



Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, May 25th, 2018

Volume 26, Number 8

In This Issue

- MOBILE MPO UPDATES
- PROJECTS LET MAY 25th, 2018
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- JUST FOR FUN
- IN THE NEWS
- TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Recently Completed Planning Studies

[Destination 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan](#)

Happy Memorial Day Weekend! The Mobile MPO met this week (*See Mobile MPO Updates*). We are still searching for an Infrastructure Bill in *Legislative Updates*, there are no new *funding opportunities* this week, and this week's *Just For Fun* is enlightening. We would like to wish the I-10 Mobile Bayway a Happy 40th Birthday, and ask each of you to remember that Memorial Day is in remembrance of those who died in active military service. Have a great weekend, and stay dry!

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

The Mobile MPO met this week.

On Wednesday, the Mobile MPO met and adopted several resolutions. There was a resolution adopting the WAVE Transit's Targets and Performance Measures as per the FAST ACT, as well as the agreement between the Mobile MPO and ALDOT concerning all other Performance Measures and Targets for Safety, System Performance and Freight, and Bridge and Pavement Condition. There were several amendments to the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as well:

Bridge Funds

100049566 (CN) Replace Bridge, Bin 008714, SR-16 (US-90) Westbound over Tensaw-Spanish River.
Old Engineers Estimate: \$19,062,500.00; New Engineers Estimate: \$24,595,731.22

National Highway Funds

100068084 (UT) SR-158 Extension Lott Road Overpass and Jug Handle. Grade, Drain, Base, Pave and Bridge (EB Seabury Creek Tributary and Partial Lott Road); \$30,000, FY 2018

STP ATTRIBUTABLE FUNDS

(New Project) (PE) Airport Blvd, additional lanes from Snow Road to 1.46 miles West to just past Eliza Jordan Road, FY 2019, \$1,300,000

Interstate Maintenance Funds

[Toole Design Non-Motorized Mobility Study for Downtown Mobile](#)

[2018 Unified Planning Work Program](#)

[2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program](#)

[Origin Destination Study Using Cell Phones](#)

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100055398 (CN) Southwest Region, Mobile Area Sign Replacement on I-10, I-65 and I-165 from FY 2019 to FY 2021
\$5,601,338.92

Earlier this week, the Mobile County Engineer provided a tour to some Project Ranking Committee members of the new project being added to the Transportation Improvement Program; Airport Blvd, additional lanes from Snow Road to 1.46 miles West to just past Eliza Jordan Road. The Project Ranking Committee consisted of Mr. Ricky Mitchell, Mrs. Kellie Hope, Mrs. Kina Andrews, Hon. Margie Wilcox, and Mr. Edwin Perry. The score is based on objective points and subjective points. The new project scored a 58.4, which is a midrange to high number compared to the other projects of the TIP. This project is in the LRTP and is scheduled for funding as part of the next Pay As You Go Program.

At the MPO meeting, Mr. Dan Dealy spoke on behalf of the Southern Rail Commission, with an update on passenger rail activity on the Gulf Coast.

Also, the 25 year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will have to be updated this summer to account for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge. When the Plan was adopted, it was not known if the Bridge was going to be a tolled facility or not. There are NEPA guidelines concerning tolled facilities and how they are to be treated in a MPO's LRTP. Specifically, the traffic volume adjustments because of the toll, the environmental justice considerations because of the toll, and an updated bicycle pedestrian considerations for the project.

The Mobile MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) met at the GM&O Building several weeks ago. Mr. Edwin Perry with ALDOT was on hand to give an update on Bike/Ped accessibility over the Mobile River. The meeting focused heavily on discussing the inclusion of Bike/Ped facilities on the proposed I-10 Mobile River Bridge. The Committee voted to amend the Bike/Ped section of the Long Range Transportation Plan to include: a detailed description of a Belvedere on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge; Bike/Ped Facilities on the Cochrane-Africatown Bridge; and the Value Added Options proposed by ALDOT with an additional Value Added Option "D".

The Value Added Option "D" recommends a shared use path on the I-10 Mobile River Bridge span connecting to the Belvedere of the Base Bid to an elevator and stair tower on the east main span pier, and connecting the Bike/Ped path from the Battleship Memorial Park to the Eastern Shore. The LRTP will be modified later this summer, and will include a Value Added Option "D" to account for the connection to Daphne as part of the Bridge Project. We will keep you posted.

