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Recently Completed Planning Studies

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.

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We hope everyone has had a great week. If you consider yourself a Mobilian, you have to check out this week's *Just For Fun*. Also, there is a very interesting look at who is coming downtown every day, and the BPAC met this week; please see *Mobile MPO Updates*. Finally the State Docks is building a rail access bridge for the recently funded Intermodal Container Transfer Facility; please see *In The News*.

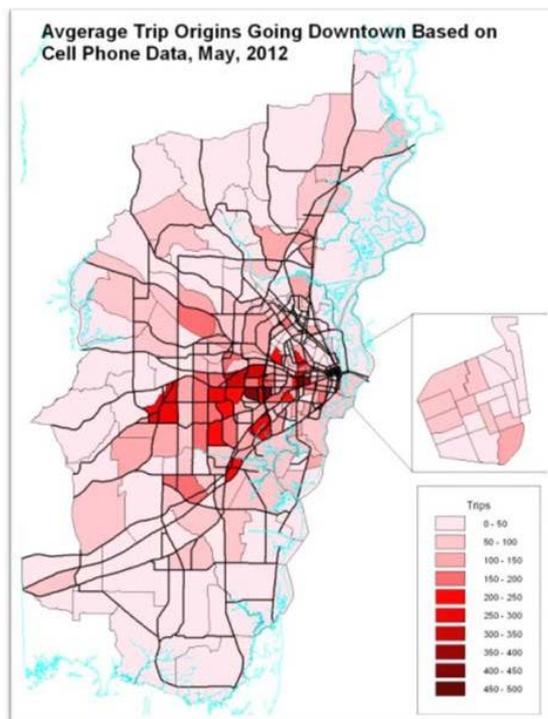
Mardi Gras 2013 is officially underway with the first downtown Mobile parade tonight, so y'all be careful and laissez les bons temps rouler!

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

Mobile MPO Updates

Where are you coming from?

Some of you that have been following the Mobile MPO Origin-Destination Study may appreciate the depth that this data will be able to provide us. Not only did the cell phone data give us the ability to calibrate our travel demand forecast model in terms of average trip length and trip length frequency distribution, but the area to area flows are an interesting note as well. With some simple massaging of the traffic analysis zone (TAZ) data, we now have the ability to determine how many trips are coming to an area, and where they are coming from, strictly from cell phone data (192,107 cell phones). To give you an example of this, we created the map below and highlighted just downtown (the inset). The map depicts where the downtown trips "originated" on the average in May, 2012. There are a couple of interesting notes. First, Bel Air Mall has a lot of trips going downtown, yet has very little residences in the traffic zone. These trips are a combination of Wave Transit patrons and non-home based trips. Another interesting note are the traffic zones with McGill-Toolen and Murphy High School. On the average, a high number of trips headed downtown are first at the high schools dropping kids off. I think we are just at the tip of the iceberg with this data.





The Mobile MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) met with ALDOT this week after hours in the SARPC Board Room. ALDOT has requested input regarding the Interstate 10 Mobile River Bridge project. The bridge is a long term endeavor but preliminary recommendations are upcoming with respect to potential bicycle and pedestrian facilities on this bridge. Vince Calametti & Don Powell with ALDOT were in attendance to explain the choice between bike facilities across the new concept bridge versus using earmarked monies for 'mitigation' projects elsewhere for bicycle facilities. If the bridge were to include bike/ped facilities, it would have approaches on each side one and a half miles long with a steep four percent grade. Another option could be to make Bike/ped improvements to the Cochran Bridge and the Causeway across the Bay. ALDOT has asked the BPAC to help them identify what alternative the bike/ped community would rather have. There will be a series of open forum, public meetings this spring regarding the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. Anyone that has an opinion regarding the bridge and bike/ped access is encouraged to attend and make their opinion known.

Projects Within Region Let January 25, 2013

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

for constructing the Permanent Slope Repair on CR-27 (Robinson Road) approximately 0.9 miles northwest of Sardis Church Road northeast of Robinsonville. Length 0.056 mi.

BALDWIN COUNTY

constructing the Grade, Drain, Base, Pave, Signs and Bridges on I-10 Interchange at CR-68 with connector to Baldwin Beach Express. Length 1.084 mi.

MOBILE COUNTY

for constructing the Planing, Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on I-65 from north of SR-158 (MP 13.648) in Saraland to north of SR-13 (US-43) (MP 19.988). Length 6.340 mi.

Legislative Updates

House T&I Announces Subcommittee Vice Chairmen

In addition to the subcommittee chairmen that House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) already [announced](#) last week, he has also [announced](#) his recommendations for the Subcommittee Vice Chairmen. House T&I Democrats Also Announced: Ranking Member Nick Rahall (D-WV) also [announced](#) his choices for the Subcommittee Ranking Members.

