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East Alabama Region Transportation Monthly Newsletter

February 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. The call-in number to attend virtually or by phone is 1-866-899-4679 with an access code of 312-611-237 OR you may join by computer or smartphone using the following link:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/132611237> .

If you are not currently on the MPO notification mailing list and would like to attend, please email Libby at elizabeth.messick@earpdc.org. All MPO meetings are open to the public.

January Calhoun Area MPO Project Changes

- ❖ #30 CN (100057407) Barry Street/US-78 intersection reconfiguration
Old Engineer's Estimate: \$2,267,768.34
Project Let for \$2,700,503.68
- ❖ #44 CN (100075806) Bynum Leatherwood/Old Gadsden Road Roundabout
Old Engineer's Estimate: \$1,150,981
Allocated amount on TIP spreadsheet from previous estimates: \$1,411,310
Office Engineer Estimate: \$1,718,076.14
Increased by 20% to \$1,693,572 to await actual Let amount
- ❖ #57 CN (100070208) Resurfacing on George Douthit Dr SW from Brierwood Place SW to SR-21
Old Target Start Date: May 26, 2023
New Target Start Date: July 28, 2023

East Alabama RPO Updates

❖ FY 2023 RPO Quarterly Meetings –

The next Quarterly meeting will be held in April.

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

These meetings will be via phone at (978) 990-5000; access number 419-691.

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.

Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

- ❖ Surveys for the 2023 Plan update were sent in January 2023 with a return deadline of April 10th, 2023
- ❖ Meetings regarding the 2023 Plan update will be held concurrently with RPO meetings in January and April 2023.
- ❖ If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions, please contact Libby Messick at 256-237-6741 or elizabeth.messick@earpdc.org.

Projects Proposed to Let February 2023

Calhoun County

- ❖ NH-HSIP-0001(626) for constructing the micro-milling, resurfacing (scrub seal), bridge guardrail retrofit, guardrail installation, and traffic stripe on SR-1 (US-431) from the junction of SR-144 northwest of Alexandria to a point 0.280 miles south of the junction of SR-204. Length 4.583 miles. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$4,455,990 to \$5,446,210.

Chambers County

none

Cherokee County

none

Clay County

none

Cleburne County

none

Coosa County

none

Etowah County

- ❖ ATRP-28-2020-223 for constructing the intersection improvements (grading, drainage, pavement, and traffic stripe)

and roadway improvements (lane reconfiguration) on SR-1 (US-278/US-41) at SR-291 (Hood Avenue) in Gadsden. Length 0.392 miles. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$783,079 to \$957,097.

pavement marker installation, traffic markings and rumble strips) on CR-207, Grist Mill Road, Goodwater Highway, and Ironaton Road at various locations as indicated in the plans. Length 62.837 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$138,772 to \$169,610.

Randolph County

none

Tallapoosa County

none

Talladega County

- ❖ HRRR-6122(250) for constructing the roadway safety improvements (raised

Upcoming Funding Opportunities & Deadlines

It's not too early to be thinking ahead!

- ❖ The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting applications for the **USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) program**. Through competitive grants, RBDG provides technical assistance, training, and other enterprise support to small businesses in rural communities. Grants generally range from \$10,000 up to \$500,000 and there is no cost share requirement. Applications are accepted through **February 28th, 2023**. More information can be found at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business-development-grants#overview>.
- ❖ **The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)** has announced that applications are open for a new round of **Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)** discretionary grants. Applicants must submit applications by **February 28, 2023**. Projects focusing on areas of persistent poverty or historically disadvantaged communities will receive preference. More information can be found at <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-12/FY%202023%20RAISE%20NOFO%2012.14.2022.pdf>.
- ❖ **The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development** is accepting applications for grants to establish and operate **Agriculture Innovation Centers (AIC)**. AICs provide technical and business development assistance to agricultural producers seeking to market or produce value-added products. Completed applications for grants must be submitted electronically by no later than 11:59 pm eastern, **March 6, 2023** through Grants.gov. More information can be found at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/agriculture-innovation-center-program>.
- ❖ 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) (<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 Frank Humber, EARPDC Deputy Director, at 256-237-6741 or frank.humber@earpdc.org for more information.**

February 2023

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

March 2023

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