



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, March 1, 2013

Volume 5, Number 9

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## Recently Completed Planning Studies

[Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones](#)

[Mobile County Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#)

[Intelligent Transportation System Diversion Route Planning Study](#)

[Click Here to see when and where federal and state projects will be happening in your area.](#)

## Contact Us

<http://www.mobilempo.org>

[transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org)

Kevin Harrison, PTP  
Director of Transportation  
[kharrison@sarpc.org](mailto:kharrison@sarpc.org)

Tom Piper  
Senior Transportation Planner  
[tpiper@sarpc.org](mailto:tpiper@sarpc.org)

Monica Williamson  
Transportation Planner  
[mwilliamson@sarpc.org](mailto:mwilliamson@sarpc.org)

Anthony Johnson  
Transportation Planner  
[ajohnson@sarpc.org](mailto:ajohnson@sarpc.org)

We hope everyone has had a great week. The Mobile MPO is mentioned in the nationally distributed magazine *The Engineering News-Record* pertaining to the **Mobile MPO Climate Change Study**. Also we have several meetings this month (TCC/CAC March 13<sup>th</sup>, MPO March 27<sup>th</sup>) so please see MPO Updates. Today is the last day for application for the EPA's *Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA)* program and don't forget the TIFIA webinar; please see *Funding Opportunities*. The Mobile Chamber of Commerce is hosting a breakfast forum with Senator Richard Shelby; Please see *In The News*.

Also, recently Kevin has presented to the [Lions Club](#), the [Rotary Club](#) and the [Mobile Business Group](#) spreading the transportation gospel; the latest presentation as requested is at [www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org).

Have a great weekend.

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

## Mobile MPO Updates

### MARCH MADNESS

**March 6<sup>th</sup> 10:00AM - Mobile MPO Climate Change meeting**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM - Mobile MPO TCC/CAC meeting**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> 12:00 PM - Mobile MPO BPAC meeting**

**March 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> – SARPC Annual Meeting (please see *In The News*)**

**March 27<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM- Mobile MPO meeting**

### Climate Change Workgroup

Please mark your calendars for March 6, 10:00 a.m. in the SARPC Training room for a meeting of the Mobile MPO Climate Change Workgroup. If you recall, this is an ongoing FHWA study utilizing input from the Mobile MPO Climate Change Workgroup; the meeting is open to the public. The federal team will be here from all parts of the country to receive input on the recent work that they have done. They are wrapping up the vulnerability assessment and would like to discuss the draft results, and also to select assets that will undergo the detailed engineering assessment. Please plan on attending.

Earlier this week, Kevin Harrison was interviewed by the Engineering News-Record about the Mobile MPO Climate Change Study [\[HERE\]](#). Although this is just a mentioning of the study, the reporter said that this is preamble to a bigger story involving studies like the Mobile MPO Climate Change Study.

[A report by the U.S. DOT's Center for Climate Change and Environmental Forecasting and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) that focuses on Mobile, Ala., is scheduled for completion this year. Its aim is to provide replicative methods and tools that address potential impacts. "We have [in Mobile] a major port, rail, airports, Interstates, tunnels and a major downtown on the river," says Kevin Harrison, director of transportation planning, South Alabama Regional Planning Commission. "It comes down to climate adaptation and education on what that is."]

### BPAC Meeting

A Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting has been scheduled to be held at the GM&O Building in the board room on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. This will be a bring your own, brown bag lunch meeting. This meeting is open to the public. Some items on the agenda include a discussion about the new Transportation Alternatives Program funding, the process to review all road projects for inclusion or exclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, a discussion about the future Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge regarding including bicycle and pedestrian facilities vs. mitigation alternatives, and a discussion about improving pedestrian crossings at major intersections downtown.

### Mobile MPO/TCC/CAC/BPAC

There will be a Mobile MPO Technical Coordinating Committee/Citizens advisory Committee (TCC/CAC) meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup>, directly before the Mobile MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting. The TCC/CAC meeting will be at 10:00 AM and then the BPAC meeting will be at 12:00 PM. We will end the TCC/CAC meeting in order for those members of both committees to go get lunch for the BPAC "bring your own lunch" meeting. The items on the

agenda for the TCC/CAC meeting include:

- SARPC to be the FTA 5310 Designated Recipient?
- Congestion Management Process (CMP) Document ([please review](#))
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Mobile MPO STP Attributable funds (we are out of balance AGAIN)
- Possibility of updating the Public Involvement Program (PIP)

Recommendations from the TCC/CAC March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting will go before the MPO Policy Board at the March 27<sup>th</sup> MPO meeting. Your participation in these committees is extremely appreciated, and without your assistance federal transportation projects could not move forward.

