The nation’s surface transportation funding situation is facing a defining moment that is more challenging than ever before. Due to the weakening economy, the ever-improving fuel efficiency of vehicles, and other factors, the traditional funding sources for surface transportation – motor fuel taxes – are having difficulty generating sufficient revenue to meet the construction and maintenance needs. To avoid a potential transportation funding crisis in the state of Alabama, this research proposes to explore alternative future financing schemes, and to provide an assessment of the feasibility and effectiveness of those options in Alabama. The research will first estimate the potential funding gap in Alabama by examining the current transportation financing mechanisms. A wide-ranging review of possible alternative revenue sources will then be performed. Advantages and challenges of each option, as well as the recommendations from current practice of selected alternative methods in other states, will be summarized. The relevance and suitability of these alternative financing schemes will be discussed with relevant transportation stakeholders in Alabama. The research will then develop a revenue forecast model for the Alabama highway system to quantify the benefits of selected alternatives. The forecast model will be a useful tool for the Alabama Department of Transportation. The results will provide recommendations on the most suitable and effective future revenue sources for the Alabama transportation system, and will serve as a good reference for the Alabama Legislature. The findings also have potentially high impacts nationwide.

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