

FINAL

2013 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FOR THE HUNTSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA



HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (HATS)

Prepared by the Huntsville Planning Division in cooperation with the
Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs, Alabama Department of Transportation

ADOPTED JANUARY 15, 2014



**HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

FINAL

2013 Public Participation Plan

This document is posted at:

<http://www.huntsvillempo.org>

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Adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization
January 15, 2014

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Madison County
City of Madison
City of Madison
Town of Owens Cross Roads
Town of Owens Cross Roads
Town of Triana
Town of Triana

RESOLUTION 6-14

HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
ADOPTING THE FINAL 2013 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study is the organization designated by the Governor of the State of Alabama as being responsible, together with the State of Alabama, for implementing the applicable provisions of amended 23 USC 134, 135, (amended by MAP 21 Section 1201 and 1202, July 2012) 42 USC 2000d-1, 7401; 23 CFR 450; 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93; and

WHEREAS, 23 CFR Section 450, Subpart C, Section 316(b)(1) requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, representative groups, and other specialized users of the transportation network, with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process; and

WHEREAS, Section 1201 of MAP-21, amends USC 134(I0)(5)(A)(B) and (C) to further expand the public participation process and identifies those segments of the population affected by transportation decisions of the MPO and further specifies format, means, and methods for providing a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Public Participation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation requires specific public involvement actions to occur as a result of the legislation, including a minimum comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised [23 CFR 450.316(a)(3)]; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Organization has prepared a **Draft 2013 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area** in accordance with federal legislation; and

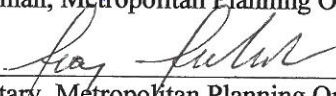
WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Organization has made available a **Draft 2013 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area** for public review for a period of 45 days or more before the plan is finalized; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Organization has addressed the comments made regarding the **Draft 2013 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area** and incorporated changes concerning those comments into the **Final 2013 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area**; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Metropolitan Planning Organization of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study that it hereby adopts the **Final 2013 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area**.

ADOPTED, this the 15th day of January, 2014.


Chairman, Metropolitan Planning Organization


Secretary, Metropolitan Planning Organization

ATTEST:


Chairman, MPO TCC

Date

1/15/14

FINAL 2013 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN THE HUNTSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
Executive Summary.....	ES-1
Purpose	ES-2
 1.0 Introduction.....	 1
1.1 Legal Authority.....	1
1.2 History and Composition of the Huntsville Area MPO.....	1
1.2.1 MPO Membership.....	1
1.2.2 MPO Responsibilities per Agreement.....	2
1.3 Advisory Committees.....	2
1.3.1 Technical Coordinating Committee.....	3
1.3.2 Citizens' Advisory Committee.....	3
1.4 Federal and State Public Participation Requirements.....	4
1.4.1 Title 23 USC 134 and 135.....	4
1.4.2 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act (MAP-21).....	4
1.4.3 23 CFR 450.....	5
1.4.4 Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq. 42 USC 2000d.....	5
1.4.4.1 23 USC 324.....	5
1.4.4.2 29 USC 794 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992.....	5
1.4.4.3 Executive Order 12898.....	5
1.4.4.4 Limited English Proficiency Persons and Language Assistance Plan.....	6
1.4.5 Clean Air Act.....	7
1.4.6 Alabama Open Meetings Act.....	7
1.5 Other Partners Involved in Public Participation.....	7
1.5.1 The Alabama Department of Transportation.....	7
1.5.2 Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration..	8
 2.0 MPO Planning Requirements.....	 8
2.1 Scope of the Planning Process.....	8
2.2 Livability Principles and Indicators.....	9
2.2.1 Livability Principles.....	9
2.2.2 Livability Indicators.....	10
2.3 Plans Approved by the MPO That Require Public Participation.....	10
2.3.1 Unified Planning Work Program.....	10
2.3.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.....	11
2.3.3 Transportation Improvement Program.....	11
2.3.4 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan.....	12

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
2.3.5 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan.....	13
2.3.6 Public Participation Plan	14
2.3.7 Air Quality Conformity Report.....	14
2.4 The Amendment Process: Long Range, TIP, and Other Operations Plans.....	16
2.4.1 Administrative Modification.....	16
2.4.2 Formal Amendment Process.....	17
3.0 Public Participation Procedures.....	17
3.1 Overview.....	17
3.1.1 Broad Categories of Public Participation.....	17
3.2 Public Participation Techniques.....	18
3.2.1 MPO Website and Social Media.....	19
3.2.2 MPO Databases.....	19
3.2.3 Press Releases.....	20
3.2.4 Legal Ads	20
3.2.5 Cable TV Announcements.....	20
3.2.6 Project-Specific Websites.....	20
3.2.7 Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses.....	21
3.2.8 Availability of Draft Planning Documents and Amendments to the Current Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Public Comments.....	21
3.2.9 Citizens' Advisory Committee.....	21
3.2.10 MPO Meetings.....	21
3.2.11 Public Notices.....	22
3.2.12 Comment Forms.....	22
3.2.13 Flyers.....	22
3.2.14 MPO Logo.....	22
3.3 Public Involvement Policies and Objectives.....	22
3.3.1 Policy 1.....	23
3.3.1.1 Objective 1.1.....	23
3.3.1.2 Objective 1.2.....	23
3.3.1.3 Objective 1.3.....	23
3.3.1.4 Objective 1.4.....	23
3.3.1.5 Objective 1.5.....	23
3.3.1.6 Objective 1.6.....	24
3.3.2 Policy 2.....	24
3.3.2.1 Objective 2.1.....	24
3.3.2.2 Objective 2.2.....	24
3.3.2.3 Objective 2.3.....	24
3.3.2.4 Objective 2.4.....	25
3.3.2.5 Objective 2.5.....	25
3.3.3 Policy 3.....	25
3.3.3.1 Objective 3.1.....	25
3.3.3.2 Objective 3.2.....	25
3.3.3.3 Objective 3.3.....	25
3.3.3.4 Objective 3.4.....	25