Performance-Based Planning and Programming: A Report to Congress

MAP-21 required that USDOT prepare a report to Congress on the impact of the performance-based planning processes (PBPP) of MPOs within five years of the date the legislation went into effect. This report highlights some of the national progress on PBPP and data from case studies on the effectiveness of PBPP. [HERE](#)

FREIGHT DATA

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As most of you know, the Mobile MPO has been trying to update its freight plan as an element to the Long Range Transportation Plan. We purchased data from INRIX to give a snap shot of where trucks are coming from and going to. In the travel demand modeling world, this is an important piece of information. To help validate the truck data, we are working with APM Terminals to try and nail down where the container trucks are coming from and going to. One day a quarter, APM Terminal will have on-board tablets for drivers to answer a series of questions in terms of where they came from, where is their return trip, if they came in from outside of Mobile County, which direction did they come from, etc; the data is exciting and interesting. Below is a flow map from the survey data in terms of container trucks going to the container terminal at Choctaw Point. Click the map to link to the survey results. <http://www.mobilempo.org/freightplanning.html>

Container Trucks Going To Choctaw Point



NEW SARPC Transportation Video



[HERE](#)

Want to know what other SARPC departments do?

[Planning and Community Development](#)

[Area Agency on Aging](#)

[Employment and Economic Development](#)

US 45 Feasibility Study

The next meeting is schedule to be at the Toulminville Library on May 30th from 5:00PM to 6:00PM. Last week MPO staff, Volkert and CERM met with the City of Prichard City Council at Prichard City Hall. It was a very informative meeting and we gained some insight into the needs of the project.

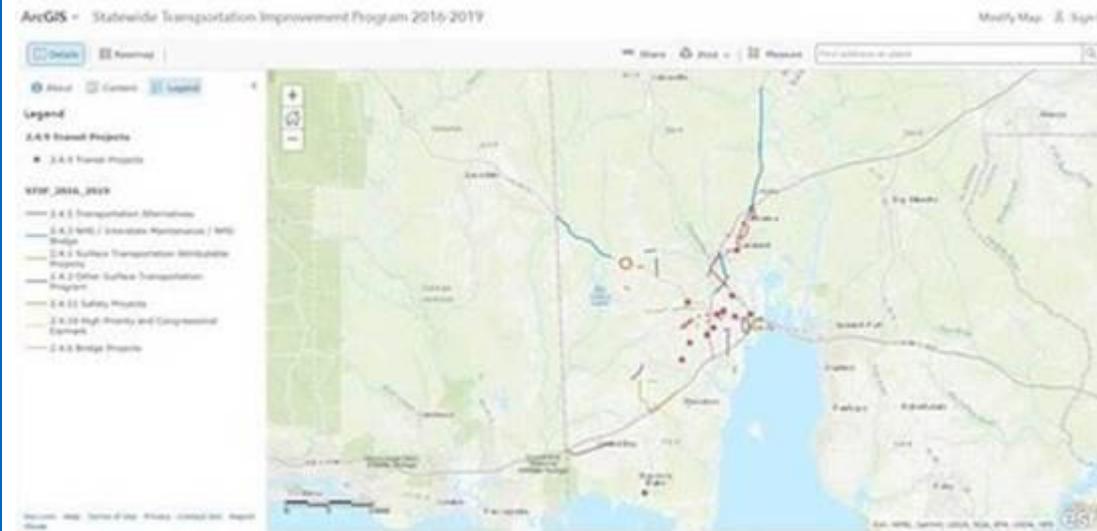
The Advisory Committee kick off meeting was held April 17th at the GM&O Building. The project consultants Volkert and CERM gave a short presentation on the goals of the project to a selected list of stakeholders that make up the Advisory Committee. There was a discussion about project expectations and public involvement at the meeting. If you are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee, please contact Kevin Harrison.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) NOW ONLINE

The TIP represents a four year program (2016-2019) for improvements in the various transportation systems located within the Mobile study area as identified in the Mobile MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the twenty-five year plan for the Mobile Urban area [Destination 2040](#). The LRTP establishes the transportation programs that are needed to meet travel demand by the study year and study area. LRTP projects that become funded are moved into the TIP and submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), where they are programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For MPO projects, TIP project selection is based on priorities established by MPO member governments and the availability of funds through the Surface Transportation Attributable program. For other projects, ALDOT has discretion of project funding based on availability of funds from various types of funding categories. Most often, projects in the TIP are derived from the LRTP. The TIP guides ALDOT in its annual allocation of funds for transportation improvements and becomes a part of the STIP.

ArcGIS Online is now being utilized by MPO staff to map all federally funded surface transportation projects within our area. Check it out.

