



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 7th 2016

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The Department of Transportation is launching a program to bring an end to traffic fatalities (*see Legislative Updates*). The U.S. 98 road project may be getting a boost thanks to BP Money and there are lots of proposed changes on the upcoming Alabama Ballot (See In the News). The RPO is finalizing the Transportation Plan to submit to ALDOT (See South Alabama RPO Updates) and be sure to check out Funding Opportunities, there's quite a lot of funding available right now.

Have a great weekend! And check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!

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

www.mobilempo.org  check us out on FACEBOOK

Mobile MPO Updates

Updated Project Status this week

Project: 100066356 (MC)
Project Description: COLLISION DAMAGE TO GIRDERS ON BRIDGE (BIN 018396) ON CR-39 (MACDONALD ROAD) OVER I-10.
Target start date: 10/15/2016
Engineers: \$350,000.00

End of the Fiscal Year

We just wrapped up Fiscal Year 2016, and the Mobile MPO had four projects totaling over **\$8.6 Million** authorized to be spent in FY 2016 out of the STP Attributable Funds. Considering we can program \$8.9 Million per year, I would say we are doing pretty good. Those four projects are:

- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), UT, \$243,946
- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), CN \$2,440,547
- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), CN, \$5,105,061
- CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD),RW, \$835,000

The MPO met 4 times in FY 2016 approving federal spending in the Mobile Urbanized Area with funds spent at the State's discretion, from: Interstate Maintenance Funds, Surface Transportation Funds, National Highway Funds, High Priority Funding, Bridge Funds and Transportation Alternative Program Funding. The total amount approved by the Mobile MPO to be included in the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was **\$56,781,580**.

Of those funding categories above, there were 37 projects that were already in the TIP that were authorized to be spent in FY 2016 in the Mobile Urbanized Area totaling **\$50,268,574**.

FTA 5310 FUNDING

The SARPC Transportation Planning Department has managed to successfully award over **\$875,000** worth of projects to the Mobile Urbanized area with the FTA 5310 program, to include funding for the following:

- MARC; Capital; 4 buses; Cost \$204,858 (\$163,886 Federal; \$40,972 Local)
- City of Prichard; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- City of Saraland; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- Goodwill Easter Seals; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- City of Satsuma; Capital; GPS System; Cost \$31,000 (\$24,800 Federal; \$6,200 Local)
- MARC; Operating; Cost; \$376,996 (\$188,498 Federal; \$188,498 Local)
- Independent Living Center; Operating; Cost \$44,940 (\$22,470 Federal; \$22,470 Local)
- Mobile Bay Transportation; Operating; Cost \$19,960 (\$9,980 Federal; \$9,980 Local)
- SARPC; Administration Cost \$36,015 (\$36,015 Federal)

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) FUNDING

TAP Funding Open Discussion

On September 27th there was an open discussion with the FHWA concerning the Mobile Urban Area Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The group talked about the FHWA Certification Recommendation to have a multi-year scheduling of TAP projects. What came out of the meeting, was that there was an agreement to have a two year award for a call for projects that will have a June, 2017 deadline. This call for projects will be for FY 2017 and FY 2018. It will give us the ability to move a project up if another project has fallen behind. There will be no extensions for the Preliminary Engineering to be completed within the two year time frame. Also, the group talked about the criteria that ranks the projects and that a local government can apply for more than one project, but only be funded one per year with the Mobile Urbanized Area TAP (this does not apply to ALDOT TAP). The amount of points given to a project that has multiple funding sources (donated) was also discussed to be decreased.

These modifications to the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) process, will be vetted back to the group prior to TCC/CAC comment and MPO approval. We will keep you posted.

ADA TRANSITION PLANS

As part of ALDOT Certification Review, FHWA noted a deficiency of ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW among Urban Areas. Since that time, all Urban Areas in the State have, or should have, completed ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW for all local governments over 50 employees. There are fewer requirements for those local governments that have less than 50 employees. Some of our rural local governments have recently adopted ADA Plans as well. These plans are a requirement of the ADA Act of 1990, and all local governments were supposed to have had an ADA Transition Plan starting in 1993. Here is [a primer for an ADA Transition Plan](#). A lot can happen in 25 years, change of staff, change of administration, and some local governments may have had a Plan, and it just needs to be updated.