Majority Leader Reid Announces First 10 Bills, Transportation Among Them

This week, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) [announced](#) the first ten pieces of legislation that the U.S. Senate will consider. Included among them is the Rebuild America Act, which focuses on rebuilding America's roads and bridges.

President Obama Sworn in for Second Term:

On Monday, January 21, 2013, President Obama was sworn in for a second term as President of the United States. The [official transcript](#) of his speech communicates several of priorities, including the connection between the need for better highways and railroads, and the economic prosperity of the nation.

EPA Announces Launch of PM Advance

Last week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [announced](#) a new voluntary clean air program, 'PM Advance,' that is designed to help communities meet soot pollution standards, improve air quality and protect public health.

Time to tweak gas taxes? States weigh options

A great tax debate is breaking out in state capitals from Vermont to Texas: How do we maintain and expand our vital-but-aging networks of roads, bridges and urban transit systems?

For nearly a century, the nation has funded projects primarily with revenue from gasoline taxes. But the gasoline tax has lost its value over the past decade. Changes in fuel-saving automotive technology and driving habits are resulting in less revenue to repair crumbling bridges, repave highways or upgrade buses and trains. [\[HERE\]](#)

Funding Opportunities

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/>

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.

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.

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.

Just For Fun

What 75 years will do to a landscape...

In looking at forecasting socioeconomic data for the Mobile MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), we came across the University of Alabama Archived aerial photography. It is fascinating what the Mobile urban landscape looked like in 1938. Click on the map below and it will take you to the web page for this 1938 photo so you can zoom in and get a feel for what was on the ground then (or [HERE](#)). It is interesting to note the Airport Blvd corridor from Cottage Hill to Azalea Rd was timber property, yet the Hillcrest Road corridor from Airport to Cottage hill was completely barren, hardly any trees! The country club golf course has hardly changed and University Blvd looks like a cow trail. The second photo below the 1938 photo is a black and white 2012 Google maps to compare.



In the News

Congratulations to the Port Authority

The Alabama State Port Authority this week approved a \$11.5 million project that will bring the Garrows Bend Intermodal Container Transfer Facility closer to reality.

The authority's board of directors authorized \$11.5 million for the construction, inspection and testing of a rail access bridge that would connect the Port of Mobile and its proposed Intermodal Container Transfer Facility to five railways. When finished, the bridge would directly connect containerized imports and exports from the Port of Mobile to major railroad lines across the United States. [\[HERE\]](#)

Late night paving along Mobile's Government Street to last awhile

To avoid causing afternoon or morning bottlenecks along Government, the Alabama Department of Transportation will resurface the street during the late night hours. "We understand the concerns the citizens have there," Matt Erickson, construction engineer with ALDOT's Ninth Division headquartered in Mobile, said Tuesday. "But it's a moving operation. Granted, there will be a little noise as the paver goes by the house. In a short amount of time, they are a block or two away."

[\[HERE\]](#)

Congrats to BRATS

Baldwin County plans to use federal grant money and some matching funds to buy six new buses for the Baldwin Rural Area Transportation System. The total cost is \$388,221. The grant is taking care of 80 percent of the cost. Four of the buses will hold 25 passengers and will have two places for wheel-chairs. Another bus will have seats for 28 to 30 passengers and will

have places for six wheel-chairs. There also will be a bus with room for 28 to 30 passengers and places for two wheel-chairs.

The new buses will replace six buses that will be auctioned.

ALDOT Purchasing Signs To Go up in Stockton

Signs recognizing the Stockton Landmark District will be placed on four roads leading into Stockton. Plans to erect signs recognizing the landmark district in Stockton are being finalized. The signs will be placed along four highways that go into Stockton.

The Stockton Landmark District was formed after voters statewide overwhelmingly voted in favor of an amendment in November. The amendment protects Stockton from forced annexation. The district is the first in the state. The Alabama Department of Transportation will purchase the signs and allow Baldwin County to place the signs along state rights-of-way.

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Seeing Comment [\[HERE\]](#)

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program would like to hear your opinion of the [draft Mobile Bay Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan](#). Mobile Bay NEP Director Roberta Swann is asking for everyone to send their comments and priorities as soon as they can using the following survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PNGJB>

Transportation Research

NTSB Announces Drop in 2011 Transportation Fatalities

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) [released](#) preliminary figures last week indicating that transportation fatalities in the U.S. declined by approximately two percent in 2011.

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) released a [fact sheet](#) that details estimated number of lives saved from 2007 to 2011 due to the use of restraints and 21-year old minimum age drinking laws, by state. NHTSA estimates that in 2011, the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles, among other factors, saved an estimated 11,949 lives.

NHTSA also released a [fact sheet](#) that details yearly **trends in motor vehicle fatalities** and injuries by state.
