Keep Mobile Moving

A

“Better, Quicker and Cheaper” Solution to South Alabama’s Traffic Congestion
Keep Mobile Moving

• *Keep Mobile Moving (KMM)*, a coalition of citizens and businesses dedicated to the economic and aesthetic vitality of all of Mobile.

• Is an active participant in developing an alternative solution for traffic congestion on the Interstate highways in the Greater Mobile Area.
Concerns

ANY BRIDGE OVER THE MOBILE RIVER IN DOWNTOWN MOBILE WILL HAVE LONG-LASTING ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES.

- Hamstrings future downtown development
- Handicaps the Mobile waterfront
- Isolates neighborhoods
- Cripples shipping and cruise industries.
- Threatens the survival of the local maritime industries that
  - Employ over 5,500 shipyard workers earning over $250 million annually
  - Pay over $25 million dollars annually in taxes
Concerns

ANY BRIDGE OVER THE MOBILE RIVER IN DOWNTOWN MOBILE WILL HAVE LONG-LASTING ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES.

- Former Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman, in a meeting with the *Mobile Press-Register* said, “Mobile has the potential to be the premier entrée port on the Gulf Coast.”

  “Mobile should not sacrifice a strategic asset (the Port) to solve a current problem (traffic).”
Approach

• *KMM* engaged a well-respected traffic consulting firm, Street Smarts to:
  – review current traffic flows and future projections
  – suggest realistic and practical alternatives to the proposed new bridge.

• *KMM* developed a series of recommendations based on Street Smarts’ comprehensive study.
KMM proposes, through the phased implementation of five core and two additional improvements, a Better, Quicker, Cheaper plan that will reduce Interstate traffic congestion throughout the Greater Mobile Area.

This solution is

- **Better** because it achieves congestion reduction throughout the Interstate system in South Alabama, not just for the Wallace Tunnel and the Bayway.
- **Quicker** because it reduces congestion faster.
- **Cheaper** because it is about 40% less expensive than the current proposals.
Core Projects

THESE CORE PROJECTS ADDRESS ALL THE TRAFFIC ISSUES COVERED BY THE CURRENT ALDOT PROPOSAL

- Reroute trucks to I-65 and I-165.
- Upgrade and expand the existing Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)
- Modify Cochran-Africatown Bridge route by converting Bay Bridge Road, from I-165 to the Bayway, to a four-lane Limited Access road
- Widen I-65 as has been discussed by ALDOT
- Expand the Bayway to eight lanes as proposed by ALDOT
Additional Projects

THESE ADDITIONAL PROJECTS WILL ENHANCE THE SAFETY AND UTILITY OF THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM

- Upgrade the approaches to/from the western end of the Wallace Tunnel.
- Build the Western Loop.
Core Projects
Reroute Trucks
IMMEDIATELY BEGIN INCREASED UTILIZATION OF I-65 AND I-165 FOR TRUCK TRAFFIC

- Trucks are more than 15 percent of the total traffic load on I-10 and each semi-rig is the equivalent of three automobiles.
- Trucks carrying hazardous materials (HAZMAT) are routed onto Water Street through the heart of the central business district.
- KMM's recommendation
  - Reroute through trucks to I-165 and I-65 and thus reduce 80 percent of the truck traffic on the most congested portion of I-10.
- Provides truckers a predetermined route that is less congested and assures a more reliable, predictable trip time.
- Routing trucks onto I-459 to by-pass Birmingham is an example of this concept.
Upgrade ITS

INCREASE CURRENT ITS COVERAGE OVER THE ENTIRE INTERSTATE NETWORK AND CONVERT IT TO A STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTER-CONTROLLED SYSTEM

- ALDOT has been implementing an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) in the Mobile area for a number of years primarily centered around the Wallace and Bankhead tunnels.
- KMM’s recommendation
  - Install upgraded ITS for the Interstate highways around Mobile and the Cochran-Africatown/Bridge Bay Bridge Road route.
- Once fully deployed, ITS will be able to monitor a larger network of traffic and provide information to the traveling public so that it can make informed driving choices.
Cochran-Africatown Route

UPGRADE AND EXPAND BAY BRIDGE ROAD CONNECTING THE COCHRAN-AFRICATOWN BRIDGE TO I-165 AND I-10 (BAYWAY) TO FOUR-LANE LIMITED ACCESS STATUS

- KMM’s recommendation
  - Convert Bay Bridge Road connecting I-165 and the I-10 Bayway utilizing the Cochran-Africatown Bridge to a Limited Access road.