2016-2019 E-TIP [HERE](#)

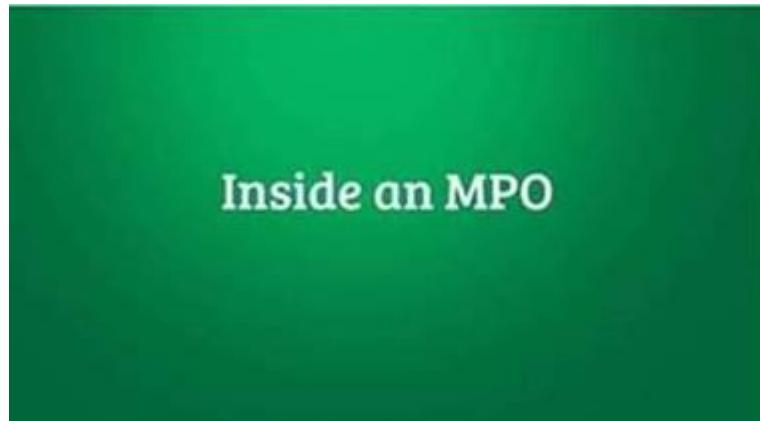


Mobile MPO 101

Here are a couple of great videos that were produced by our counterpart in Birmingham (Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham). The videos are a summary of the MPO planning process and are below:



Funding a Project with an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210829210>



Inside an MPO: <https://vimeo.com/210825997>

[HERE](#) are the slides and presentations of the Mobile MPO 101 training.

Stay UP To Date on the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project: <http://mobileriverbridge.com/>

This critically important, high-priority transportation project will involve constructing a new six-lane bridge across the Mobile River to increase Interstate 10's capacity and replace the existing four-lane Bayway with an eight-lane facility at an elevation above the 100 year storm surge event to reduce traffic headaches for thousands of commuters each day by saving motorists time.

The Wallace Tunnel currently averages 75,000 vehicles per day, reaching up to 100,000 vehicles during the peak tourism season. With almost double the daily traffic originally anticipated for the crossing, heavy congestions and longer travel times impact motorists, businesses, and the quality of life in the region. ALDOT expects this project to:

- **Reduce travel time between Mobile and Spanish Fort/Daphne.**
- **Increase reliability in travel times and accessibility to jobs, educational facilities, medical services, and recreational activities.**
- **Facilitate access to/from major industries and freight destinations in Mobile and Baldwin Counties and provide hazardous material vehicles a direct route away from the downtown district.**
- **Take all efforts to preserve and protect the Mobile Bay so that generations to come can enjoy the view and natural beauty from the bridge.**

Hyperlinks within the advisory:

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project: <http://mobileriverbridge.com/>

ALDOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, environmentally and economically sound transportation network across Alabama. For further information, visit www.dot.state.al.us.

Recent Scheduling Changes This Week for Mobile

The target start date or project engineers estimated amount has changed for the following :

NONE THIS WEEK

Projects in Region Let May 25th, 2018

MULTIPLE COUNTIES

For constructing the Median Barrier Protection (Cable Guiderail Installation) on I-65 from the SR-59 Interchange to the Railroad Bridge at MP 75.500 (Site 1) and on I-65 from the SR-158 Interchange to north of the CR-41 Interchange (MP 16.900) in Saraland (Site 2). Length 45.698 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,376,096 to \$2,904,118.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

None at this time

MOBILE COUNTY

- For constructing the Interior Lighting on SR-42 (US-98) in the Bankhead Tunnel in Mobile. Length 0.641 mi.

The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,300,658 to \$1,589,693

- For constructing the Bridge Deck Replacement (Partial) on Airport Boulevard over I-65 in Mobile. Length 0.052 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$256,844 to \$313,920.

BALDWIN COUNTY

- For constructing the Additional Lanes (Grading, Drainage, Pavement, Traffic Signals, and Traffic Stripe) on SR-181 from south of the intersection of SR-104 north of Fairhope to south of the intersection of CR-64 in Belforest. Length 3.979 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$17,874,500 to \$21,846,611.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on I-65 from the Dyas Creek Bridge to the Escambia County Line. Length 7.319 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$8,461,432 to \$10,341,751.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-59 from the intersection of CR-12 in Foley to the junction of Windbigler Drive. Length 6.469 mi The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,410,810 to \$2,946,546.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-182 from the junction of West Lagoon Avenue to the East City Limits of Gulf Shores. Length 4.062 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,383,581 to \$1,691,043.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on I-65 from the Dyas Creek Bridge to the Escambia County Line. Length 7.319 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$8,461,432 to \$10,341,751 .

What's Under Construction?

Project Status

Legislative Updates

GOP chairman to introduce infrastructure bill this summer

BY MALLORY SHELBOURNE - 05/22/18 03:03 PM EDT 80



© Greg Nash

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster(R-Pa.) is working to unveil an infrastructure bill this summer.

A source close to the matter confirmed to The Hill that Shuster, who is retiring at the end of his current term, is working with other members of the committee to introduce a piece of legislation.

"The infrastructure proposal will follow the general principles that the chairman discussed earlier in the year — that any proposal should be bipartisan, forward-looking and fiscally responsible," the source said.