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
3.3.4 Policy 4.....	25
3.3.4.1 Objective 4.1.....	25
3.3.4.2 Objective 4.2.....	26
3.3.4.3 Objective 4.3.....	26
3.3.4.4 Objective 4.4.....	26
3.3.5 Policy 5.....	26
3.3.5.1 Objective 5.1.....	26
3.3.5.2 Objective 5.2.....	27
3.3.6 Policy 6.....	27
3.3.6.1 Objective 6.1.....	27
3.3.6.2 Objective 6.2.....	27
3.3.6.3 Objective 6.3.....	28
3.3.6.4 Objective 6.4.....	28
3.3.6.5 Objective 6.5.....	28
3.3.7 Policy 7.....	28
3.3.7.1 Objective 7.1.....	28
3.3.7.2 Objective 7.2.....	29
3.3.7.3 Objective 7.3.....	29
3.3.7.4 Objective 7.4.....	29
3.3.8 Policy 8.....	29
3.3.8.1 Objective 8.1.....	29
3.3.8.2 Objective 8.2.....	29
3.3.8.3 Objective 8.3.....	29
3.3.8.4 Objective 8.4.....	29
3.3.9 Policy 9.....	30
3.3.9.1 Objective 9.1.....	30
3.3.9.2 Objective 9.2.....	30
4.0 Revisions and Amendments.....	30
5.0 Appendices	
Appendix A: Huntsville Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Map.....	A-1
Appendix B: Livability Indicators.....	B-1
Appendix C: Title VI Documentation – Limited English Proficiency Plan.....	C-1
Attachment C-1: Language Identification Flashcard.....	C-9
Appendix D: Public Participation Evaluation Procedures.....	D-1
Attachment D-1: Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals.....	D-5
Attachment D-2: Improvement Strategies.....	D-6
Appendix E: Glossary of Abbreviations.....	E-1
Appendix F: Public Comments Received Regarding the Draft 2013 Public Participation Plan.....	F-1

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
6.0 Index of Maps	
Appendix A: Huntsville Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Map.....	A-1
Appendix B: Livability Indicators.....	B-1
Map B-1: Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area.....	B-2
Map B-2: Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service	B-3
Map B-3: Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing.....	B-4
Map B-4: Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation.....	B-5
Map B-5: Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or Less Commute Time.....	B-6
Map B-6: Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or More Commute Time.....	B-7
Map B-7: Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Major Retail Services.....	B-10
Map B-8: Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Recreational Facilities.....	B-11
7.0 Index of Tables and Attachments	
Appendix B	
Table B-1: Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Existing Transportation Systems.....	B-8
Table B-2: Percent of Transportation Projects Where More than One Funding Source is Utilized.....	B-9
Appendix C	
Attachment C-1: Language Identification Flashcard.....	C-9
Appendix D	
Table D-1: Public Involvement Techniques Evaluation.....	D-2
Attachment D-1: Public Involvement Evaluation Form.....	D-5
Attachment D-2: Public Involvement Evaluation Improvement Strategies Form.....	D-6

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title 23, United States Code (USC) 134 and 135, were amended by *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)*, in July of 2012. This legislation continues the legacy of earlier laws and regulations to ensure the continued participation of citizens in the Transportation Planning process. The regulatory provisions under 23 CFR 450 indicate that the most effective public participation process is one in which the public has access to information through various methods, is provided the ability to act on that information before decisions are finalized, and is allowed opportunities to provide such input as to exert their influence over the outcome of project decisions.

In the Huntsville urbanized area, the MPO is formally known as the Huntsville Area Transportation Study or HATS. For the purpose of this plan, the HATS will be referred to as the MPO. The MPO staff has established public participation strategies for the transportation plans developed by the MPO. These strategies vary, and may include distributing press releases, issuing public notices, holding special meetings, and providing additional outreach through the MPO's website. The public participation strategy(ies) used are either documented in the plan or documented separately, as required by the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Division of the Federal Highway Administration.

