

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- MPO Updates
 - MPO Meetings
 - FY 24-27 TIP Public Involvement
 - 2045 LRTP project changes Public Involvement
 - Project Changes
- RPO Updates
 - FY23 Meetings
- ALDOT STIP
- Projects Proposed to Let
- Upcoming Funding Opportunities & Deadlines
- Calendar of Meetings

East Alabama Region Transportation Monthly Newsletter

July 2023 Issue

Calhoun Area MPO Updates

MPO Meetings

All MPO meetings have resumed to in-person with the option to attend virtually. Meeting notifications will reflect any changes if they occur. GoToMeeting has updated their web application and no longer has a call-in function. However, if you would like to attend virtually you may join any of the Calhoun Area MPO meetings from your computer, tablet, or smart phone via this link: <https://meet.goto.com/132611237>. To get the app now and be ready before the meetings start use this link: <https://meet.goto.com/install>. If you are not currently on the MPO notification mailing list and would like to receive mailed or email notifications of upcoming meetings, please email Libby at elizabeth.messick@earpdc.org. All MPO meetings are open to the public.

FY 24-27 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Public Involvement

The Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is soliciting public review and comments on the **Draft FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**. The TIP is a four-year plan which identifies local improvement projects sponsored by local jurisdictions through the Calhoun Area MPO. The plan allocates approximately \$15 million toward projects over the four-year period. A copy of the updated Draft FY 24-27 TIP and comment form can be reviewed prior to the meeting at the EARPDC website at www.earpdc.org or picked up at the EARPDC offices during normal working hours. Copies of the Draft FY 24-27 TIP will also be available for review and comment at a public meeting scheduled for: **Wednesday July 14th from 4 - 5 pm at** EARPDC 3rd floor Conference Room, 1130 Quintard Avenue, Anniston, AL 36202.

This is a handicapped accessible building and room. [Persons needing special accommodations to attend this meeting should contact the EARPDC – ADA Coordinator, Amanda Carroll at \(256\) 237-6741 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.](#)

Public comments can be dropped off at the EARPDC offices, mailed to PO Box 2186 Anniston, AL 36202, faxed to (256) 237-6763, or emailed to elizabeth.messick@earpdc.org. All public comments will be reviewed by the MPO and included in the final plan document.

For more information contact: Libby Messick, Senior Planner at the phone number and address above.

2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) project changes Public Involvement

The Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is also soliciting public review and comments on the **deletion of one project and addition of four projects in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for Calhoun County and the City of Jacksonville**. The LRTP is a twenty-year plan which identifies local improvement projects sponsored by local jurisdictions through the Calhoun Area MPO. A copy of the proposed project additions, project deletions, and comment form can be reviewed prior to the meeting at the EARPDC website at www.earpdc.org or picked up at the EARPDC offices during normal working hours. Copies will also be available for review and comment at a public meeting scheduled for: **Wednesday July 12th from 4 - 5 pm at EARPDC 3rd floor Conference Room, 1130 Quintard Avenue, Anniston, AL 36202.**

This is a handicapped accessible building and room. [Persons needing special accommodations to attend this meeting should contact the EARPDC – ADA Coordinator, Amanda Carroll at \(256\) 237-6741 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.](#)

Public comments can be dropped off at the EARPDC offices, mailed to PO Box 2186 Anniston, AL 36202, faxed to (256) 237-6763, or emailed to elizabeth.messick@earpdc.org. All public comments will be reviewed by the MPO and included in the final plan document.

For more information contact: Libby Messick, Senior Planner at the phone number and address above.

June Calhoun Area MPO Project Changes

- #48 RW (100070248) Widening on Friendship Rd from Cheaha Dr to Circle Drive (Phase I)
 - Old target start date: January 1, 2024
 - New target start date: September 1, 2023
 - New target start date moves project from FY24 to FY23; moved and decreased by 1%
- #35 PE (100063207) Noble/4th Street Intersection Improvements
 - Previous allocated amount: \$109,410
 - New allocated amount: \$94,721
 - Overruns in amount of \$17,356 covered by Carbon Reduction Funds on separate spreadsheet
- #35 CN (100063208) Noble/4th Street Intersection Improvements
 - Previous allocated amount: \$907,908
 - New allocated amount: \$885,642
 - Overruns in amount of \$22,518 covered by Carbon Reduction Funds on separate spreadsheet; additional overruns in amount of \$6,001 were in an administrative modification March 2023; Added this overrun to TIP spreadsheet until it is confirmed these will be covered by Carbon Reduction Funds as well.
- #39 CN (100064884) Mountain St NE Resurface from SR-21 to 8th Ave.
 - Typo on previous TIP spreadsheet had \$66,860 when should be \$668,860.
- #56 PE (100070197) Resurfacing George Douthit Dr from SR-21 to Brierwood Place SW
 - Project was previously reported on FY 21 when should have been FY22.
- #41 UT (100064889) Airport Rd. Bridge Replacement at Coldwater Creek (BIN 11215)

-Updated allocated amount from \$80,410 to \$81,214 to match Urban Funds Report.