The push comes after [President Trump's](#) rebuilding blueprint appeared to hit a wall in Congress this spring, despite bipartisan support for an overhaul of U.S. public works.

Shuster on Friday had summoned Republican members of the committee for a meeting on infrastructure, according to a senior House GOP aide.

"We checked FAA, WRDA drops today and now we are pivoting towards an infrastructure package," that aide said Friday, referring to a reauthorization bill of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

Shuster and other members of the House panel have long called for a sweeping infrastructure package, but GOP leadership has not shown much of an appetite for a comprehensive bill.

Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) (R-Wis.) earlier this year said the president's infrastructure blueprint would come about in "five or six different bills," throwing cold water on the push for a large-scale overhaul.

Ryan at the time referenced two must-pass bills: the omnibus spending package and the FAA reauthorization. He also pointed to WRDA, a biennial water infrastructure legislation in the form of a stand-alone bill that both chambers of Congress are currently working to pass.

Shuster has maintained that any infrastructure proposal must have bipartisan support in Congress.

GOP chairman calls infrastructure meeting as Trump plan remains on hold

BY [MELANIE ZANONA](#) - 05/18/18 10:47 AM EDT

The chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has scheduled a meeting on infrastructure as [President Trump's](#) rebuilding plan has been put on ice.

Rep. [Bill Shuster](#) (R-Pa.) invited Republican members on the committee to an infrastructure meeting on Friday, according to a source familiar with the meeting. Lawmakers were asked to bring their ideas and priorities, which could be used to start putting together a potential rebuilding package.

The meeting, which comes the same day that the panel is supposed to unveil a water infrastructure bill, could be an effort to kick-start rebuilding efforts on Capitol Hill.

Trump has repeatedly promised to upgrade roads, bridges and airports with a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill. The White House [put forth a proposal](#) in February, but White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders [recently cast doubt](#) on the potential for a package this year.

“I don’t know that there will be one by the end of this year. Certainly, the administration, as you mentioned, secured some funding for infrastructure projects,” Sanders said last week when asked about the likelihood for an overarching piece of legislation.

“We’re going to continue to look at ways to improve the nation’s infrastructure. But in terms of a specific piece of legislation, I’m not aware that that will happen by the end of the year,” she added.

But lawmakers on the Transportation Committee have expressed frustration that the rebuilding plan has stalled.

Shuster, who is retiring this year, may also be eager to bolster his legacy by passing a massive infrastructure package before he leaves Congress. Former infrastructure policy adviser DJ Gribbin [left the White House](#) in April and has not been replaced.

It’s Only MOSTLY Dead

House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) gathered committee Republicans last week to discuss ideas for a big infrastructure proposal. Shuster, who is retiring at the end of this year, has confirmed that he is working on a proposal but did not provide specifics. On the Senate side, Commerce Chairman John Thune (R-SD) thinks that an infrastructure package could get some attention after the midterms, but that Congress is working on smaller infrastructure-related bills for now.

House Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2019 THUD spending bill Wednesday. The panel adopted a manager’s amendment by voice vote. Democrats proposed several amendments to move money within the bill as well as items related to trucking and high-speed rail. These amendments all failed. It is not clear when the full House will take up the appropriations bills.

Update on WRDA

The House and Senate versions of the water resources legislation currently moving through Congress take several perspectives. The Senate version is now broader than the House version, now that the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee adopted multiple amendments creating new water infrastructure financing mechanisms and the requirement that the iron and steel must be made in the United States. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said he is “committed to getting infrastructure to the president’s desk;” however; he could not provide a timeline for the full Senate review the bill.

The House bill was designed to move through the chamber quickly, without controversial provisions. The bill authorizes projects the Army Corps of Engineers can move forward with, some of which include a \$3.3 billion storm mitigation project in Texas; a \$973 million harbor expansion in Georgia; and a \$306 million flood-control project in Hawaii. The House bill would also move the Army Corps of Engineers out of the U.S. Department of Defense. The bill is expected to receive a vote the first week of June.

Funding Opportunities

U.S. Department of Transportation Launches BUILD Transportation Program, Announces \$1.5 Billion Notice of Funding Opportunity

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) today published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to apply for \$1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program.

BUILD Transportation grants will replace the pre-existing Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. As the Administration looks to enhance America’s infrastructure, FY 2018 BUILD Transportation grants are for investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation.

“BUILD Transportation grants will help communities revitalize their surface transportation systems while also increasing support for rural areas to ensure that every region of our country benefits,” said Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

Projects for BUILD will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection, state of good repair, innovation, partnership, and additional non-federal revenue for future transportation infrastructure investments.