## Projects Within Region Let February 22, 2013

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MOBILE COUNTY

for constructing the Grade, Drain, Base, and Pave on Broad Street from Michigan Avenue to 15th Street west of I-10 in Mobile. Length 0.982 mi.

## Legislative Updates

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### Sequester what?

Transportation has become the latest flash point in the battle over sequestration, with Democrats and the White House warning travelers they could be in for long lines and flight delays as a result of the automatic cuts, set to go into effect on Friday.

"We can fix this," said Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine (D) this week during a press conference at Reagan National Airport. "It doesn't have to be this way. We need to embrace a reasonable path of deficit reduction." But Republican leaders on transportation issues say the claims of flight delays of up to 90 minutes during peak times at major airports and long security lines are exaggerated.

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### Some Thought Provoking Transportation Videos from the AASHTO Washington Briefing.

Secretary LaHood Speaks at AASHTO Washington Briefing... Closing statements include *"Sequester is a dumb idea"*

[Link to video on Transportation TV](#)

Chairman Shuster Speaks at AASHTO Washington Briefing

[Link to video on Transportation TV](#)

Rep. Tom Petri Speaks at AASHTO Washington Briefing

[Link to video on Transportation TV](#)

Congressional Transportation Committee Chairs Say They're Open to Ideas

[Link to article in Governing](#)

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### Transportation Infrastructure Bill Introduced

Sens. John Davison "Jay" Rockefeller, D-W.Va., and Frank R. Lautenberg, D-N.J., [have introduced](#) legislation that they say would leverage federal investment to rebuild and expand transportation infrastructure.

The American Infrastructure Investment Fund Act of 2013 would establish a \$5 billion fund to provide incentives for private, state and regional investments in transportation projects nationwide by providing eligible projects with financial assistance.

"This bill would establish a creative new way to leverage federal funding and increase investment in projects that will expand rail capacity, like the Gateway Tunnel, and projects that will modernize our ports and other infrastructure to meet the growing demands of the 21st century," said Lautenberg in a written statement.

- See more at: [http://www.joc.com/regulation-policy/transportation-policy/united-states/transportation-infrastructure-bill-introduced\\_20130227.html#sthash.BarFvueM.dpuf](http://www.joc.com/regulation-policy/transportation-policy/united-states/transportation-infrastructure-bill-introduced_20130227.html#sthash.BarFvueM.dpuf)

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### Alabama lawmakers pass bills to provide \$25 million in matching funds for counties for roads and bridges

The Alabama House of Representatives and Senate passed bills this week intended to help some counties obtain matching funds to draw federal money to pay for bridge and road projects.

The bills, by Sen. Paul Bussman, R-Cullman, and Rep. Mac McCutcheon, R-Huntsville, would allow the Alabama Highway Finance Corporation to issue up to \$25 million in bonds that could be used for the matching funds. The Alabama Highway Finance Corporation is a public corporation established by the Legislature to sell bonds for road projects.

Either Bussman's bill or McCutcheon's bill would have to pass the other house to become law. The \$25 million will be used to fund the Rural Assistance Match Program. Twenty-two counties opted to participate in RAMP. They can receive up to \$1 million from the state to obtain up to \$4 million in federal funds for bridge and road projects.[\[HERE\]](#)

As a tradeoff, those counties will not take part in the next round of competition for dollars under the [Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program](#). *[As a note, no agency from within the 3 county region of SARPC applied for the RAMP, therefore all are allowed to take part of the next round of ATRIP]*

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#### **Webinar on Federal Budget and Transportation**

NARC's March Webinar on Federal Budget and Transportation: On March 12, 2013, from 12:00-2:00pm ET, NARC's Transportation Funding and Finance Subcommittee will host its next, monthly Transportation Committee webinar. March is an important month in the federal budget process, with several transportation-related implications. This webinar will review the connection between the federal budget process, provide an update on the potential impacts of the federal sequester and review national level trends in funding transportation. Click [HERE](#) to register and [HERE](#) for the agenda.

## Funding Opportunities

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#### **FHWA TIFIA WEBINAR:**

FHWA Hosts TIFIA Webinar: On March 7, 2013 from 1:30-3:30pm ET, the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Innovative Program Delivery will host a webinar for state departments of transportation, MPOs and other interested parties on the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA). This webinar will help participants understand TIFIA fundamentals, identify eligible projects, provide better guidance on how TIFIA works, and enable transportation professionals to provide better guidance to state and local partners. Register [HERE](#).