23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.310 requires that urbanized areas, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau with a population of 50,000 or more, be designated as an MPO. Furthermore, urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 individuals shall be designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Subsequent to the U.S. decennial census of 2000, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) designated the Huntsville urbanized area as a TMA. Since its designation, the MPO has met all responsibilities and requirements pertaining to TMAs in accordance with 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. Those requirements pertain to membership of the MPO [23 CFR 450.301(d)], the development of a congestion management process [23 CFR 450.320(a)], project selection for the Transportation Improvement Program [23 CFR 450.330(c)], and joint FHWA/FTA certification of the planning process to ensure that the transportation planning process meets the requirements of federal law [23 CFR 450.334(b)]. At the present time, the MPO is not mandated to meet the requirements of 23 CFR 450.320(d) and 23 CFR 450.320(e) regarding the congestion management process in a nonattainment area for ozone or carbon monoxide, as the TMA does not present an air quality problem. All of these mandated requirements demand a public involvement component, which this document addresses.

The overall goal of public participation is to ensure that the plans adopted by the MPO appropriately reflect the region's philosophy towards the management and development of transportation assets, and equitably benefit all communities within the planning area. To meet this goal, the objectives of the public participation process are explored in detail within this document. The MPO staff uses periodic assessments to measure the effectiveness of public participation techniques. Results of the assessments are used to improve the public participation processes so that the MPO can meet the goal of insuring that transportation plans reflect the region's philosophy and benefit all communities in the planning area.

PURPOSE

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to provide guidelines for public participation activities to be conducted by the Huntsville area MPO. This plan complies with the U.S. Department of Transportation rules requiring provisions to ensure early and continuing public participation in the development of transportation plans and programs for the Huntsville Area Transportation Study. This plan also ensures that identified Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations responsible for plans that may be impacted by transportation planning activities are consulted and included in the public participation process, specifically during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legal Authority

The Federal Highway Act of 1962 required all urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more to establish a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) planning process in order to be eligible to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation. This process was further addressed in the 1974 Federal Aid Highway Act, which stipulated that all urbanized areas required to have a 3C planning process also create local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO).

1.2 History and Composition of the Huntsville Area MPO

An updated agreement concerning a transportation planning process for the Huntsville Urbanized Area was executed in January 2009 by Madison County; the cities of Huntsville, Madison, Triana, and Owens Cross Roads; the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments; and the Alabama Department of Transportation. Representatives from these governmental entities comprise the local MPO. Public Transit interests are represented on the MPO by the Chief Elected Officials that are responsible for transit programs within their respective jurisdictions. MPO meetings are called when necessary to adopt or amend transportation plans. Meetings are generally held on the 1st floor of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building at 3:30 pm, typically on a Wednesday. The MPO does not act arbitrarily, but is governed by specific by-laws. A quorum must be in attendance to vote upon issues that are presented before the group.

1.2.1 MPO Membership

Membership of the MPO consists of the following members:

- Chairman of the Madison County Commission
- Mayor of Huntsville
- City Council Member of Huntsville
- Mayor of Madison
- Mayor of Owens Cross Roads
- Mayor of Triana
- Division Engineer for the Alabama Department of Transportation
- Executive Director, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (non-voting)
- Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration (non-voting)
- Transportation Planning Engineer for the Alabama Department of Transportation (non-voting)

1.2.2 MPO Responsibilities per Agreement

The agreement concerning a transportation planning process for the Huntsville Urbanized Area defines the responsibilities of the MPO to be as follows:

- Organize and elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and establish its rules of procedure and by-laws
- Appoint members to the Transportation Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees
- Take official action on Transportation Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees' recommendations and other matters pertaining to furthering the planning process
- Set the transportation study area and federal-aid urban area boundaries. See **Appendix A** for the most up to date map depicting those boundaries.
- Adopt transportation goals and objectives to guide the Huntsville urbanized area metropolitan planning process
- Endorse the Unified Planning Work Program which documents the transportation related planning activities to be performed with planning assistance provided under FTA and FHWA Planning funds of the current federal transportation legislation
- Review and endorse the (Metropolitan) Transportation Plan to confirm its validity and its consistency with current transportation; and land use conditions as required by the State and Federal regulations
- Adopt a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is updated as required by the State and Federal regulations
- Adopt and submit plans and recommendations to participating agencies and local governments

1.3 Advisory Committees

The MPO receives public input and advisement before voting on transportation plans. The MPO is advised by two committees: The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC). The Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizens' Advisory Committee meet as called. Meetings are held at the City of Huntsville Municipal Building. Typically, the Technical Coordinating Committee meets at 3:00 pm, prior to the prescheduled

Wednesday 3:30 pm meeting of the MPO. The Citizens' Advisory Committee will meet at 5:00 pm on Monday, the week before a scheduled MPO meeting. These two committees provide input to transportation planning issues prior to MPO deliberations; however, the MPO is the final body that has legal authority to approve transportation plans and plan amendments.

1.3.1 Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee is comprised of technical personnel of operating agencies represented on the MPO, and other agencies (including private, when and if applicable) responsible for or affected by implementation of the transportation plans and programs. Members of the committee are appointed by the MPO. Directors and managers of public transit agencies and the administrators of Federal Transit Administration funds within the MPO Study Area are members of the TCC.

According to the by-laws of the TCC, their functions and duties are as follows:

- To analyze and recommend technical methods, procedures and standards to further the transportation planning process.
- To help coordinate work of operating departments and agencies participating in the study.
- To recommend alternate transportation plans and programs to the MPO.