To reflect the Administration’s Infrastructure Initiative, DOT intends to award a greater share of BUILD Transportation grant funding to projects located in rural areas that align well with the selection criteria than to such projects in urban areas. The notice highlights rural needs in several of the evaluation criteria, including support for rural broadband deployment where it is part of an eligible transportation project.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 made available \$1.5 billion for National Infrastructure Investments, otherwise known as BUILD Transportation Discretionary grants, through September 30, 2020. For this round of BUILD Transportation grants, the maximum grant award

is \$25 million, and no more than \$150 million can be awarded to a single State, as specified in the FY 2018 Appropriations Act. At least 30 percent of funds must be awarded to projects located in rural areas.

To provide technical assistance to a broad array of stakeholders, DOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2018 BUILD grant application process. A webinar on how to compete for BUILD Transportation Grants for all applicants will be held on Thursday, May 24; a webinar for rural and tribal applicants will be held on Tuesday, May 29; and a webinar on how to prepare a benefit cost analysis for a BUILD application will be held on Thursday, May 31. All webinars will take place from 2:00-4:00 PM EDT. Details and registration information regarding these webinars will be made available at <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>. The Department will schedule additional webinars on these topics in June.

The deadline to submit an application for the FY 2018 BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants program is July 19, 2018.

[BUILD Grant Webinars](#)

May 29, [How to Compete for BUILD Transportation Grants – Rural/Tribal Applicants](#)

May 31, [Preparing a Benefit-Cost Analysis for a BUILD Application](#)

For 2018 BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants, USDOT is offering a series of special topic webinars that delve into various aspects of the BUILD application process. These webinars are a great resource for anyone considering applying to BUILD this year or those preparing a BUILD application, as the webinars come from the funding source and share the expertise of USDOT to prospective applicants.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant programs

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (FY 2017)

CRISI program: Applications are due no later than *5:00 p.m. EDT, June 21, 2018*.

More information on FRA's CRISI website: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1079>

Overview: This program will fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of passenger and freight rail. See the [FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for more information.

Legislative Authority: This program was authorized in Section 11301 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. 114-94 (2015); 49 U.S.C. § 24407. Funding under this program was made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Public Law No. 115-31, Division K, Title I. **Amount:** \$65,232,400

Restoration and Enhancement Grants Program (FY 2017)

REG program: Applications are due no later than *5:00 p.m. EDT May 22, 2018*.

More information on FRA's REG website: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P1081>

Overview: This program will fund operating assistance grants for initiating, restoring, or enhancing intercity rail passenger transportation. See the [FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for more information.

Legislative Authority: This program was authorized in Section 11303 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94 (2015); 49 U.S.C. § 24408. Funding under this program was made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Public Law No. 115-31, Division K, Title I. **Amount:** \$4,796,500

Section 5307, 5310, and 5311: Using Non-DOT Funds for Local Match

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Administration for Community Living](#) (ACL) has worked with the [National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#) to clarify the ability of grantees to use Older Americans Act Title IIIB Supportive Services Funds to match Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs. These FTA programs include Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307), Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities (Section 5310), and Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311). This information has been publicized [HERE](#)

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.

The FHWA continues the Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration authorized within the Technology and Innovation Deployment Program (TIDP) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The AID Demonstration provides incentive funding for any project activities eligible for assistance under title 23, U.S.C. in any phase of a highway transportation project between project planning and project delivery including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment, and construction that address

the TIDP goals. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published on September 1, 2016 (<https://federalregister.gov/a/2016-21063>) requests grant applications and provides selection criteria, application requirements, and technical assistance with Grants.gov during the grant solicitation period.

Link to Additional Information: [FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation Grants page](#)

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](#)

To stay up to date on all of the many grants that are available click [HERE](#) or type www.grants.gov in your browser.

Just For Fun

WAIT FOR IT....



Since it is Memorial Day Weekend and most of us will at some point sit in traffic this weekend, let's talk traffic signals. Do they change when I flash my lights at them? What if I backed up, and then pulled up to the light again? Will that work? How does it know when we are there? Is it because we ran over the big white stripe that causes the signal to change? Is it an invisible curtain? What if I used the flash light on my smart phone to [flash Morse code at the signal](#)? What about the Signal Sorcerer® Traffic Light Changer, and the [Traffic Light Remote Control](#)? What if I am a pedestrian, and I hit the pedestrian button multiple times? *(You know, because it works so well on the UP button of an elevator).*



NONE OF THAT WORKS.....BTW. So, [how do traffic signals work?](#)



Did you know, there are almost 600 traffic signals in Mobile County and its municipalities? There are several jurisdictions responsible for all of these signals, AND there are several kinds of signals; some are [pre-timed](#) signals, and others are called "actuated" signals. Actuated signals do just what they say they do, they are actuated by a vehicle (or a pedestrian button), and that will cause a change in the signals. That change may be an immediate green signal your way, but it may not be immediate; you still may have to wait depending on traffic but it knows you are there. Also, heavy rush hour traffic may trigger a timing sequence that is different than off peak. This stuff gets complicated....