- Mixing road classifications as proposed is a current practice in populous areas. Other states mix Interstate standard freeways with local freeways to provide more localized access than an Interstate alone allows.
Cochran-Africatown Route, also known as The Northern Route
Widen I-65

EXPAND CAPACITY OF I-65 BETWEEN I-10 AND I-165

- Normal growth and growth added by routing I-10 traffic to I-165 may increase traffic on I-65 to unacceptable levels.
- KMM’s recommendation
  - add one lane in each direction to I-65.
- ALDOT agrees and has stated that upgrades to I-65 between I-165 and I-10 are required to reduce congestion.
• KMM’s recommendation
  – Support ALDOT’s recommendation to increase the Bayway roadbed from four lanes to eight lanes.
  – Reduce risk by reconfiguring the interchange between Bay Bridge Road and the Bayway so eastbound traffic, especially truck, does not have to travel to the mid-point of the Causeway before merging onto I-10.
• Allow direct access to the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park by all I-10 traffic.
Cost Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“New Bridge” Project</th>
<th>KMM Proposal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New I-10 bridge over Mobile River (see Note 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Widen the I-10 Bayway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Widen I-65 between I-10 and I-165</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand regional ITS</td>
<td>$40 M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cochran-Africatown Freeway</td>
<td>$132 M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prohibit through trucks in Wallace Tunnel</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>TOTA L</strong></td>
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1 Based on 190’ air draft. Costs will increase dramatically when this is raised.

Note: Using a 3% inflation factor, in 2015 dollars the cost to complete the alternative solution is approximately $266M less than the “New Bridge” Project.
Additional Projects
The western approach to/from the Wallace Tunnel has two significant problems that contribute to the tunnel’s capacity issues:

- Traffic traveling in both directions on I-10 must make a quick turn when approaching or exiting the tunnel.
- The merge point for traffic from Water Street into the Wallace Tunnel and the I-10 eastbound traffic occurs only 650 feet west of the Wallace Tunnel.

ALDOT recognized these problems a decade ago and developed plans to realign the I-10 west approaches to the Wallace Tunnel.

KMM’s proposed alternative creates a gentler curve approaching the tunnel and moves the merge point for Water Street traffic further away from the tunnel.

The result is a safer freeway with more capacity.
Wallace Tunnel Approaches

Two lanes into tunnel
Existing merge point for I-10 Eastbound traffic and Water St traffic, 650' from tunnel
Three lanes
New merge point 1050' from tunnel

New Eastbound approach to tunnel to provide safer curve and easier merge with downtown merge traffic – three lanes merge to two lanes

Concept: New I-10 approach to Wallace Tunnel
Objective: Improve safety and add capacity to I-10 on the west side of Wallace Tunnel
Description: Reconstruct the I-10 eastbound approach to the tunnel and move the connection point from Water St approx. 400 feet further from the Wallace Tunnel; Reconstruct associated ramps and connections to coincide with approach highway.
Western Loop

REROUTE TRAFFIC FROM I-10 ON THE SOUTH TO THE NEW US 98/S158

• A Western Loop has been planned for decades and is significant to the region.
• The project became controversial and was removed from ALDOT’s work program.
• The ALDOT/SARPC plan creates a north-south section of that highway on the west side of the Mobile Regional Airport and then turns easterly and intersects I-65, north of I-165.
• KMM recommends adopting the ALDOT/SARPC plan to build the Western Loop. It will alleviate traffic congestion and provide a badly-needed limited access route to the Mobile Regional Airport.
Western Loop

Concept: Limited access highway (freeway) from I-10 to I-65, west of Mobile Regional Airport, along primarily undeveloped land.

Objective: Provide a by-pass freeway to relieve I-65 between I-165 and I-10; provide freeway access to Mobile Regional Airport from I-10 and I-65.

Description: Four-lane cross section, 26.8 mi freeway, utilizing new alignment with interchanges at I-10, Jeff Hamilton Mill Rd, Airport Blvd, Tanner Williams Rd, Howells Ferry Rd, US 98, and I-65.

Est. Cost: $163 Million

New interchange with I-10 8 miles west of I-65.
Current Status

- Met with ALDOT in early May
- Working with ALDOT and SARPC to refine traffic model
- Met with Mayor and County Commission
- Expanding Membership in KMM
- Increase Community Awareness
Keep Mobile Moving with a “Better, Quicker, Cheaper” solution to traffic congestion