



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, September 18th, 2015

Volume 15, Number 11

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Recently Completed Planning Studies

Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones
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 Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
 Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study

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A new round of 5310 awards has been announced; see *Mobile MPO Updates*; There is a **RPO meeting** scheduled Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 2:00 PM at the Baldwin County Central Annex at 22251 Palmer Street in Robertsdale. This week's *Just For Fun* will make you cross...

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

FTA 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Awards

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Designated Recipient for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 *Urban Area Funding* for the Mobile Urban Area. In July, we awarded \$265,410 of federal funds for both operating and capital. We had almost \$500,000 remaining of un-awarded funds for capital only, so we re-advertised the call for projects. The FTA 5310 Project Selection Committee met on September 11, 2015 and awarded the following for capital projects:

AGENCY	FEDERAL AMOUNT	CAPITAL / OPERATING
Mobile ARC	\$163,886	Capital
City of Saraland	\$43,200	Capital
City of Satsuma	\$24,800	Capital
Goodwill Easter Seals	\$43,200	Capital
City of Prichard SAIL Center	\$43,200	Capital
	\$318,286	

This coming summer we will have another round of funding. There will only be around \$100,000 for operations (paying your drivers) and about \$300,000 for capital (vehicles).

ADA Transition Plans

Each City in the Mobile MPO Study Area and Mobile County now has an appointed ADA Coordinator, thank you for your cooperation. The FHWA has required that every city and county in the state have an ADA Transition Plan, and Urban Areas will have a one year deadline. The ADA Coordinators create a nine member ADA Subcommittee of the MPO. The first task was to select a consultant through the ALDOT Alternative Consultant Selection Procedures.

The available ADA Coordinators have met, and selected Neel-Schaffer to do the work. We are currently negotiating a contract with Neel-Schaffer, and will keep you posted on the progress of this study.

(for areas outside the boundaries of an MPO, ALDOT is working on a time line for you, and you will not follow the same timeline as the Urban areas)



Toole Design Group is finalizing the recommendations of the *Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile*. For anyone interested in the Power Point given by Ernie Boughman with Toole Design Group, please see [HERE](#)

GIS online

We are upgrading and starting to utilize our online GIS capabilities. Please check out some of the current interactive maps we have been working on. Many more to come...

<http://mobilempo.org/maps.html>

DESTINATION 2040

The Mobile MPO [Long Range Transportation Plan](#), Destination 2040, has been adopted, subsequent comments from ALDOT, FHWA, and FTA. The DRAFT document that was out for public review and reviewed with MPO and TCC/CAC members may have some slight modifications in the FINAL Document. The FINAL will be out next week.

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 September 25th, 2015

Mobile County

for constructing the Bridge Replacement and Approaches on CR-23 (Padgett Switch Road) over Carls Creek in Bayou La Batre. Length 0.467 mi.

Baldwin County

None at this time

Escambia County

for constructing the Bridge Replacements (Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, and Bridges) on SR-41 (Conecuh River and Relief) in Riverview. Length 0.826 mi.

[What's Under Construction?](#)

Legislative Updates

The House and Senate are both in session this week. The Pope is in Washington, DC for three days next week, including an address to a joint session of Congress on Wednesday. The House is on recess next week, while the Senate will be in session for most of the week.

The Big Question: When?

Yesterday was supposed to be the day the House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee marked up a multi-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal. This would be the House answer to the Senate's DRIVE Act, which passed at the end of August. Cracks in the House plan began showing last week when the release of the bill text was delayed, and the death blow came last Friday when T&I Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) announced the markup itself would be delayed as well. So, the question has become: When will we see a bill?

Chairman Shuster indicated the release of a bill will be pushed off until the end of September or early October. Unless there is some serious progress by the House Ways and Means Committee on a pay for, there is good reason to doubt that prediction as well. Meanwhile, it has become crystal clear that Congress will need to extend – again – the existing program when it expires at the end of October. There is no way a bill can pass the House, be conferenced, pass both chambers again, and make it to the President in time. Meanwhile, NARC is using this delay wisely. We have held dozens of meetings with individual offices to put a laser focus on our priorities and help ensure a good outcome when a bill is finally released.