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#### **FHWA Solicitation for INVEST Implementation Projects**

The [INVEST self-evaluation tool](#), a sustainability working group, and the creation of a Sustainable Pavements Program are among the efforts underway at FHWA to help State and local agencies document and improve the sustainability of the Nation's roadways. For years, FHWA has supported research, development, and implementation efforts at the forefront of the sustainability movement. The sustainable highways initiative supports the various activities conducted across FHWA to facilitate balanced decision-making among environmental, economic, and social values—the triple bottom line of sustainability.

In the summer of 2010, FHWA convened a sustainability working group to build capacity and encourage communication and coordination on sustainability concepts and practices within the agency. The group consists of engineers, scientists, planners, and economists with expertise in planning, design, construction, pavement, storm water management, natural resources, and livability. It meets regularly to coordinate activities, foster increased application of sustainability principles, and provide guidance to FHWA on developing best practices and establishing standardized sustainability measures.

Multiple awards of approximately \$25,000 to \$150,000 are anticipated, though projects may be larger or smaller depending on the context, scope, and approach. By Federal statute, a 100% non-Federal match (50-50 cost share) is required. In-kind contributions such as staffing can be counted towards the match requirement.

Each INVEST implementation project should result in a final report that details the work performed, parties involved, roles and responsibilities, issues encountered, lessons learned, sustainability improvements identified, sustainability improvements implemented, analyses of costs and benefits of implementing particular sustainability best practices, recommendations for future action, and recommendations on improving INVEST and adding to the state of the practice. The final report should be in a form that is sharable with other agencies, and may be posted to the FHWA website. <http://www.sustainablehighways.dot.gov/>

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#### **Update on the new Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) was created in the new federal transportation law, MAP-21 (P. L. 112-141), which combines three previously separate programs—Transportation Enhancements, the Recreational Trails program, and the Safe Routes to School program. Most, but not all eligible activities from these earlier programs have been preserved in the new program. Overall, funding has been reduced by about \$300 million compared to FY2012 apportionments, down to \$814 Million nationwide. TAP funding will comprise about 2 percent of total federal highway spending over the next year.

The State of Alabama will receive about \$16,670,000 in federal funding. This funding is all subject to a 20% match. \$1,700,000 will be set aside for the Recreational Trails program through ADECA. The large urban areas (with a

population over 200,000) will have \$2,670,000 set aside. Of this, the Mobile MPO will receive \$531,431 federal funds. The remaining \$12,300,000 will be administered through ALDOT and will be divided between Small Urban Areas (\$1,600,000), Rural Areas (\$3,200,000) and statewide (\$7,500,000).

Local Governments and other local or government entities with responsibility for oversight of transportation (other than State agencies and metropolitan planning organizations) are eligible for TAP funding. School districts, Colleges and Universities, nonprofits, public land agencies, transit agencies, and Tribal governments are not eligible.

The application process for these funds has not yet been developed. Notification will be forthcoming once we know more. Click [here](#) to view FHWA's Transportation Alternatives Program interim guidance.

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#### **Transportation Enhancement Funding Announcement**

*Application Due: May 3, 2013*

The Transportation Enhancement Program was not continued under the new transportation bill MAP-21. ALDOT has a small balance of TE funds for a few additional TE projects. It is ALDOT's desire to use this remaining TE Funds to correct Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Deficiencies. Therefore, to utilize all of the State's TE funds, ALDOT is soliciting applications for a few additional projects for FY 2013. The deadline is May 3, 2013 and an application can be picked up at SARPC, or please call Mr. Kevin Harrison at SARPC(251)706-4635, or Mr. Cecil Colson at ALDOT (334)353-6403. The eligible projects under this particular application are for:

1. Streetscapes to achieve compliance with ADA guidelines. A streetscape can include items such as sidewalk replacement, improvement for ADA compliance, pedestrian lighting and landscaping.
  2. Projects to make sidewalks ADA Compliant, such as curb cuts.
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#### **Bicycle Friendly America Program**

The Bicycle Friendly America program provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities, universities and businesses that actively support bicycling, and ranks states annually based on their level of bike-friendliness. Across the U.S., the interest in bicycling is skyrocketing-- and it's easy to see why. A bike is a ticket to health, mobility, freedom and fun. Bicycling isn't just a way to get from one place to another; it's an avenue to a better life. And when communities, businesses and universities get on board, great things happen. How do you capture and capitalize on the tremendous benefits of biking?

[Download the new Bicycle Friendly America Brochure](#) and click the links on the top right of the page to learn more about each of the BFA programs.