1.3.2 Citizens' Advisory Committee

The 2009 agreement concerning the transportation planning process in the Huntsville Urbanized Area includes provisions for public involvement through a representative Citizens' Advisory Committee. This Committee is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Review and respond to local transportation plans prepared for the area.
- Assess the local area-wide transportation and transportation related needs as perceived by area residents.
- Initiate actions related to providing area residents the opportunity to input individual, group, private, and semi-private ideas, suggestions, needs, and concepts for consideration and recommendation to the Metropolitan Planning Organization and/or the Technical Coordinating Committee.

- Objectively assess the social, economic, and physical impact within the area of all transportation plans submitted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization or Technical Coordinating Committee.
- Assist the transportation planning staff, where possible, in the development of specific program solutions to area-wide needs as identified through community research and public meetings.

The 2009 agreement concerning the transportation planning process in the Huntsville Urbanized Area and the by-laws of the Citizens' Advisory Committee provide for the committee's membership. The CAC is composed of 16 members appointed by the officials of local government who serve on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The membership of the committee is composed of the following:

Eight (8) representatives from the City of Huntsville
 Two (2) representatives from Madison County
 Two (2) representatives from the City of Madison
 Two (2) representatives from the City of Owens Cross Roads
 Two (2) representatives from the Town of Triana

The CAC meetings provide a public forum for citizens to provide input to the transportation planning process. Public announcements of CAC meetings are provided to newspapers of general circulation, radio, and television stations within the study area, inviting the participation of the general public in the meetings.

1.4 Federal and State Public Participation Requirements

In addition to the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the local MPO involves the general public in transportation planning activities through a variety of strategies and as mandated by law and executive order. Following is a brief summary of the relevant federal laws, regulations, and executive orders that direct State departments of transportation regarding public participation. This text was provided by the Bureau of Transportation Planning at the Alabama Department of Transportation and was tailored by the MPO staff to address MPO functions.

1.4.1 Title 23 United State Code (USC) 134 and 135

23 USC 134 is a codification of the law establishing planning policy, defining MPO organizational structure, and delineating MPO and State responsibilities in the transportation planning process.

1.4.2 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

This is the most recent transportation legislation, signed into law by President Obama in July 2012. This law amends, modifies, and adds to

existing 23 USC 134 and 135. The language specific to the participation process is found in 134(i)(6): Participation by Interested Parties.

1.4.3 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450

23 CFR 450 is FHWA/FTA interpretation of 23 USC 134 and 135, providing specific requirements and actions for MPOs and the State implementing agency, the DOT. The applicable language for both is found, respectively, in 450.210(1)(I and others) (“...the State shall...”) and 450.316(1)(vii and others) (“...the MPO shall...”). Furthermore, federal regulation 23 CFR 450.316 requires MPOs to develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process of providing reasonable opportunities for the general public as well as transportation users and providers among various modes, to be involved in the metropolitan planning process. The federal regulation requires that the participation plan be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes.

1.4.4 Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq. 42 USC 2000d

This legislation prohibits exclusion from participation in any federal program on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This is the seminal or shaping expression of the law. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance, and local MPOs must follow those provisions.

1.4.4.1 23 USC 324 – This is the law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This requirement is found in 23 CFR 450.334(1).

1.4.4.2 29 USC 794 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1992 - These are laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a disability, and in terms of access to the transportation planning process.

1.4.4.3 Executive Order 12898 – Executive Orders by the President as the head of the Executive Branch typically carry the weight of the law. This is not actually true unless the order has been given discretionary power through an Act of Congress, or a later act gives Congressional weight to the order. Significant orders by Presidents in the past affect the ability of segments of the population to gain access, and in this case, the planning process. Order 12898, often simply called “Environmental Justice,” requires federal agencies to identify “disproportionally high and adverse human and health environmental effects of its programs on minority populations and low-income populations...” and prohibits actions that

would adversely affect a disproportionately high number among these populations. Section 5-5 addresses the public involvement part of the order.

1.4.4.4 Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) and Language Assistance Plan – As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and FTA Circular FTA C4702.1B, October 2012, the MPO has completed a Four Factor Analysis of the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area to determine requirements for compliance with the Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) provisions. Based on the analysis, the MPO has identified a population within the MPA that may require MPO assistance in participating in the planning process. A Language Assistance Plan has been developed as follows:

- A total of 1.07% of the population of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Study Area are not proficient speakers of English, therefore the MPO is required to develop a Language Assistance Plan. Spanish is the largest representative language spoken by .69% of those residing in the MPO Study Area.
- The MPO can provide language assistance services by having available persons that are fluent in Spanish. Assistance with other languages may be available upon request and as resources allow.
- Notice of the availability of language assistance to LEP persons is provided through the MPO staff and the Public Participation Plan.
- The MPO monitors, evaluates, and updates the LEP annually through update of the PPP and staff reports.
- Training of the MPO staff to provide language assistance is done under guidance of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

The MPO periodically reviews the above steps to ensure that inadvertent discrimination on the basis of national origin is not occurring. In addition to the above actions, the MPO will provide the following:

- Notice of MPO meetings and hearings in the secondary language as requested.
- Translation services for meetings or hearings on request.
- Translation services, verbal only, of planning documents, subject to 2 week notice.