In Mobile alone, there are video, radar, induction loops and wireless magnetometer type actuated signals. If you are in a regular sized car and not on a bike or moped, the actuated signal knows you are there (if everything is working correctly). So, you cannot flash your lights, or back up, you have to WAIT FOR IT; however, I found that sometimes prayer does work.

If you want to change the light from red to green faster in the City of Mobile, call 311...and you will be “actuated” into the system.

How great would it be if we lived in a world where all of the signals were connected into one system, and talked to one another for a full optimized network; you know, *Just For Fun*.

In the News

Alabama Department of Transportation prepares for holiday weekend travel

POSTED 5:54 PM, MAY 23, 2018, BY [BLAKE WILLIAMS](#)

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – With the Memorial Day Holiday quickly approaching, the Alabama Department of Transportation announced they will limit temporary lane closures on interstates after Noon Friday, May 25, through midnight Monday, May 28.

“While most ALDOT construction will halt during the holiday, driving within the speed limit and watching out for shifting lanes and other changes in the roadway is still important in a construction zone,” said Allison Green, Drive Safe Alabama coordinator, ALDOT. “Before getting on the road, drivers can find out if there are construction zones along their route or traffic congestion by checking [ALGOTraffic.com](#) or the ALGO Traffic app.”

Holiday Driving Tips

With increased traffic expected on roads around the state, ALDOT is asking travelers to allow extra time to reach their destination. ALDOT offers the following reminders for the Memorial Day holiday weekend:

Don’t drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs

[People are seven times more likely to die](#) in a crash when the driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as shown in ALDOT crash reports.

Designating a sober driver before drinking is key to preventing these deadly crashes.

Wear your seat belt, in both front and rear seats

Surviving a crash is much more likely when wearing a seatbelt. The latest stats from Drive Safe Alabama show that almost [60 percent of people dying in crashes](#) on Alabama highways are not wearing a seatbelt.

You can find more safe driving tips on the [Drive Safe Alabama Facebook page](#).

Hotter than Baldwin? Saraland surges in latest census estimates

Updated May 24, 9:33 AM; Posted May 24, 6:01 AM



The new Saraland High School opened after Saraland launched its own city school system in 2008. Years later, that system is seen as one reason for the city's growth. (Kate Mercer/AL.com file)

By [Lawrence Specker](#)
lspecker@al.com

Daphne and Fairhope can't take the population growth crown for granted anymore, according to new census numbers that show Saraland catching fire.

The latest city population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau confirm some familiar trends. Mobile's still sagging. In Baldwin County, Eastern Shore communities continue to boom, as do counterparts inland and on the coast.

But the Saraland surge is something new. The estimated 547 people that Saraland gained from 2016 to 2017 is nearly as many as the 624 it gained from 2010 to 2016. Among Alabama cities with population greater than 10,000, that was the second-fastest single-year growth by percentage, at 3.9 percent. (Only Chelsea, a slightly smaller city southeast of Birmingham, did better. It racked up 4.15 percent growth.)

While the numbers might be new, the phenomenon isn't exactly a surprise. Anyone driving through Saraland on I-65 can see growth at Exit 13. [A new Infirmiry Health medical center opened in December](#), followed by [a new Cracker Barrel](#) in April and a new hotel. [A Publix will anchor a new shopping center](#) being developed nearby.

In December, as the Infirmiry center opened, executives cited a swelling population. "This is the fastest growing part of Mobile County," Kenny Breal, Infirmiry Health's vice president for clinical operations, said at the time. "The need was there."

Dr. John L. Dixon Jr., one of the doctors working at the facility, said one of the major factors was the success of the Saraland School System since the city voted in 2006 to break off from the Mobile County Public School System.

"We spent 20 years watching people move to Daphne for the school system," he said, but now he saw them moving back for the same reason.

The system opened in 2008, supported by a half-cent sales tax hike. A \$30 million new Saraland High School opened in 2010, followed by a new elementary school. In 2015 the city approved a 7.5 mill property tax increase to fund ongoing capital improvements for its schools.

Veronica Hudson, a Saraland city council member who also has served on the school board, said that education consistently is the top priority for people thinking about moving to Saraland. But its low crime rate and easy access to Mobile also are major selling points. "Crime is almost nonexistent in Saraland," she said.

Hudson said the flip side of the growth is a tight housing market. "We're building a lot of new subdivisions," she said. Subdivision approvals and annexations are big part of the council's business, she said.