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#### **EPA's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA)**

EPA's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program is accepting applications from tribal, local, regional, and state governments and nonprofit organizations that have partnered with a governmental entity. Applications will be accepted until March 1, 2013.

SGIA provides technical assistance to help communities grow in ways that improve the local economy, the environment, and people's health. The program aims to help applicants develop solutions to local challenges, such as managing stormwater, increasing transit-oriented development, and adapting to climate change, and to share those solutions with other communities.

EPA is seeking applications in the following four categories:

1. **Community Resilience to Disasters and Climate Change** – Projects should aim to develop planning principles and building design guidelines that ensure future development provides communities with better protection against storms, floods, and other natural disasters.
2. **Redevelopment for Job Creation** – Projects should aim to support growing industries that provide quality jobs for existing residents using land use policies that direct development to existing neighborhoods, are pedestrian-friendly, allow for transit connections, and are close to businesses and public services.
3. **Manufactured and Modular Homes in Sustainable Neighborhood Design** – Projects should help communities that are using manufactured and modular homes to address sudden population and economic growth. These communities should provide a mix of uses and maximize existing streets and other infrastructure investments, community gathering spaces, and water and energy efficiency.
4. **Medical and Social Service Facilities Siting** – Projects should aim to explore planning for high-quality community service facilities, including health care centers and social services centers, in ways that support neighborhood economic development and healthy communities.

EPA will provide assistance to three to four communities selected from this round of applications.

Find additional information, including the Request for Letters of Interest, at <http://epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm>.

## Just For Fun

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**BE CAREFUL OUT THERE...**

**Top Gear: Top 10 Car Wrecks** (all in the name of science)



**With Great Reward, Comes Great Responsibility?**

*That's Not True Anymore!* Here are the Top Ten most expensive car crashes...



## In the News

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### **BRATS Fairhope Transit Hub Open House**

We have enjoyed working with BRATS and Baldwin County, to assist in the administration of the Baldwin County ARRA funds and the Davis – Bacon Requirements for the BRATS Fairhope Hub. The Baldwin County Commission invites you to attend the BRATS Fairhope Transit Hub Open House:

**Friday, March 8, 2013**

**10:00 a.m.**

BRATS Fairhope Transit Hub  
918 Fairhope Avenue  
Fairhope, Alabama

This event is open to the public and is free of charge.



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### **Mobile Chamber of Commerce**

**Forum Alabama with US Senator Richard Shelby March 11, 7:30 to 9 a.m.**

**Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel**

Breakfast tickets are \$25 for members/\$35 for potential members [RSVP here](#) or call 251-431-8621

An advocate for the state and local region, U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby will offer his perspective on the most pressing issues facing the nation, including healthcare, environmental regulations, free trade agreements and financial regulatory reforms.

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**Good Life Bicycle Ride & Hangout**  
**Sunday, May 12th, 2013**

The Good Life Foundation's Good Life Ride is Sunday, May 12, 2013! Join them for a fun ride from Fairhope to The Hangout in Gulf Shores, Alabama! The ride is mostly rural and flat through Fairhope, Magnolia Springs, Foley and Gulf Shores. The fun ride will start on De La Mare in the heart of downtown Fairhope. This year's ride will end and the fun will continue at The Hangout! There will be no Living Social coupon this year, but they are offering a reduced registration fee.

<http://www.imathlete.com/events/GoodLifeRidetoLuLus?z=1326928764199>

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**Corridor X in North Alabama**

Here is an article of interest that is not local, or is it? It seems a large number of projects from the MPO TIP were recently moved out of the schedule. BIG projects we have been waiting years to start. Once ALDOT completes the \$169 Million, 1.5 Mile section of Corridor X, maybe some funds will be freed up to be spent in the Mobile MPO area.

Construction of the final segment of Corridor X remains on schedule for completion in late 2014, according to Alabama Department of Transportation officials. Overpasses continue to take shape as crews with Archer Western Contractors inch toward fusing the new highway with Interstate 65 between Birmingham and Fultondale. The price tag for the 1.5-mile project stands at more than \$168.8 million, ALDOT spokeswoman Linda Crockett said. A network of 14 ramps and 14 bridges will carry traffic between the two routes. I-65 will be eight lanes wide, with four northbound lanes and four southbound lanes. There will be two parallel lanes on each side that will serve as flyovers carrying traffic to and from Corridor X, plans show.

