

## **SECTION I INTRODUCTION**

This update of the Mobile Area Transportation Study (MATS) Long-Range Transportation Plan to the year 2030 was begun in 2003 under the guidance of the Mobile Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The study was conducted by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission with the assistance of the Alabama Department of Transportation, the Mobile County Engineering Department, Mobile Metro Transit System, and the City of Mobile Transportation, Planning, and Engineering Departments. Funding has been provided by the U. S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, by the Mobile County Commission, and by the cities of Mobile, Prichard, Chickasaw, Saraland, Satsuma, Creola, and Bayou La Batre.

The 2030 Transportation 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 alternative modes. 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.

The MPO's objective in initiating the plan update was 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 2030 in order to maintain an acceptable level of mobility. Where possible, these needs were quantified in terms of dollar costs and prioritized based on the availability of funding, the impact of the proposed improvement, and anticipated development patterns and timing. The Year 2030 Plan as detailed herein is not proposed as a rigid, inflexible blueprint, but rather is intended to guide decision-makers' actions within a regional context and thus maintain system coordination across the various political boundaries which divide the MATS area.

The recommendations contained in this report for highway and transit projects address only major needs of regional importance which will add significant capacity to the transportation system; the proposals should be regarded as general only and do not represent specific alignments or locations. Many projects not included in this plan will doubtless be constructed by developers or implemented by local governments between now and the year 2030; conversely, some of the projects described in this report may never be constructed. Prior to construction, specific studies will be conducted for each project to determine environmental, social, and economic impacts. For those determined to be in the best interest of the public, studies will be completed to finalize engineering details including specific location and any necessary rights-of-way. Further, the recommendations made in this report will be reviewed and updated periodically in future years as changing social, economic, physical or technological conditions warrant, and the appropriate changes as then determined will be incorporated in new, updated plans.

Figure 1  
Mobile Area Transportation Study Area