Infrastructure was another challenge, she said. With most of the growth coming west of I-65, the corridors across the interstate risk becoming bottlenecks. The Alabama Department of Transportation has a major project under way at Exit 15, where Celeste Road crosses. That can't get done soon enough, Hudson said. Continue [HERE](#)

Spanish Fort approves Causeway master plan



Posted Friday, May 18, 2018 2:22 pm

By Cliff McCollum

Spanish Fort city officials recently unveiled a new master plan for improvements they'd like to see made to the Causeway, and passed the master plan at last week's city council meeting.

"We've finally put together what we feel is a very efficient plan that will add a lot of niceties to the Causeway," Mayor Mike McMillan said. "We will be looking for funds to make this happen, but in order to make that happen, we needed to have a plan."

Included in the new master plan are a 5.5 mile long pedestrian and bicycle trail along the Causeway's north side and two parks with picnic areas, parking and fishing piers, as well as a boat launch for residents and visitors with canoes or kayaks.

"This is an opportunity to do something," McMillan said. "This is going to be a great enhancement for the Causeway."

McMillan and other officials hosted a community hearing in April to get reaction and ideas from Causeway business owners and residents, some of whom were concerned the new plan could result in increased traffic and cost of the project, as well as who would bear responsibility for upkeep - the city or the Alabama Department of Transportation

McMillan said the proposed changes would likely be rolled out over a 20-year period and that the city fully planned to discuss with ALDOT what each entity's role would be.

"We're going to have to sit down with ALDOT and see who will maintain what," McMillan said. "We're not going to have sidewalks and all of these other amenities and have it look trashy. We're going to take care of it. The city and the state will take care of it."

McMillan said now was the perfect time to develop the plan and try to seek out grant money given the attention being given to the I-10 bridge project.

"We're trying to find ways to connect it in with the new Bayway," McMillan. "This is a big opportunity, and we are going to be in the right position to try to move this forward as best as we can."

Residents near bridge road project cry foul over noise

Posted by [John Mullen](#) | May 23, 2018 | [Bay Briefs](#) | [0](#) |

One evening Mike Powell and his wife were relaxing on the porch before sundown and noticed something he'd never heard before. Traffic noise. This particular night it seemed louder than normal. Powell said the noise had increased steadily since the building of a new Shell station in the median of the Foley Beach Express about a half mile from his home in Craft Farms North in South Baldwin County.

"It depends on which way the wind blows," Powell said. "That particular night was really bad."

Powell decided to investigate. South of the Shell station on the west side of the Foley Beach Express he saw a trail had been cut into the woods. And it just so happened an ALDOT pickup truck was emerging from the woods that same evening.

"I asked them 'what are you doing?'" Powell said. "And they said we're building a bridge."

That was the first time Powell or any of his neighbors had heard of a bridge coming to their neck of the woods. That project is under fire in the form of a condemnation challenge from the Baldwin County Bridge Company on a piece of its land the Alabama Department of Transportation wants for the project. The hearing in that challenge detailed the lack of studies and public meetings conducted to warrant the \$87 million project as confirmed by ALDOT's own director, John Cooper. Since that Dec. 4 meeting the bridge, Powell said, has grown from being eight feet off the ground to span some wetlands to a 28-foot flyover at the start of a new road he's calling the Beach Expressway II. And, like the big bridge project, no one can point to studies to justify building the bridge on the north either, Powell said.

"The stories keep changing," Powell said.

He and his neighbors aren't happy about it. A trip to Mobile's ALDOT's office with engineers Edwin Perry and Vince Beebe in March didn't assuage any fears he might have.

"He had a map and it didn't show where our houses were," Powell said. "My wife, Lisa, asked him what kind of volume of traffic were they expecting. They didn't know. I said 'how and the heck can you put in something like this and not know what's going on?' They had no answers for us and we still had no answers of where our homes were going to be.

"And now it was about 17 feet high for the bridge."

After more consulting and complaining from Powell — and ALDOT consulting with its legal department — Powell finally received a map of the project in relation to the houses in Craft Farms North.

"And he put in there it's going to be a 28-foot flyover now," Powell said.

No one has yet to address the noise issue either, Powell said.

“Mayor [Robert] Craft said he could not do anything about the state project,” Powell said. “When we met with Edwin Perry and Vince Beebe they said it was the city pushing it. When I got on the phone with Vince Calametti he said ‘Mike, the mayor is pushing this. The mayor wants this to happen.’ No one wants to help.”

ALDOT’s case against toll bridge to be heard by panel

Posted by [Lagniappe](#) | May 22, 2018 | [Latest](#) | [0](#) |

The fight over a two-foot strip of property holding up an \$87 million bridge-road bridge project has moved on to the second phase, according to a release by the owners of the Foley Beach Express toll bridge.

American Roads, owner of the Baldwin County Bridge Company, which owns the toll bridge, also owns the right of way to a two-foot strip alongside the Foley Beach Express from County Road 12 to “about Cotton Creek” in South Baldwin County, according to court transcripts.