GAO Report Confirms Need for Positive Train Control Deadline Extension

A recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded that most U.S. railroads will not meet the Positive Train Control (PTC) deadline currently set for December 31. Other findings of the report conclude that most railroads will need one to five years to complete implementation and that the Federal Railway

Administration was insufficient in monitoring implementation. The Administration and Senate and House leaders are working to extend the deadline to prevent hardships for passengers and freight service.

TAP FUNDS

Last week, House transportation Democrats sent a letter to fellow minority party ranking members outlining the importance of continued support for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) in the House transportation bill. The letter can be read [HERE](#).

Funding Opportunities

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

A transportation crossword puzzle? WHY? Just For Fun... The first person to beat my score of 100 gets a free Long Range Transportation Plan; *Destination 2040*

TRANSPORTATION CROSSWORD

Z A Z Y A B D M B V K P K X Y T Y U F P	AIRPLANE <input type="text" value="solve"/>
B Y U E C N W C G E U Y D N U I O T X G	SHIP <input type="text" value="solve"/>
G O H H Z O Y C W P W X I B N F D E X G	MOTORCYCLE <input type="text" value="solve"/>
D X A O P Y O U J J Y H T F L J E K L G	TRAM <input type="text" value="solve"/>
Q D U T V U R V B F O M F J J J J V E U	TAXI <input type="text" value="solve"/>
I X Z W F E L U G M E H Q W V D M B Q T	JET <input type="text" value="solve"/>
E G J E G N R K M P X L Y K W A H J U Y	TRUCK <input type="text" value="solve"/>
K Y T G O W L C B P E Q C N N Q I Y P B	BUS <input type="text" value="solve"/>
T Z Q W S X T V R O R N Y Y I C L O I V	VAN <input type="text" value="solve"/>
K L A R H A N T I A S V E V C L R T H W	HELICOPTER <input type="text" value="solve"/>
C I H O X W R D D O F W F T O R S V S R	TROLLY <input type="text" value="solve"/>
U V T I L A S I D T O T A R P Y O G E F	CAR <input type="text" value="solve"/>
R V R J M F F N G E O I T N M N L T G N	BOAT <input type="text" value="solve"/>
T P A D L Z F G X J R U L I J I P E O C	TRAIN <input type="text" value="solve"/>
L H I S Q O P C O P M B H K T O N C Q M	HOVER CRAFT <input type="text" value="solve"/>
C Q N V A H A J L Z U L J J C Q V O R I	
S Y E Z N R B A N S L A A I W A V K K V	
U B G P Z N N S C K S V L X N C U H M G	
J F U N L E Z J A P A E Y O T D Z P R C	
M F Y G K W X A H Q H A R R P M M J I U	

In the News

Projects in Alabama's Black Belt to receive \$11.5 million in federal funds



By [Erin Edgemon | eedgemon@al.com](#)
[Follow on Twitter](#)

Email the author
on September 16, 2015 at 1:49 PM, updated September 16, 2015 at 1:50 PM

The Delta Regional Authority along with officials from the state of Alabama will announce more than \$11.5 million in federal dollars for projects in Alabama's Black Belt.

Gov. Robert Bentley and Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Director Jim Byard will take part in the Thursday morning announcement at Alabama State Capitol.

The investments are made through the Delta Regional Authority States Economic Development Assistance Program, which invests in basic public infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, workforce development and business development projects in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region.

"Federal investments are important for these projects because a minimal investment of state funds can bring a large return in federal dollars and result in a greater economic impact for the Delta Region in Alabama," according to a release from Bentley's office

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces up to \$42 Million in Next Generation Connected Vehicle Technologies: New York City, Tampa, FL and Wyoming Selected for Competitive Pilot Programs

WASHINGTON –This week, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx made a major announcement on the future of vehicles that will make driving safer, cleaner, and more efficient. At the New York City Joint Management Traffic Center, the Secretary revealed that New York City, Wyoming, and Tampa, FL will receive up to \$42 million to pilot next-generation technology in infrastructure and in vehicles to share and communicate anonymous information with each other and their surroundings in real time, reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, and cutting the unimpaired vehicle crash rate by 80 percent.

As part of the Department of Transportation (USDOT) national Connected Vehicle Pilot deployment program, the locations were selected in a competitive process to go beyond traditional vehicle technologies to help drivers better use the roadways to get to work and appointments, relieve the stress caused by bottlenecks, and communicate with pedestrians on cell phones of approaching vehicles.