For all ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW for the local Governments of the Mobile Urbanized area, please see [HERE](#). If you have any questions, please call Kevin Harrison.

MPO Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet

FHWA recently announced the availability of four new resources online to help states and other stakeholders implement the Safety Performance Management Measures Final Rule. The resources include a safety performance targets timeline and a list of data resources and training support. In addition, the [MPO Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet](#) summarizes the requirements for MPOs and compares the different responsibilities with state DOTs.

South Alabama RPO Updates

SARPC's RPO Program is finalizing the list of the current transportation projects and safety needs for the RPO area. This list is broken down by County and by Category (roadways, bridges, bike/ped, and transit). If there is anything you would like to add or delete or if there is a project listed that has been completed please let us know.

This list is an amendment to the RPO Transportation Plan and list of safety needs that we update each September. This comprehensive list of projects will be submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation as a list of prioritized transportation needs for the rural areas of our region.

Further information is available on our [website](#).

Projects Within Region Let September 30th, 2016

Mobile County

- For constructing the I-10 Eastbound Water Street On-Ramp Closure and Roadway Improvements (Minor Widening) at the Canal Street, Claiborne Street, and Texas Street Interchanges in Mobile. Length 1.242 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,121,759 to \$1,371,039.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from west of the intersection of Pine Hill Drive (MP 25.250) to the intersection of SR-163 (MP 25.869) in Mobile. Length 0.619 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$319,672 to \$390,710 .

Baldwin County

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Traffic Stripe, and Culvert Replacement on SR-225 from the junction of CR-138 (Hurricane Road) to the junction of SR-59 in Stockton. Length 11.546 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,027,543 to \$2,478,108 .
- For constructing the Adaptive Signal Installations along SR-42 (US-98) at various locations as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,269,431 to \$2,773,749
- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on Scenic Route 98 from the junction of CR-1 to the junction of Nelson Drive in Fairhope. Length 6.581 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$861,388 to \$1,052,808 .

Escambia County

- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-21 from the Florida State Line to the pavement joint at MP 0.968 in Atmore. Length 0.968 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$349,579 to \$427,263 .

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

Legislative Updates

U.S. DOT, NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL LAUNCH ROAD TO ZERO COALITION TO END ROADWAY FATALITIES

New partnership aims to end traffic fatalities within the next 30 years

WASHINGTON – U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration are joining forces with the National Safety Council (NSC) to launch the *Road to Zero* coalition with the goal of ending fatalities on the nation's roads within the next 30 years. The Department of Transportation has committed \$1 million a year for the next three years to provide grants to organizations working on lifesaving programs.

"Our vision is simple – zero fatalities on our roads," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "We know that setting the bar for safety to the highest possible standard requires commitment from everyone to think differently about safety– from drivers to industry, safety organizations and government at all levels."

The year 2015 marked the largest increase in traffic deaths since 1966 and preliminary [estimates for the first half of 2016](#) show an alarming uptick in fatalities - an increase of about 10.4 percent as compared to the number of fatalities in the first half of 2015.

"Every single death on our roadways is a tragedy," said NHTSA Administrator Mark Rosekind. "We can prevent them. Our drive toward zero deaths is more than just a worthy goal. It is the only acceptable goal."

The Road to Zero Coalition will initially focus on promoting proven lifesaving strategies, such as improving seat belt use, installing rumble strips, truck safety, behavior change campaigns and data-driven enforcement. Additionally, the coalition will then lead the development of a new scenario-based vision on how to achieve zero traffic deaths based on evidence-based strategies and a systematic approach to eliminating risks.

"The "4Es" – Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services provide a reliable roadmap for driving down fatalities. Coupled with new technologies and innovative approaches to mobility, we may now hold the keys that get us to zero," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, president and CEO of the National Safety Council. "The Road to Zero Coalition affirms that it will take ALL of us working together in new ways to eliminate preventable deaths."