- Title VI Complaint Form(s) in the secondary language as requested.

The LEP is published as part of this document in **Appendix C**.

1.4.5 Clean Air Act

A series of acts aimed at reducing smog and air pollution, the most recent of which is the Clean Air Act Extension of 1970, with amendments in 1977 and 1990. The 1990 amendment established the State Implementation Plan (SIP), under which states are obligated to notify the public of plans for pollutant control and allow opportunities for input into the process.

1.4.6 Alabama Open Meetings Act

All meetings associated with the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO are open to the public in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act, Act No. 2005-40, which sets forth the general rule of law for open meetings. The Act requires that all governmental agencies, boards, committees, and institutions be in compliance.

It is based upon these requirements that the Huntsville Area MPO maintains a public participation program.

1.5 Other Partners Involved in Public Participation

Other entities are involved in the public participation process of U.S. DOT activities. The MPO supports their public involvement initiatives and compliance as well.

1.5.1 The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)

The ALDOT has three offices that work closely with the MPO. The ALDOT Bureau of Transportation and Modal Programs located at the central office in Montgomery, provides general oversight of the MPO program. Within the Bureau, the Metropolitan Planning Section prepares the MPO agreements, reviews MPO documents, processes MPO invoices, and ensures that the MPO addresses all of the federal transportation planning requirements. The Metropolitan Planning Section is also responsible for developing the State TIP (STIP) and the State Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The process to develop these documents requires the coordination of public involvement activities with the MPOs in the state. The ALDOT Bureau of Transportation and Modal Programs has a non-voting member on the MPO and a voting member on the Technical Coordinating Committee.

The two other ALDOT offices that work with the MPO are the ALDOT Division 1 Office located in Guntersville and the ALDOT Division 2 Office located in Tuscumbia. These offices are involved in all aspects of road construction, from engineering design review to right of way acquisition and construction. Both division offices share responsibilities for the geographical area inside of the MPO Study Area boundaries. Both divisions have voting members on the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee. Additionally, both divisions often responds to requests from the public for information concerning particular projects. They further hold public meetings for individual federally funded highway projects. The MPO staff supports those public involvement activities.

1.5.2 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The FHWA and FTA hold public involvement activities in conjunction with the required Transportation Management Area Certification Review. The MPO assists the FHWA and FTA in this effort. The FHWA and FTA also review all draft and final documents under the purview of the MPO to assure compliance. The Environmental Protection Agency will review the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, TIP, and the Air Quality Conformity Report for MPOs designated as non-conforming under the Clean Air Act. At the present time, the Huntsville area has not been designated as non-conforming. If the Huntsville area MPO is so designated, there will possibly be a separate document required for Public Involvement for Air Quality Conformity. The FHWA has a non-voting member on the MPO. Both the FHWA and the FTA have members on the Technical Coordinating Committee of the MPO. FHWA has a division office in Montgomery, Alabama. FTA has a division office located in Atlanta, Georgia.

2.0 MPO PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

The MPO is required by legislation to adhere to certain planning requirements which must be included in the development of specific planning documents. The plans, which are the outcome of the planning requirements, involve public participation.

2.1 Scope of the Planning Process

In accordance with 23 U.S.C 134(h), there are eight (8) factors that must be considered as part of the planning process for all metropolitan areas. These factors are consulted throughout the development of projects and strategies that are included in the Huntsville area's transportation plans. The eight factors of the metropolitan planning process that are to be considered in the metropolitan planning process shall:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

2.2 Livability Principles and Indicators

Federal legislation requires that MPOs periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process. [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x)]. By taking such action, the MPO staff can determine what methods are best, what methods can be discontinued due to ineffectiveness, and what strategies should be adjusted.

Increasingly, federal and state agencies are using Performance Measures as a way of ensuring greater accountability for the expenditure of public funds in an ever growing number of programs and activities across a variety of disciplines. Within the transportation sector and the planning processes associated with transportation infrastructure development, the Alabama Department of Transportation has adopted the Livability Principles and Indicators as a sustainability measurement against future actions.

The Livability Principles and Indicators are described in the narrative of various MPO adopted plans. The principals identified cannot be changed; however, Alabama MPOs are charged with determining which indicators best reflects their local conditions and needs, and can easily be monitored and presented in tabular, graphic, or mapping format. All planning tasks must be measured against these Livability Principles.

2.2.1 Livability Principles

- 1) Provide more transportation choices
- 2) Promote equitable, affordable housing
- 3) Enhance economic competitiveness
- 4) Support existing communities
- 5) Coordinate policies and leverage investment

- 6) Value communities and neighborhoods

2.2.2 Livability Indicators

As a measure of sustainability of these principals, the MPO will provide the following Livability Indicators:

- 1) Percent of housing located within .50 mile of transit service
- 2) Percent of employment located within .50 mile of transit service
- 3) Percent of household income spent on housing
- 4) Percent of household income spent on transportation
- 5) Percent of workforce with 29 minute or less commute time
- 6) Percent of workforce with 30 minute or more commute time
- 7) Percent of transportation investment dedicated to enhancing accessibility of existing transportation systems
- 8) Percent of transportation projects where more than one funding source is utilized
- 9) Percent of housing units within .25 mile of major retail service center
- 10) Percent of housing units within .25 mile of recreational facilities

These indicators and their applicability to the above principles may be found in **Appendix B** of this document.