[\[HERE\]](#)



**Brownfields/Economic Development Conference, May 15-17, 2013**

See the information below on an upcoming Brownfields/Economic Development conference sponsored by EPA specifically for the State of Alabama. The National Brownfields Conference is the largest event in the nation that focuses on environmental revitalization and economic redevelopment. As defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a brownfield is a property that has a presence, or potential presence, of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, thus creating complications during its expansion, redevelopment, or reuse. [EPA's Brownfields Program](#) is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse these properties. [\[HERE\]](#)

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**City of Chickasaw Bill Brooks Park Tour**

"Walk on the Board Walks" Great way to welcome Spring. Light Lunch will be served. Please call for reservations.

\$2.00 per person

Tuesday, March 19

Meet at Bill Brooks Park at 10:00am

Call 452-6464 for transportation

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**Mark your calendars**

If you are a board member of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, the annual meeting has been set for March 21-22 at the Grand Hotel; please mark your calendars. Something soon should be going out from SARPC pertaining to that meeting. This was mentioned in last week's newsletter that the final agreed upon structure is a Board of Directors which was recommended to a quorum of the Full Commission on January 23, 2013, for consideration is as follows:

- A County Commissioner from each member county appointed at the discretion of each County

Commission.

- The mayor of each large city member in each county. (State statute defines a large city as one having more than 10,000 in population based on the most recent decennial census.)
- One mayor from the small city category from each member county to represent these small cities in each county. The selected mayor from each county shall be appointed by the respective small city members from each county.
- An economic development representative appointed by each County Commission.
- A citizen member appointed by each County Commission
- Four citizen members not holding an elective office appointed at large by the elected members of the Board of Directors
- The Alabama Education Board District 1 or appointee
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District of Alabama Representative

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Chris Miller, 433-6541.

## Transportation Research

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### **Metropolitan Transportation Planning: The Evolving Legacy and an Abbreviated History of the First 50 Years**

A featured article in the November-December 2012 issue of the Transportation Research Board's Newsletter present the developments, influences, and workings that have shaped the practice of metropolitan transportation planning during the last 50 years. The urban planning provisions of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 were considered pivotal in the transition of the highway program from a rurally oriented, civil engineering-based activity to a new framework that had a major urban component and that was multimodal, interdisciplinary, and involved local officials. You can view the full article [HERE](#).

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### **Are Highways Crumbling?**

The Reason Foundation released, [Are Highways Crumbling? State and U.S. Highway Performance Trends, 1989–2008](#), which concluded that the condition of roads and bridges are better off now than they were twenty years ago. They came to this conclusion by examining measures like, highway fatalities, percentages of rural and urban interstates (as well as rural primary roads) rated in poor condition, percentages of urban interstates rated as congested, and the percentage of bridges rated as deficient, among other measures.

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### **Planning 2012**

TRB's Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board, No. 2307 summarizes 15 papers concerned with aspects of transportation planning including road investments to support oil and gas production and distribution; a new approach in community-based transportation planning; transportation-induced agglomeration effects and productivity; potential high-speed rail routes from a megaregion perspective; and the role of metropolitan planning organizations in transportation planning for megaregions.

Papers in this issue of TRR also address factors influencing walking in a small urban region; planning the secondary road network for low-speed vehicles; an alternative planning tool for a small metropolitan planning organization; practices to encourage bicycling and pedestrians on federal lands; community engagement in transportation planning; role of social media in the environmental review process; adjusting Institution of Transportation Engineers trip generation rates in urban contexts; smart growth trip generation methodologies; relationships among opportunity-based accessibility, reported land values, and resident characteristics; and teaching transportation planning with board games.

<http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/168505.aspx>

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### **2012 Annual Urban Mobility Report**

<http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/>

Research Report: *Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)*

The 2012 Urban Mobility Report builds on previous Urban Mobility Reports with an improved methodology and expanded coverage of the nation's urban congestion problems and solutions. The website contains links to information on long-term congestion trends, the most recent congestion comparisons and a description of many congestion improvement strategies.

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### **Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning for Healthy Communities**

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/health\\_in\\_transportation/resources/mpohealthywhitepaper.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/health_in_transportation/resources/mpohealthywhitepaper.cfm)

White Paper: *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)*

The FHWA report develops a framework for metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to use to successfully consider health throughout the transportation planning process. The report demonstrates how health can effectively be incorporated in metropolitan transportation planning through four case studies for the Nashville, Seattle, Sacramento,

and San Diego metropolitan areas.

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**U.S. Research and Innovative Technology Administration Pocket Guide**

The **U.S. Research and Innovative Technology Administration** released its [2013 Pocket Guide to Transportation](#). A report that provides data on the U.S. transportation system and highlights trends in safety, economic competitiveness, and environmental sustainability

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