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East Alabama Region Transportation Monthly Newsletter

December 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 smartphone via this link: <https://meet.goto.com/148309069>

You can also dial in using your phone.

Access Code: 148-309-069

United States (Toll-Free): [1 866 899 4679](tel:18668994679)

United States: [+1 \(571\) 317-3116](tel:+15713173116)

January Calhoun Area MPO Project Changes

❖ #50 UT (100070269) Friendship Road Widening and Bridge Replacement Phase III

Old Target Start Date: April 1, 2024

New Target Start Date: October 1, 2025

New target start date in new FY; increased by 1% for each FY moved from \$109,671 to \$111,876 and moved on TIP spreadsheet

❖ #64 CN (100077729) AL-21 Pedestrian Crossing at McClellan Blvd.

Original Estimate: \$170,445

New Estimate: \$172,445

New Estimate provided by ALDOT. Updated CRF Spreadsheet to reflect.

❖ #49 CN (100070257) Friendship Road Widening and Bridge Replacement Phase II

Old Target Start Date: June 27, 2025

New Target Start Date: June 26, 2026

❖ #61 CN (100078095) Old Gadsden Hwy Resurfacing from Railroad Ave to Hwy 431

Old Target Start Date: FY26

New Target Start Date: FY25

-moved start day ahead of the previous schedule due to better balance programmed funding.

- ❖ #49 UT (100070255) Friendship Road Widening and Bridge Replacement Phase II
Old Target Start Date: April 1, 2024
New Target Start Date: September 1, 2024
-New target start date in same FY, no change needed
- ❖ #49 RW (100070254) Friendship Road Widening and Bridge Replacement Phase II
Old Target Start Date: January 1, 2024
New Target Start Date: June 1, 2024
-New target start date in same FY, no change needed
- ❖ #50 RW (100070262) Friendship Road Widening and Bridge Replacement Phase III
Old Target Start Date: January 1, 2024
New Target Start Date: September 1, 2024
-New target start date in same FY, no change needed
- ❖ #41 RW (100064888) Bridge Replacement on Airport Rd at Coldwater Creek BIN#11215
Old Target Start Date: March 1, 2024
New Target Start Date: May 1, 2024
-New target start date in same FY; no change needed
- ❖ #41 UT (100064889) Bridge Replacement on Airport Rd at Coldwater Creek BIN#11215
Old Target Start Date: June 1, 2024
New Target Start Date: August 1, 2024
-New target start date in same FY; no change needed

East Alabama RPO Updates

❖ FY 2024 RPO Quarterly Meetings

- Northern Counties (Etowah and Cherokee): TBA
- Central Counties (Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, and Talladega): TBA
- Southern Counties (Chambers, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa): TBA

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 eric.wright@earpdc.org or call 256-237-6741. We would love to have these meetings be both beneficial and enjoyable for all involved.

Projects Proposed to Let January 26, 2024

Calhoun County

- ❖ STPSU-0819(255) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing, and traffic stripe on George Douthit Drive Southwest from the junction of Brierwood Place Southwest to the intersection of SR-21 in Jacksonville. Length 1.108 miles. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$494,133 to \$603,941.

Chambers County

none

Cherokee County

- ❖ NH-0035(538) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing, and traffic stripe on SR-35 from the junction of SR-273 to the DeKalb County line. Length 2.999 miles. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$939,958 to \$1,148,837.

Clay County

none

Cleburne County

none

Coosa County

- ❖ NH-0021(578) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing (scrub seal), and traffic stripe on SR-21 (US-231) in Rockford from 0.560

miles south of the intersection of SR-22 to the junction of CR-59 north of Rockford. Length 3.316 miles. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$1,533,485 to \$1,874,259.

Etowah County

none

Randolph County

- ❖ STPAA-HSIP-0048(507) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing (scrub seal), and traffic stripe on SR-48 from 0.280 miles west of the junction of CR-531 (MP24.961) to the Georgia state line. Length 9.360. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$4,231,672 to \$5,172,043.

Talladega County

- ❖ STPAA-HSIP-0034(503) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing (scrub seal), bridge guardrail retrofit, guardrail installation, and traffic stripe on SR-34 from the St. Clair County line to the junction of SR-77 north of Talladega. Length 8.241 miles. The bracket estimate on this project is from \$3,229,685 to \$3,947,392.

Tallapoosa County

none

Upcoming Funding Opportunities & Deadlines

It's not too early to be thinking ahead!

❖ **Apply Now for the 2024 Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative Program**

In partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), The Conservation Fund is pleased to announce the 2024 Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative (AGCI) program. Through the initiative, teams from communities serving as gateways to public lands in Appalachia are provided the skills and knowledge to create lasting economic opportunity by leveraging natural, cultural, and recreation assets. The deadline for Letters of Interest is **January 24** and the deadline to apply is **February 6**. Learn more and apply at conservationfund.org/appalachian-gateway-community-initiative-2024?emci=93957ddb-eaab-ee11-bea1-0022482237da&emdi=02b13b7b-36ae-ee11-bea1-0022482237da&ceid=523675.

- ❖ Appalachian Regional Commission seeks local government applicants for no-cost training, and access to funding. READY Local Governments is offering a nine-week training program, expert guidance, and funding opportunities to help local governments in the Appalachian Region better apply for, manage, and implement federal funding. Skills for this training opportunity include project identification, research, and planning; the grant lifecycle; federal grant application development; community engagement; federal grant regulations and compliance; federal grant financial and risk management. Following completion of the training program, participants will be eligible for up to \$50,000 in funding (no match required) to implement internal capacity-building projects to help them better serve communities. Applications for the first READY Local Government training program are due **February 29, 2024**, and capacity is limited to 180 local government officials, with no more than two officials per community. To learn more about READY Local Governments and how to apply, **visit www.arc.gov/read/localgovs/**

- ❖ 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) services 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.

- ❖ Applications for the next round of **Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)** grants are anticipated to open in **February 2024**. The program provides for two types of grants, Planning & Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants. The program supports the development of a comprehensive safety action plan (Action Plan) that identifies the most significant roadway safety concerns in a community and the implementation of projects and strategies to address roadway safety issues. Action Plans are the foundation of the SS4A grant program. SS4A requires an eligible Action Plan be in place before applying to implement projects and strategies.
- ❖ FTA's **Low or No Emission competitive program** provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities. FTA anticipates releasing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this program in February 2024.
- ❖ FHWA is accepting applications for \$9.7 billion in multi-year funding to improve the nation's bridges through the competitive **Bridge Investment Program's "Planning" and "Bridge Project" categories**, which fund bridge planning, repair, and replacement projects under \$100 million. FHWA has provided a [Bridge Project Application Template](#) and [Planning Grant Application Template](#) and highly encourages applicants to use the templates for their applications. Join FHWA for live Q&A sessions on [January 25 at 2:00 p.m. ET](#) on Planning and Bridge Project Grants and on [January 30 at 2:00 p.m. ET](#) on the Benefit Cost Analysis Tool. [Technical assistance](#) is also available to recipients who receive Bridge Investment Program grants. **Applications for this round of planning and bridge project funding must be submitted by March 19, 2024 via Grants.gov.**
- ❖ **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, EARPCD Planning and Development Director, at 256-237-6741 or \[eric.wright@earpcd.org\]\(mailto:eric.wright@earpcd.org\) for more information.](#)

February 2024

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

March 2024

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