2.3 Plans Approved by the MPO that Require Public Participation

2.3.1 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program describes in detail the transportation planning work to be done by the MPO staff and Huntsville Public Transit each fiscal year. The UPWP attaches a budget to specific work tasks necessary to accomplish and maintain the transportation planning process within the MPO study area. The main objective of the UPWP is the development of an integrated planning program that considers the planning activities of each modal group and coordinates these activities to produce a comprehensive transportation plan serving all segments of the population. The public has an opportunity to provide input in the development of the UPWP and make comments concerning the document during the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings and the MPO meetings. Meeting notices are provided at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting to news media, committee members, and interested groups and individuals. The draft and final UPWP as well as the meeting notices are posted on the MPO website. The draft UPWP is also available for review at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office, Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor's office, Town of Triana Mayor's office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor's office. The documents will also be available on the MPO's

website. The public review and request for comments for the draft and final UPWP will be at least 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

2.3.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is also known as the Long Range Transportation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify current transportation needs, forecast future transportation needs, and establish strategies and projects that address those needs. Federal regulations regarding the development of the metropolitan plan (23 CFR Part 450.322) require that the strategies and projects should “lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.” To further meet this end, the MPO has incorporated its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Congestion Management Process into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

The creation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a lengthy process that requires public involvement at various stages of its development. During the time of the plan’s development, the MPO staff may hold various several MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the plan. Additionally, the MPO staff may hold special public meetings at various locations in the MPO study area to receive public input. These meetings will be advertised as well. Copies of the draft and final metropolitan transportation plan as well as any amendments to the plan will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office, Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor’s office, Town of Triana Mayor’s office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor’s office. The plans will also be made available on the MPO’s website. The public review and request for comments for the draft, final, or amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

2.3.3 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program is a document that lists transportation projects that are anticipated to be funded in various phases during a 4 year period. The projects listed in the TIP are selected from the approved Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan, with the exception of certain level of effort projects and yearly transit program grant allocations. The TIP is considered the short-range plan of the MPO. The TIP breaks down transportation projects into phases such as preliminary engineering, right of way, utility relocation, and construction; and assigns a beginning year for each phase. The TIP essentially is the schedule of various phases of transportation

projects for implementation. The public is given several opportunities to provide input on the draft TIP before its adoption by the MPO. Additionally, after adoption of the draft and final TIP documents, the plan may be amended to add and/or move certain projects. Prior to any of these events, the documents and/or its amendments will be available for public review and comment. Draft TIPs and amendments to the documents are discussed and voted on at MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the document. Copies of the draft Transportation Improvement Program will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office, Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor's office, Town of Triana Mayor's office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor's office. Routine amendments to the document will be available on the MPO's website and advertised through available means as part of the MPO meeting announcements. The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. The public review and request for comments for draft, final, and amendments to the TIP is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

2.3.4 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan

The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) on the behalf of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO, assists the State of Alabama in the development and updating of the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, to include the MPO Study Area. The purpose of this plan is to identify how to enhance access to transit services to persons with disabilities, the aged population, and individuals with low incomes through the coordination of existing and future transit services that are funded with FTA Section 5301 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities), Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute or JARC), and Section 5317 (New Freedom). TARCOG maintains a stakeholders list that is comprised of local and regional transit providers and advocates of public transit from the general public. This list is continually evolving as TARCOG staff becomes aware of interest in this program and the planning process. From time to time, the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan requires amendments, or granted projects or program allocations are voted on for addition to the Transportation Improvement Program. When this needs to occur, these actions are presented to the MPO committees. Prior to any of these actions, the document and/or amendments to the TIP will be available for public review and comment. Amendments to the document and proposed TIP amendments pertaining to the program's grant programs are discussed and voted on at MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee

members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the document. Amendments to the document will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office, Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor's office, Town of Triana Mayor's office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor's office. The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. The public review for the draft and final Human Service Coordinated Transportation Plan is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting. Proposed TIP amendments pertaining to the Human Service Coordinated Transportation Plan's grant programs will be handled as a routine TIP amendment and advertised accordingly.

2.3.5 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan

By FHWA directive, bicycle and pedestrian components have been required in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program for some time. Inclusion in Alabama MPO planning documents began in 2010. ALDOT joined other State DOTs and approved and implemented a Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan during the same year.

As a result of this action, ALDOT instructed all MPOs in 2010 to prepare a Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan or have one under development no later than Spring of 2011. The MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan is a component of the Year 2035 Transportation Plan. The plan addresses all of the federal directives and includes the financing of bicycle/pedestrian projects. It also illustrates how planned bike routes, bike lanes, greenways, and shared use paths correlate with planned roadway improvements within the MPO Study Area. The FY 2014 UPWP requires a comprehensive Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan update to be accomplished during 2014. Additionally, the MPO staff will continue with its educational and informational programs on bicycle and pedestrian safety. All of these projects will require some aspect of public involvement.