"Reaching zero deaths will be difficult, will take time and will require significant effort from all of us but it is the only acceptable vision," said FHWA Deputy Administrator David Kim. "We're not at zero yet, but by working together, the day will come when there are no fatalities on the nation's roadways, sidewalks or bicycle paths."

With the rapid introduction of automated vehicles and advanced technologies, the Department believes it is now increasingly likely that the vision of zero road deaths and serious injuries can be achieved in the next 30 years. The Road to Zero Coalition will work to accelerate the achievement of that vision through concurrent efforts that focus on overall system design, addressing infrastructure design, vehicle technology, enforcement and behavior safety. An important principle of the effort will be to find ways to ensure that inevitable human mistakes do not result in fatalities.

"Working closely with our partners, both inside and outside the Department, we are committing significant resources to the serious effort being put forth to make the ambitious goal of zero deaths an eventual reality," said FMCSA Administrator T.F. Scott Darling III. "While we work tirelessly every day to promote safer roadways, we understand that this coalition will only succeed if we all do our part and pledge to make safety our highest priority."

The "zero deaths" idea was first adopted in Sweden in 1997 as "Vision Zero" and since then has evolved across the country and across the world. A growing number of state and cities have adopted "Zero" fatality visions.

Funding Opportunities

ALDOT TAP FUNDING (*deadline December 16th, 2016*)

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is soliciting applications for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for FY 2017.

The TAP application and instructions are located on the ALDOT website at:

http://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/specialprograms_section.htm

The TAP application is available on this page and on page two (2) of the instructional information is a listing of eligible improvement projects for TAP funding. The deadline for submission of FY 2017 TAP applications including support documentation is Friday, December 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Some major application requirements of the TAP are:

1. Only cities, towns and county commissions can apply for funding;
2. Due to limited funding, there is a \$400,000 cap on the amount of federal funds that a sponsor can apply for;
3. Only one application can be submitted by an eligible sponsor due to limited funding;
4. The funding ratio for TAP projects is 80% federal funds and 20% sponsor funds. The sponsor is responsible for the cost of required preliminary engineering;
5. Public involvement is optional;
6. Fifty (50) percent of the TAP funds are sub-allocated to the MPO's by population
1. and fifty (50) percent is distributed to any area of the state by ALDOT ;
7. All TAP projects are selected by a competitive application process administered by ALDOT ;
8. Independent landscaping projects are not eligible;
9. Transportation museums are not eligible;
10. For cities/towns located within the six (6) largest MPO's (Birmingham, Huntsville, Montgomery , Mobile, Columbus, GA, and Pensacola, FL), the TAP funds that are being administered by ALDOT are completely separate from the TAP funds that are dedicated to the aforementioned MPO's.

Please contact Bob Kratzer at (334) 353-6442 if you have questions regarding this matter.

FHWA Offers New Funding for Innovative Demonstration Projects

New funding is available from the Federal Highway Administration's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program to encourage the transportation community to adopt proven innovations. [Funding](#) or the AID Demonstration program, launched in 2014 as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, was continued by the 2015 [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act](#). Since AID Demonstration was introduced, FHWA has provided more than \$43 million for 61 awards.

Under the program, funding of up to \$1 million may be awarded for projects that use proven innovations in any project phase, including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment and construction. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through [Grants.gov](#), the federal government's website for information on funding opportunities. For more information on the AID Demonstration program, contact [Ewa Flom](#) of the FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation

USDOT Announces \$7 Million in Funding for Innovative Research to Improve Public Transportation *(Deadline October 14, 2016)*

The FTA and USDOT announced the \$7 million Safety Research and Demonstration (SRD) program this week. The SRD program provides assistance for transit agencies to pursue cutting edge technology and innovative approaches to safety. This year the program aims to help transit agencies prevent collisions, enhance safety design elements, and evaluate potential solutions. Applications are due October 14. [HERE](#)

The Big Jump Project

[The Big Jump Project](#) applications Due: *October 28, 2016*

Building on the momentum of the Green Lane Project, The Big Jump will put bikes at the center of connecting people to the places where they live, learn, work and play. Through a mix of on-the-ground infrastructure, smart outreach and community engagement, The Big Jump will partner with community leaders in the U.S. to identify opportunities for improvements specifically tailored to each community's needs. The Big Jump Project is a three-year effort to help 10 places achieve a big jump in biking – a doubling or tripling of people riding – by building a network of safe and comfortable places to ride and engaging the community. The goal is also to validate a core concept: that if a city does all the right things, more people will ride and the community will be a better place to live, work and play. The Big Jump team is looking for 10 places that will achieve great things for biking between now and 2020.

Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

Deadline: Rolling

Grants made under these programs will leverage regional assets to support the implementation of regional economic development strategies designed to create jobs, leverage private capital, encourage economic development, and strengthen America's ability to compete in the global marketplace. Through the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO), the Economic Development Administration (EDA) solicits applications from rural and urban communities to develop initiatives that advance new ideas and creative approaches to address rapidly evolving economic conditions. EDA is employing a new two-phase review process for proposals/applications submitted under this FFO. Proposals will be reviewed by EDA within 30 days of receipt; and following the proposal review, full applications will be reviewed within 60 days of receipt.

Industrial Access Road and Bridge

Industrial access funds are intended to provide adequate public access to new or expanding distribution, manufacturing and industrial firms. The industry must be committed to new investment and the creation of new jobs. The new access must be on public right of way for public use (state, city or county) and the project sponsor (city or county) must maintain the completed facility unless the facility consists of turn lanes, crossovers, etc., that are located on state highways. Industrial access funds are limited to construction, construction engineering and inspection costs. The project sponsor is responsible for all preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation costs.

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

Just For Fun

[National School Bus Safety Week](#) is just 10 days away! Ever thought about the challenge of driving a bus? Give it a try! Check out the Do's and Don'ts, then click [HERE](#) to play.

Some Bus DON'TS:



Don't get in an accident

Don't run red lights

Don't drive on the lawn



Don't let your buses get into disrepair



Don't Run out of fuel



Most importantly don't run anyone over!

In the News

Alabama's bypass to the beach, a 'top priority' project, revived with BP money

By John Sharp | jsharp@al.com

With \$65 million in new money thanks to the state's BP settlement, the long-beleaguered U.S. 98 project in coastal Alabama has a new life, but officials are proceeding cautiously.

It was nearly a decade ago when a previous U.S. 98 project was shut down amid lawsuits and accusations surrounding sediment from the construction site that ran off into the waterways supplying a majority of the Mobile region's drinking water.

"The job has been redesigned," said Vince Calametti, ALDOT's Southwest Region's chief engineer. "There was an environmental assessment, and it will have to be re-evaluated. It will be one of the first things we get done."

Said Rick Courtney, a Mobile attorney who represented Mobile Baykeeper – an environmental organization that was involved in the dispute years ago: "We hope they pay heed to the lessons learned."

Latest plans

ALDOT officials, including Secretary John Cooper, met with state lawmakers in Mobile on Monday to discuss the latest U.S. 98 bypass plans.

What lawmakers learned is that the project will be piecemealed and constructed in sections. And instead of a four-lane thoroughfare, the road will be paved for two lanes only.

A total of \$110 million will be dedicated to the 12-mile bypass – which will be an extension of Ala. 158 from the Mississippi-Alabama line to Schillinger Road. The BP deal will supply \$65 million, and ALDOT's 2019 and 2020 budgets will appropriate around \$50 million.

Calametti is confident that the project, as a two-lane road, will get built and serve as an alternate route to U.S. 98, which is the main state highway that transports tourists and truckers through Mobile County toward Alabama's beaches and into Florida. Long ago, it was given the ominous nickname "Bloody 98" because of the deadly crashes that often occurred there.

Calametti said his team is focused on the project's initial phases, which could be under construction as early as next summer. Those are Schillinger to Lott Road, which is about a three- or four-mile extension of new roadway, and Lott Road to McCrary Road.

"They are the projects that are almost completely designed," said Calametti. "We can get shovels into the ground very quickly."

He said that there's sufficient funding to complete drainage and grading for a four-lane road to the Mississippi line. But paving the road into a four-lane highway will have to wait, he said.