"Today's announcement is a big step forward for the future of how we move in this country, from our rural communities to our biggest cities," said Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "It has been a core mission of the Department to support promising new technologies, and through these types of smart investments we are opening the door to a safer and cleaner network and expanding how future generations travel."

New York City will install Vehicle to Vehicle (V2V) technology in up to 10,000 city-owned vehicles; including cars, buses, and limousines, that frequently travel in Midtown Manhattan, as well as Vehicle to Infrastructure (V2I) technology throughout Midtown. This includes upgrading traffic signals with V2I technology along avenues between 14th Street and 66th Street in Manhattan and throughout Brooklyn. Additionally, roadside units will be equipped with connected vehicle technology along the FDR Drive between 50th Street and 90th Street.

U.S. DOT made an additional commitment to empowering cities to solve congestion and safety issues with connected vehicle technology by awarding \$17 million to solve peak rush hour congestion in downtown Tampa and to protect the city's pedestrians by equipping their smartphones with the same connected technology being put into the vehicles. Tampa also committed to measuring the environmental benefits of using this technology.

Moody's Cites Solid Finances of Mobile County September 15, 2015

Citing Mobile County's "solid financial position and affordable debt burden," Moody's Investors Service assigned an Aa2 rating to a new borrowing program.

"We continue to abide by strict borrowing and spending limits and the reward is a high credit rating and lower borrowing costs," said Mobile County Commission President Jerry Carl.

Moody's gives an upbeat forecast of the future for Mobile County, anticipating "significant upcoming industrial and commercial growth," along with "benefits from a diverse economic base."

Importantly, the Moody's report notes that the county's "financial position will remain stable over the near term after two consecutive years of surpluses and further improvement expected in fiscal 2014 and 2015."

Nevertheless it does report that the surpluses followed four years of declines and a \$32.1 million or 23.3 percent

drop in General Fund revenues.

Mobile County Finance Director Michelle Herman has said she anticipates a surplus at the end of this fiscal year as well, due primarily to an increase in sales tax revenues. The fiscal year ends September 30.

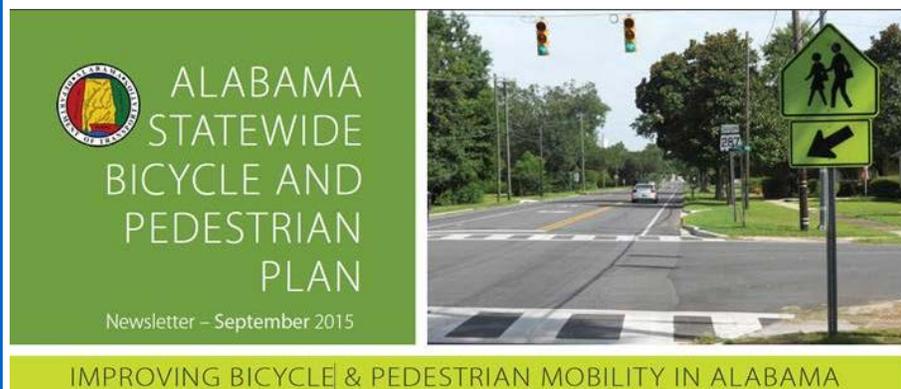
With the implementation of a Debt Service Policy, the county's debt burden "remains affordable over the near term, given low direct debt levels," according to Moody's.

"A stable bond rating instills confidence in Mobile County as a breeding ground for successful businesses," said Mobile County Commissioner Merceria Ludgood. "We need to stay the course."

The Moody's report cites Airbus as the newest generator of new businesses and jobs, including the \$37 million Honeywell Inc. power facility and the MAAS paint hanger, both at Brookley Aeroplex.

Mobile County also is the beneficiary of the second largest natural gas reserve in the world, according to Moody's, with 20 onshore and 16 offshore gas fields. Chemicals, shipping, the Port of Mobile and the University of South Alabama remain critical economic engines, the report said.

"Besides low borrowing costs, good budgetary practices create a stable environment for county government and economic growth," said Mobile County Commissioner Connie Hudson.