During the comprehensive Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan update, the MPO will hold a public review and take comments pertaining to the plan. This will be done through the MPO committees. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the plan. Copies of the draft and final comprehensive Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office, Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor's office, Town of Triana Mayor's office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor's office. The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. The public review and request for comments for the plan is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

2.3.6 Public Participation Plan

A documented public participation plan is required under 23 CFR 450.316(a) et al. Typically a plan will be developed to span the period of time between Congressional legislative actions on new transportation bills. The Huntsville MPO Public Participation Plan includes a proactive public involvement process that supports and encourages early and continuous opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the metropolitan transportation planning decision making process. As a living document, this plan is periodically reviewed for potential modifications and revisions. In accordance with federal requirements, the Public Participation Plan will be available for public review and comment for 45 days prior to its adoption. Notice of plan availability will be made through all available and reasonable means.

2.3.7 Air Quality Conformity Report

If Madison County becomes designated as a non-attainment area for ozone, carbon monoxide, and other pollutants, based upon monitoring data and information provided by the FHWA, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the MPO will be required to take necessary steps in documenting a process for attaining Air Quality Conformity.

Under the provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (42 USC 7401 et seq.), the Huntsville Area Transportation Study - MPO would be responsible for making the Conformity Determination. This determination must be made through consultation with the EPA, FHWA, FTA, and State and local air quality agencies. The transportation conformity rule (40 CFR Part 93) requires that conformity analyses be based upon the latest motor vehicle emissions model approved by EPA. Section 176(c)(1) of the Clean Air Act states that `` . . . the determination of conformity shall be based on the most recent estimates of emissions, and such estimates shall be determined from the most recent population, employment, travel, and congestion estimates. . . ."

A non-attainment designation requires additional planning activities to occur, such as amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program as well as preparing a separate Air Quality Conformity Report. The Air Quality Conformity Report provides pollution estimates using specific software based upon pollutant budgets from ADEM's Statewide Implementation Plan.

In accordance with the Clean Air Act and related federal regulations, both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the TIP must be found to be in conformity with all applicable State Implementation Plans (SIPs) and with the mobile source emissions budgets as established by the SIPs, before the

TIP may be approved by the MPO and the Federal Highway Administration. The *projected* emissions for the long range transportation plan and the TIP must not exceed the emissions limits or budgets established by the SIP. If these limits are exceeded, the plans will be deemed as non-conforming. Conformity Determination demonstrates that transportation projects and programs contained in the TIP and the long range transportation plan will not have a negative impact on air quality in the region. Conformity Determinations must be made at least every four years, or when transportation plans or TIPs are updated.

Certain projects identified in the TIP are exempt from the conformity rule. These projects are safety projects, mass transit projects, bike/pedestrian projects, and projects that do not involve construction of roadways such as planning and technical studies, etc.

A second requirement of a Conformity Determination is an assessment of the progress in implementing Transportation Control Measures, or TCMs, identified in the SIPs. These measures intend to reduce emissions or concentrations of pollutants from transportation sources by reducing vehicle use or otherwise reducing vehicle emissions. As part of the Conformity Determination, the MPO has to certify that TCMs in the categories included in the SIPs which are eligible for federal funding are progressing on-time towards implementation and that no federal funds are being diverted which might delay their swift implementation.

For new nonattainment areas, the Clean Air Act and the conformity rule provide a one-year grace period after the EPA's nonattainment designation, to make a Conformity Determination. After one year, the conforming long range transportation plan and TIP must be in place, and the area becomes subject to conformity frequency requirements. (In other words, the long range transportation plan and the TIP projects must be amended.) If a Conformity Determination is not made according to the required frequency, a conformity lapse occurs. In the case of a conformity lapse, the use of federal transportation funds is restricted to certain kinds of projects. These include "exempt projects" like safety projects and certain public transportation projects, Transportation Control Measures from an approved SIP, and project phases that were authorized by the FHWA and/or FTA prior to the lapse. The FHWA and FTA do not reduce the amount of funding a State receives if there is a lapse; however, the use of federal funds is restricted during the lapse.

The documentation for the Conformity Determination is supported by a public participation process, which is later published as a separate document along with all amended documents mentioned in this section. The document, which may be titled "Public Involvement for Air Quality Conformity (date)" would provide information on all MPO public involvement efforts, such as public meetings, hearings, and other outreach,

as well as the MPO's responses to all public inquiry during the Air Quality Conformity process.

At the present time, the Huntsville Area Transportation Study (MPO) is designated as an attainment area for air quality, and a Conformity Determination is currently not required for the long range transportation plan and TIP within the Huntsville study area boundaries. However, indications point that the area is headed toward nonattainment in the near future and the area may be subject to these additional requirements. If Madison County becomes designated as a non-attainment area, all public involvement requirements will be followed.

2.4 The Amendment Process: Long Range, TIP, and Other Operations Plans

Amendments to formal planning documents containing project listings and funding will be carried out pursuant to sections of Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450, applicable to road and highway projects under various Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding programs and those transportation projects and funding actions under Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs.

While governing regulations are specific to the Long Range Transportation Plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Plan), the short range component of the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP); the process is extended in Alabama to those plans with projects and funding presented in tabular or listed format, to include the Congestion Management Plan (CMP), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the amended project listings of the Long Range and TIP documents under the Air Quality Conformity Process.