"This is something that is not unheard of and happens quite regularly," Calametti said about preparing for a four-lane road but only building two lanes. "When Rangeline Road was first built, it was graded and drained for four lanes but two lanes were originally opened.

Some years later, the other two lanes were paved."

The newer extensions will tie into an already-finished eight-mile stretch, which has long been dubbed the "road to nowhere" because it doesn't connect with anything. That extension, which cost the state around \$80 million, was stopped amid the environmental

concerns that publicly surfaced in 2007.

Before any new construction can take place, a new environmental assessment will have to be completed.

And the pressure is on to get it right this time, especially after local lawmakers fought last month in Montgomery to secure \$65 million of BP funds – all of which was dedicated to U.S. 98, despite wishes elsewhere in the region for road projects to stem rising congestion.

The road money from Alabama's \$1 billion BP settlement [was approved during last month's special legislative session](#), after the coast fended off demands by north Alabama lawmakers to pour all of the dollars into paying down the state's debts.

"The pressure remains on all of us ... the city, the county, the Legislature and the governor and ALDOT because it is not done yet," said state Sen. Bill Hightower, R-Mobile, and a leading lawmaker in efforts to dedicate a portion of the BP settlement for roadwork. Skepticism and hope

Meanwhile, there's still skepticism about the project at the grass-roots level, particularly around the Wilmer area.

Among the doubters is Larry Godfrey, the longtime owner of a campground where some of the previous construction problems and silt runoff occurred.

"If four lanes are put in during your lifetime ... I don't believe it will happen," said Godfrey, who at age 72, is attempting to sell the Escatawapa Hollow Campground. "My experience with ALDOT is they won't tell you the truth."

The previous U.S. 98 project, which was under way in the mid-2000s, was halted after the Press-Register documented numerous state and federal environmental violations. Among the findings was massive mud fouling the Escatawapa River, several creeks and Big Creek Lake, the region's main drinking water source.

A lack of funding prevented the estimated \$180 million project from restarting under a new design before the BP money surfaced.

Also, from a public standpoint, the project began to take a back seat to other larger and more high-profile construction jobs, namely a long-dreamed \$850 million Interstate 10 Bridge and Bayway expansion across Mobile Bay. Godfrey thinks that this intentional on ALDOT's part: "It's way under the radar. And they want to keep it under the radar."

But ALDOT and state lawmakers have never wavered in describing U.S. 98 as the No. 1 priority. Even northern lawmakers, who pushed against awarding BP compensation to roads, believe that wrapping up the U.S. 98 bypass will elevate their projects to the top of the priority heap.

U.S. 98 is among the most dangerous roads in the region, with more than 50 fatal crashes occurring from 1995-2008 on the 17-mile stretch from U.S. 98 from the Mississippi-Alabama line to the Mobile city limits.

Tiffany Waite, who recently purchased a local landmark general store called Snuffy Smith's near Wilmer, is concerned about the fast-moving truck traffic that roars by. "You really can't pull out of here. It's really dangerous," she said.

Jacob Crason, who recently moved into a house on U.S. 98 near the store, said there is too much truck traffic on the highway. Once U.S. 98 traverses into Mississippi, it widens to four lanes. Mississippi, in the 1980s, approved a highway spending plan that established a four-lane U.S. 98 from Hattiesburg to the Alabama line.

"It's like Mississippi built it but Alabama didn't want to finish it," said Crason. "Apparently, Alabama is too cheap."

But with the money now available, and plans in place to ensure environmental compliance, confidence is rising that the project will forge ahead successfully.

Semmes Mayor-elect David Baker said his constituents feel like the bypass is on the right track. "I don't believe they ever gave up hope," he said. "There are basically frustrations that it's taken so long. But they believed at some point, the construction and road would come to light again."