IMPROVING BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY IN ALABAMA



Purpose of the Plan

- Establish a vision for bicycling and walking as modes of transportation in Alabama
- Help guide investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities that maximize limited available funding



Moving Forward

This fall, we will hold five Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan regional public workshops – one in each of the five ALDOT regions. We encourage your participation. Your input about your community's bicycle and pedestrian needs allows all of us to utilize resources more wisely and efficiently. The dates, times, and locations of these workshops will soon be available on the project website.



Where are We in the Planning Process?

In July, the Project Advisory Committee held its first meeting and discussed several topics.

- Federal and state plans and policies
- National best practices
- Goals for bicycling and walking in Alabama.

The Project Advisory Committee is a diverse body representing transportation, health, trails, bicycling, conservation and community planning, and economic development organizations. The Committee is scheduled to meet three times during the year-long planning process.



We want to know how we can better serve your walking and bicycling needs. We invite and encourage you to participate in our online survey. Click [HERE](#) to take our survey.



If you know of others who are interested in bicycle and pedestrian transportation, please encourage them to take the survey located in this newsletter or on the ALDOT website: www.dot.state.al.us

Anyone interested in receiving future email updates and online newsletters may submit their contact information to ALDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian [Team](#).

Never look back unless you are planning to go that way.

Congressman Bradley Byrne to host Town Hall in Midtown



Midtown Mobile Town Hall Meeting
September 21st; 6:00 to 7:00 pm
Via Health, Fitness, and Enrichment Center; 1716 Dauphin Street; Mobile

Transportation Research

Last day for the early bird discount for the third Emerald Coast Transportation Symposium, November 12 & 13 at Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort!

The Third Emerald Coast Transportation Symposium will be held November 12 and 13 at [Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort](#) near Destin, Florida. The Transportation Symposium provides a forum for leadership in transportation by enhancing cross-organization collaboration, developing lasting local and regional partnerships, sharing best practices, and giving innovators a platform to inspire others. This year's event will bring together professionals and policy-makers to openly discuss ways in which our transportation system can be updated to meet the 21st century economic and environmental realities.

Keynote speakers and panelists for the November 12-13 event include:

- **FDOT Secretary Jim Boxold**, delivering the symposium kick-off address
- **Dr. Jim Johnson**, "a geographer with a PhD, a professor with an endowed chair at a leading business school, an expert on poverty, and a tireless activist for social justice"
- **Dan Burden**, director of innovation and inspiration at **Blue Zones**
- **Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti**, executive director of **Florida's Turnpike Enterprise**
- **James Mazzuto** from **Make It Right Solar** in New Orleans.

A draft program of all panel topics and keynote speakers on the event [web site](#).

The two-day event is hosted by the [West Florida Regional Planning Council](#), Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization and the Bay, Gulf, Holmes, Washington Regional Transportation Partnership. **Many thanks to our generous sponsors!**

Registration is \$175 until 4 p.m. today and you may register [online](#). For more information or details on sponsorship opportunities, visit [www.transportationsymposium.org](#) or call 800-226-8914, extension 204.

- **[FHWA and AASHTO Release Findings on Guardrail Terminal Crash Analysis](#)**, 9/11/2015

Real-world crash data collected and evaluated by a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) joint task force suggest that extruding w-beam guardrail end terminals made by several different manufacturers experienced performance limitations in certain impact and installation scenarios. These limitations have led the task force to make several recommendations, including implementation of next generation of guardrail terminal crash test criteria for new installations.

Travel Monitoring

Traffic Volume Trends



Traffic Volume Trends is a monthly report based on hourly traffic count data reported by the States. These data are collected at approximately 4,000 continuous traffic counting locations nationwide and are used to estimate the percent change in traffic for the current month compared with the same month in the previous year. Estimates are re-adjusted annually to match the vehicle miles of travel from the Highway Performance Monitoring System and are continually updated with additional data.

2015



Monthly Report	PDF Version	XLS Version
June 2015	PDF (366 KB)	XLS (488 KB)
May 2015	PDF (366 KB)	XLS (486 KB)
April 2015	PDF (353 KB)	XLS (319 KB)
March 2015	PDF (353 KB)	XLS (319 KB)
February 2015	PDF (353 KB)	XLS (319 KB)
January 2015	PDF (353 KB)	XLS (319 KB)