The Alabama Department of Transportation is seeking to condemn part of the strip so it can build flyover bridges just south of County Road 8 to start a new road south, eventually ending up with a bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway east of the Gulf Shores Airport.

It was [challenged in Baldwin County Probate court](#), where Judge James Reid said ALDOT can move to the next phase of a hearing before an appointed panel. Reid’s ruling was dated May 14 but not handed down until May 21.

“That ruling was not unexpected at this early stage of the probate action, where the court routinely defers to ALDOT’s representation that its requested taking is in the public interest,” American Roads CEO Neal Belitsky said. “In our view, the admissions ALDOT personnel made in the probate proceeding show that the taking is unjustified and contrary to the public interest.

[MORE: Baldwin mayors say \\$83 million bridge is needed](#)

“American Roads/BCBC, therefore, will continue to defend itself against the government’s attempt to take its property without adhering to fundamental Constitutional due -process protections, including pursuing a new trial in Alabama Circuit Court after full discovery of everyone involved.”

In Reid's ruling, he appointed three commissioners "to assess the damages and compensation to which such defendants, as owners and parties holding or claiming some interest in the lands described in the application, are entitled."

Those commissioners, — Sam Davis, Tim Barnhill and Tommy Harris — are the three appointed to report "amount of damages and compensation so ascertained and assessed by them as being due said owners."

ALDOT and American Roads entered negotiations in 2015 seeking a deal to turn over the toll bridge to the city of Orange Beach. Negotiations fell through because the company, as it said in the initial filing challenging the condemnation of bridge company's land, would have meant handing over the bridge to Orange Beach "at virtually no cost."

At that point, the state began plans to build its own new road and bridge about 1.5 miles west of the Foley Beach Express bridge. Some condemnations have already been filed and settled but at least one other owner is also challenging the state's offer on their property.

The state offered less than \$10,000 for the access to the bridge company's right of way, which was considered "woefully inadequate" by American Roads officials. The company is currently negotiating with a buyer for the Foley Beach Express bridge and several other toll roads in Alabama and one in Michigan.

The project has spawned several protests and petitions challenging the need for the bridge and the state's lack of comprehensive studies to prove the need. ALDOT recently had to resubmit for permitting to the Corps of Engineers because the original permit application didn't include the bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway.

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!
ALABAMA RECREATIONAL TRAILS
LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP**

**Thursday, June 7, 2018
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM**

**Orange Beach Community Center
27235 Canal Road
Orange Beach, Alabama 36561**

**A fun and informative gathering for those who plan, develop, and manage recreational trails in Alabama.
[FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER CLICK HERE](#)**

Transportation Research

NTI has scheduled the following course:

Course: Transportation Planning Process

Schedule: Monday, July 23, 2018 – 8:30am – 4:00pm (Registration 8:00am)
Tuesday, July 24, 2018 – 8:30am – 4:00pm

Location: Pensacola City Hall (City of Pensacola Technology Resources Building)
222 W. Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502
850-435-1603

Host: West Florida Regional Planning Council (wfrpc)

National Dialogue on Highway Automation

FHWA launched a [National Dialogue on Highway Automation](#) this week. The program includes five upcoming workshops hosted around the country concerning different areas of highway automation. FHWA plans to include a broader range of stakeholders to inform FHWA's role in automation and national research, policy, and programs to aid in the development of the technology. The Launch Workshop will be in Detroit, Michigan on June 7. The first issue workshop, which will focus on policy and planning, will be in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania June 26-27.

Strategic Transit Automation Research Plan

FTA has published its final [Strategic Research Transit Automation \(STAR\) Plan](#). The STAR Plan outlines an FTA research agenda for transit bus automation over five years and provides a framework for the transit industry to pursue transit bus automation. Additionally, it defines activities in the areas of enabling research, integrated demonstrations, and strategic partnerships. The plan focuses on stakeholder engagement, knowledge transfer, and technical assistance to ensure that complementary work being done by the public sector, private sector, and academia is effectively communicated and leveraged.

[Identification of High Pedestrian Crash Locations](#)

This FHWA guidebook presents a process to help state and local agencies identify high pedestrian crash locations and includes a literature review, case studies, and other research needed to develop a five-step process.

New ADA Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Compliance App

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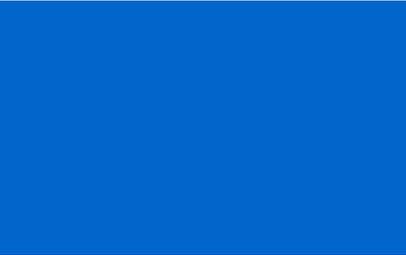
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- Location is automatically collected in GIS

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.

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- 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.