- #50 CN (100070271) Resurfacing, Widening, and Upgrading existing turn signals, adding turn lanes
 - Previous allocated amount: \$653,200
 - New allocated amount: \$817,915
 - Project outside of current STIP when increased
- #41 CN (100064890) Airport Rd. Bridge Replacement @Coldwater Creek (BIN 11215)
 - Old target start date: February 2026
 - New target start date: February 2027
 - Project moved out FY for better fiscal constraint throughout next TIP cycle.
- #55 CN (100070232) Resurfacing on Eulaton Gate Rd and Off-ramp from the Anniston Army Depot Gate to Bynum Leatherwood Rd.
 - Old target start date: September 29, 2023
 - New target start date: August 25, 2023
 - New target start date in same FY as old; no change needed

East Alabama RPO Updates

❖ FY 2023 RPO Quarterly Meetings

- [Northern Counties \(Etowah and Cherokee\): July 13th](#)
- [Central Counties \(Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, and Talladega\): July 20th](#)
- [Southern Counties \(Chambers, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa\): July 27th](#)

All meeting minutes and materials can be found at www.earpdc.org.

If you have any suggestions on where to house future RPO meetings in your area, please contact Lattisha Royal at lattisha.royal@earpdc.org or call 256-237-6741. We would love to have these meetings be both beneficial and enjoyable for all involved.

ALDOT State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP)

The **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** is a federally mandated 4-year funding and scheduling document for surface transportation projects (road, highway, pedestrian trails, bicycle facilities, bridge facilities and transit projects in Alabama).

The STIP is important because federal and state money cannot be spent on projects unless they are listed in the STIP.

The STIP must be financially constrained to the estimated federal apportionments. Only projects which construction and operating funds can reasonably be expected to be available are included in the STIP.

The draft STIP open comment period will begin June 6 – June 26, 2023. Please visit ALDOT's website at <https://cpmsapps.dot.state.us/OfficeEngineer/Plan/Statewide2> to view information about the STIP.

Projects Proposed to Let June 30, 2023

Calhoun County

none

Chambers County

none

Cherokee County

none

Clay County

none

Cleburne County

none

Coosa County

none

Etowah County

- ❖ NH-0001(634) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing, and traffic stripe on SR-1 (US-431) from the north bridge end over Line Creek (MP 269.030) southwest of Ridgeville to a point 0.300 mile north of the junction of Rockledge Road (MP 272.520). Length 3.490 miles. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$2,728,802 to \$3,335,203.

Randolph County

none

Talladega County

none

Tallapoosa County

none

Upcoming Funding Opportunities & Deadlines

It's not too early to be thinking ahead!

- ❖ The US Department of Transportation has issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for their Safe Streets for All program. The NOFO and other information can be found at <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/fy23-nofo>. Applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm Eastern Time Monday, **July 10, 2023**.
- ❖ The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of nearly \$11 billion in grants and loan opportunities to help rural energy and utility providers bring affordable clean energy to communities. Funding will be available through two new programs under the Inflation Reduction Act: the Empowering Rural America (New ERA) program and the Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE) program. USDA will accept Letters of Interest from **June 30 to September 29 for the PACE program and from July 31 to August 31 for the New ERA program**.
- ❖ The US Department of Transportation announces technical assistance grants for transportation projects in rural and tribal communities. **Grants do not require a local match! Applications can be submitted starting 2 pm ET on Monday, August 14, 2023.** The Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program offers technical assistance grants to rural and tribal communities. The NOFO combines two years of funding, \$3.4 million in total, to eligible applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Individual awards will range in value up to the statutory limit of \$360,000. The grants may be used to hire staff or advisors to assist with early

development-phase activities including, but not limited to, feasibility studies; preliminary engineering and design; environmental review; revenue forecasting; financial feasibility analysis; statutory and regulatory analysis and drafting and negotiation of agreements. Eligible applicants include local governments or political subdivisions with projects located outside an urbanized area with a population of more than 150,000 residents as determined by the Census.