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Seeks Comment on Draft Comprehensive Plan Update

Today is the deadline to submit comments on the Restoration Council's updated Draft Comprehensive Plan. [Follow this link to learn about the updated plan and to submit comments.](#)

Hundreds of laws at stake with Amendment 14 on Alabama ballot

By [Mike Cason | \[mikercason@al.com\]\(mailto:mikercason@al.com\)](mailto:mikercason@al.com)

Voters statewide will decide the fates of 14 proposed amendments to the Alabama Constitution on Nov. 8. The topics range widely – from protecting money for state parks to expanding the Auburn University board of trustees. A few affect only one county. Voters might find some of the amendments confusing unless they do some homework before heading to the polls. An example is Amendment 14, which officials say is needed to save hundreds of local laws from legal jeopardy. "All 67 counties would have something at stake should this go down," Sen. Cam Ward, R-Alabaster, said. The issue goes back to another amendment added to the state Constitution in 1984. Amendment 448 requires legislators to pass the state budgets before other bills. The budgets are long, detailed documents that need lots of fine-tuning, so lawmakers circumvent the mandate to approve them first. To do that, they pass a "budget isolation resolution" for each bill they consider before the budgets, which is allowed under Amendment 448. The so-called BIR vote is ingrained in the legislative routine.

In December, a court ruled that a Jefferson County sales tax law was invalid because the BIR vote did not get the required three-fifths

vote. Amendment 448 says approval requires three-fifths of a quorum, meaning at least 32 votes in the House. But a House of Representatives rule says approval requires three-fifths of those voting, a lower standard. The Jefferson County sales tax bill passed the House after a 13-3 vote on the BIR. Hundreds of other local bills have become law since the 1980s with BIR approval by fewer than 32 votes in the House. That's because it's customary for House members to abstain on local bills outside their districts. The court ruling invalidating the Jefferson County law is on appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court. Ward said more than 600 local laws would be ripe for lawsuits if the Supreme Court upholds the decision.

That would "pretty much guarantee that any other challenges will sail right through," said Ward, who sponsored the bill to put Amendment 14 on the ballot. Local laws that are potentially at risk affect sales taxes, gasoline taxes, property taxes, court costs, pistol permit fees, Sunday alcohol sales, annexations and dozens of other matters. One example is a Chilton County law passed in 2014 to allow a referendum for a 1-cent sales tax to build a hospital. St. Vincent's Chilton Hospital will have a grand opening on Sept. 30. Amendment 14 would ratify and validate all the bills that have passed under the House BIR rule. Sonny Brasfield, executive director of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, said Amendment 14 is the logical way to resolve a technicality that jeopardizes established laws needed to deliver government services. Brasfield said it's not practical to think that the Legislature could pass them again. Local bills have to be advertised for four consecutive weeks before passing, and Brasfield said that alone would cost an estimated \$3 to \$4 million. Brasfield said he's worried because there are 13 other amendments before Amendment 14 on the ballot.

"Sometimes voters lose interest," Brasfield said.

Ward said mayors, county commissioners, sheriffs and other local officials have participated in conference calls about the importance of approving Amendment 14. He said they will be the leading the effort to get the word out.

"That's going to be your principal cheerleaders and surrogates out there because they realize what it can do to so many local laws and sources of funding," Ward said.

There is a new resource to help voters understand the proposed amendments. The Legislature passed a bill in 2015 to create the Fair Ballot Commission. The commission writes summaries of constitutional amendments in plain language, easier to digest than the legalistic wording of some amendments. [The summaries](#) are on the Secretary of State's website. Continue [HERE](#).

Transportation Research

2016 GRITS Annual Meeting

*November 14-16, 2016
L'Auberge Hotel Casino
Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNTS - EXTENDED UNTIL October 14th!

We are looking forward to the 8th Annual GRITS Meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana! This year we are offering COMPLEMENTARY registrations and 2017 memberships to all of our student and municipal attendees, just select "Municipal" or "Student" as your registration type!

