baldwin County roads 64 and 48
- Building a third bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway
- Constructing an interchange at Interstate 10 and Baldwin County 13
- Extending 20th Street to Canal Road
- Widening U.S. 31 between U.S. 98 and Alabama 181

"You are talking about... projects in Baldwin County that will be completed in the next five to six years and make a significant impact on our getting around," Baldwin County Commissioner Tucker Dorsey said. "I am talking about your commute to work, picking up your kids up from school and for our local businesses to get around. We are trying to alleviate local traffic." [HERE](#) to continue and [HERE](#) for Commissioner Elliott's remarks.

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:cfambro@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

Report: US gas prices driven more by international crude

By [Laura Barron-Lopez](#) - 10/30/14 04:55 PM EDT

The Energy Department's top analysts said on Thursday that when it comes to U.S. gas prices, the most "important" determining factor is the international price of crude oil, not domestic oil.

While the [report](#) doesn't take a side in the growing debate surrounding lifting the decades-old ban on crude oil exports, its findings support advocates who argue repealing the restrictions could lower gas prices.

Shipping more crude oil overseas could increase U.S. production, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), and lower the price of international Brent crude.

That would also cause the domestic West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude price to rise, essentially bringing Brent and WTI more into line.

And on the issue of gas prices for consumers, it's that Brent crude oil price that matters.

"Brent crude oil prices are more important than WTI crude oil prices as a determinant of U.S. gasoline prices in all four regions studied, including the Midwest," the EIA states in the report. continue [HERE](#)

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 pre-tabulated (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.