- ❖ The US Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) intends to issue a funding opportunity in March 2023 for up to \$300 million to improve the cost, reliability, environmental impact, and climate resilience of energy systems in rural or remote areas across the country. More about this anticipated funding opportunity announcement can be found here: https://www.energy.gov/oced/energy-improvements-rural-or-remote-areas-0?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery
- ❖ In partnership with Main Street America and Smart Growth America, T-Mobile is committing \$25 million toward small town grants over the next five years through its **Hometown Grants program**. The program will award up to 100 towns per year with project funding grants of up to \$50,000 each. The program will focus on revitalizing community spaces in towns with 50,000 people or less. Main Street programs are encouraged to apply. For more information on the program and to apply go to <https://www.t-mobile.com/brand/hometown-grants>.
- ❖ **The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development** is seeking applications for **loans and grants to support rural water and waste disposal systems**. Applications are accepted year-round, and technical assistance is available. USDA's **Water and Environmental Programs** can assist with constructing or improving infrastructure through loans, grants, and loan guarantees. USDA can also partner with rural water and waste service providers to finance infrastructure that aims to protect the cyber security of their facilities. The Water and Environmental Programs at USDA were recently expanded, and guaranteed loans are now available to smaller communities that have the financial strength to take advantage of conventional credit as well as larger communities with populations of up to 50,000. USDA also has technical assistance resources available through partnering organizations. USDA's resources are not limited to communities that have already received a loan or grant through Rural Development. Any water or waste disposal system in an eligible rural area may benefit from technical assistance. For more information on the resources available reach out to your local **USDA Community Program Specialist**. Applications can be submitted through **RDApply** (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rd-apply>).
- ❖ The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) have announced calls for the Traffic and Safety Operations Section's (TSOS) **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)** applications. **Deadlines are April 1st, July 1st, October 1st, and January 1st. Max funding amount per agency for reducing rural land departures is \$2,000,000; for intersection related projects is \$2,000,000, and for safe transportation for every pedestrian (STEP) is \$200,000.** They are also announcing a new Local Roads Safety Initiative within the Alabama HSIP. The initiative will be open to cities and counties for both rural and urban non-State maintained roadways with significant safety risks. Applications submitted through this initiative must be in accordance with the most recent Alabama Strategic Highway Safety Plan and applicable Local Road Safety Plans if one has been developed by the county that the location falls within. The TSOS is also making available Road Safety Review (RSR) service for those cities or counties that have an identified location(s) but would like some assistance in ensuring the most effective countermeasures are chosen. Applications under this initiative will be submitted electronically to the ALDOT State Traffic and Safety Operations Engineer. PE, ROW, UT, and CN phases are

eligible for funding, but may make the application less competitive compared to those with only CN phases requested. Contact John-Michael Walker at 334-242-6123 or walkerjoh@dot.state.al.us with any requests for assistance or questions about the program.

- ❖ **The Environmental Finance Center Network** is offering technical assistance free of charge to small drinking water systems serving 10,000 or fewer people. Services include a resource help desk, financial health check-up, water and wastewater rates analysis tool, and a financial resilience dashboard. See https://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/TechnicalAssistanceEFCN_COVID.pdf for more information.
- ❖ **Community Heart & Soul is offering \$10,000 in Seed Grant Funding** to small cities and towns. This program provides startup funding for resident-driven groups in communities with populations of 2,500 – 30,000 to implement the Community Heart & Soul model which engages the entire population of a town in identifying what they love the most about their community, what future they want for it, and how to achieve it. See <https://www.communityheartandsoul.org/seed-grants/> for more information and to apply.

More information regarding deadlines will be distributed as it becomes available. **Please don't hesitate to contact Eric Wright, EARPDC Planning and Development Director, at 256-237-6741 or eric.wright@earpdc.org for more information.**

July 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 EAC offices Closed	4 EAC offices Closed	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Transit Advisory Board Meeting @ 9	12 MPO Technical Advisory Committee @ 10 (Tentative) FY 2024-27 TIP Public Involvement Meeting @ 4	13 Northern RPO Meeting @ 11	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Central RPO Meeting @ 11	21	22
23	24	25	26 MPO Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting @ 10	27 MPO Policy Committee meeting @ 10	28	29
30	31					

August 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Transit Advisory Board Meeting @ 9	9 MPO Technical Advisory Committee @ 10	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 MPO Policy Committee meeting @ 10	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		