[Special thanks to our 2016 GRITS Annual Meeting Sponsors!!!](#)

BTS Releases Geographic Databases for 2016

The U.S. Department of Transportation's [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#) (BTS) released the 2016 edition of the [National Transportation Atlas Database](#) (NTAD) this week. The NTAD is a compilation of datasets representing the nation's transportation infrastructure, including more than 500,000 miles of roadway, over 600,000 bridges, and in excess of 19,000 airports. This year's NTAD consists of over 60 individual data layers, most of which have been updated within the last year. The NTAD also includes several new features: the U.S. portion of the North American Rail Network, truck parking, and road and airport noise layers. The 2016 NTAD marks the end of the traditional annual update. BTS will now begin using a dynamic publication cycle, making updated data available throughout the year, allowing for more timely delivery to users. Also new this year, NTAD will be available exclusively online. To offer larger and more complex data sets and enhanced functionality, DVDs have been eliminated. The enhanced online NTAD datasets allow for customizable downloads and APIs. They are available as GeoJSON and GeoServices (REST) services and are also available for download as shapefiles, kml and csv files. Contacts: Press: Dave Smallen: (202) 366-5568. For technical information: Dominic Menegus: (202) 366-8717.

SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Safety is pleased to announce the availability of several new resources to help States implement the [Safety Performance Management Measures](#) Final Rule under 23 CFR 490. These resources, available at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/spm/>, include:

- **State Serious Injury Conversion Tables:** assist States in reporting serious injuries per the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition attribute for "Suspected Serious Injury (A)." States that do not currently use the MMUCC 4th Edition attribute should use the conversion tables to convert the equivalent data from their State's Motor Vehicle Crash Database. The conversion tables also provide the equivalent definitions for pedestrian and pedalcyclist as defined in the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) D16.1-2007 for States to report the required number of non-motorized serious injuries.
- **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet:** highlights the requirements specific to

MPOs and provides a comparison of MPO and State DOT responsibilities.

- **2018-2019 HSIP Safety Performance Targets Timeline:** provides important dates for the safety performance target process, including coordination, target establishment, reports, and assessment of significant progress.
- **Safety Performance Measures Resources and Support:** provides a list of training opportunities, tools, and capacity-building resources.

Pocket Guide to Transportation Statistics

If you need transportation statistics at a moment's notice – for example, if you want to see a list of the most congested urban areas or if you want to find the busiest Amtrak stations – the Bureau of Transportation Statistics has a solution for you.

As we mark the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, BTS is introducing its most innovative product yet – a smartphone app for the [Pocket Guide to Transportation](#).



[Click Here to continue reading Introducing the Pocket Guide to Transportation App](#)

AASHTO Releases Federal Surface Transportation Authorization Portal

AASHTO has developed a portal for information on federal surface transportation authorization. This is a regularly updated resource on MAP-21 reauthorization and implementation of the **Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development

by Carrie Kissel

In March 2016, the NADO Research Foundation held a focus group on the link between transportation and economic development, and how state departments of transportation and regional planning and development organizations can work together to better plan for those issues in an integrated way. The focus group participants included regional, state, and federal agency staff and others with experience in both transportation and economic development programs. During the conversation, the focus group participants developed a definition of economic development that emphasizes doing economic development and transportation planning differently, and can be used to help frame related planning efforts:

Economic development in transportation involves deliberate interventions to produce tangible benefits that are specific to the context, are sustained over time, and make a place more resilient.

This new report, [Advancing Collaborative Planning: Summary of a National Focus Group on Transportation and Economic Development\(PDF\)](#), explores how the participants' definition of economic development can be applied in transportation planning. The report documents the themes of the focus group discussion, including economic development impacts, resilience, and state department of transportation (DOT) and regional planning and development organization roles in working together. Read about the highlights of the discussion and about noteworthy practices shared by participants that can institutionalize consideration of transportation and economic development together.

Transportation Dictionary

The USDOT released a searchable online dictionary that includes over 9,000 transportation terms and acronyms. The terms were collected from a variety of public and private transportation publications and databases. This dictionary presents over 9,000 terms and acronyms related to transportation. The terms and acronyms were obtained from various transportation publications and databases which exist within the federal government, private organizations, Canada and Mexico.

Search Tips

- Sources are listed in parenthesis after the definition.
- None of the searches are case sensitive. Searching for PEDESTRIAN will produce the same results as searching for pedestrian.
- The Dictionary searches for the word, phrase or acronym as it is entered and returns all records that match or contain that word, phrase or acronym. For example, searching for pedestrian will return records for pedestrian and pedestrian walkway.

Click [HERE](#) for the search engine.