An amendment to the Long Range Plan, TIP, and STIP documents may take one of two forms: 1. Administrative Modification, or 2. Formal Amendment Process.

2.4.1 Administrative Modification

An **Administrative Modification** is a minor change to project costs, funding sources, or project/phase start dates. Such minor changes or adjustments do not require public involvement activities, reestablishment of financial constraint, or, in areas of air quality non-conformity, confirmation of conformity determination. Amendments of this nature are generally conducted through coordination of ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs staff and MPO staff to minimize plan modification and documentation activities and costs.

2.4.2 Formal Amendment Process

The **Formal Amendment** Process is a major change to project costs, design scope, funding amounts, project/phase start dates, or a revision approved and required in the MPO plans by the State as an adjunct to the its Public Involvement process. This process requires public notice, addition to MPO monthly meeting agendas, review by the public and MPO advisory committees, reviews by federal agencies, a vote by the MPO Policy Board, and an executed Resolution of adoption. The process criteria then, under which a formal amendment occurs, is when a plan or document:

- a. Adds a project
- b. Deletes a project
- c. Project costs exceed 20% of the original projected costs
- d. Changes a project start or completion date
- e. Changes the project design scope or termini description

Amendments to Congestion Management Plans (TMAs only) and Bicycle Pedestrian Plans (now a formal plan in Alabama) are subject to the same processes as above. However, ALDOT will generally work with MPOs to make adjustments to these documents on a more informal basis in order to accommodate public involvement meetings and advisory committee scheduling.

3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

3.1 Overview

The local MPO is required by federal legislation to develop and adopt a Long Range Transportation Plan or metropolitan transportation plan, a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Unified Planning Work Program, a Congestion Management Plan, and a Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan. It shall be the policy of the MPO to conduct public involvement activities before these major plans are to be submitted for formal adoption to the MPO.

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to provide various techniques which may be implemented when conducting public involvement activities. The PPP also details the specific goals and policies of the MPO for public participation in the planning process.

3.1.1 Broad Categories of Public Participation

Public involvement or participation activities coordinated by the local MPO can be placed within the following five broad categories:

- In accordance with MPO by-laws, regular and special business meetings of the MPO and its advisory committees are conducted in an open public forum with prior notification.
- The development of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or metropolitan transportation plan, Congestion Management Plan, Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, and other major transportation policies, plans, or programs identified by the MPO, include opportunities for public comment prior to adoption by the MPO.
- Individual transportation improvement projects have their own public involvement methods in place. An example would be conducting engineering design public hearings for road widening projects, and taking public comments during and preceding the public hearing.
- Periodic updates of local MPO activities are available to the public in various ways, including the official MPO website, and through available staff who may assist inquiring citizens in person, by phone, letter, or e-mail.
- In order to eliminate or minimize conflicts with other agencies' plans that may impact transportation, consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local, and private agencies and organizations is included in the participation process; more specifically during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

These five components serve as a general overview of public involvement within the MPO's jurisdiction. While the public participation process for transportation plans and programs shall continue to focus upon the activities of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the MPO staff will also continue to take advantage of processes already in place to disseminate public information and encourage public participation.

3.2 Public Participation Techniques

Public participation in planning activities is an on-going process for the MPO. Several techniques are employed on a routine basis to ensure that public involvement is successful. The public involvement and participation techniques listed in this section can be used for special events and for routine activities such as the TIP process and updating the metropolitan transportation plan. The list provided as follows presents a toolbox of techniques that may be utilized. The MPO may select a number of public involvement activities to be exercised during the inception and life of a project or program; however, there may be instances where some techniques may not be appropriate for all circumstances or instances

where some techniques are required by federal legislation. The MPO staff must, at their discretion, select the most appropriate public involvement activities for each circumstance. All methods discussed below are currently used by the MPO, and include a description of the technique as well as the activities and outcomes promoted by each method.

3.2.1 MPO Website and Social Media:

The MPO website was developed in 2001 and revised in 2013. The website includes information about the MPO, membership of the committees, meeting times, and meeting agendas. The MPO website informs the public of the status of current and planned transportation projects, and promotes the MPOs' planning studies and other transportation publications. The website includes a listing of authorized projects for the previous and current fiscal year, and the status of transportation projects for the current fiscal year. The site also includes transportation planning publications that can be downloaded such as the TIP, UPWP, Long Range Transportation Plan (metropolitan transportation plan), as well as bike and pedestrian plans. The MPO website is routinely maintained and updated by the MPO staff. The website is used to promote MPO meetings and special public involvement meetings and public hearings. The site can also be used by the public to download specific published transportation plans and publications. The City of Huntsville's website contains a community bulletin board on its main page, and it has been utilized to announce public hearings and public involvement meetings. Additionally, the MPO will reach out to persons through various methods of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Access to other social media platforms will be made available on the MPO website as they are developed. Persons can access the MPO website by visiting <http://www.huntsvillempo.org>.

3.2.2 MPO Databases:

The MPO staff maintains several databases of contacts which include MPO committee memberships; news media; local elected officials; appropriate Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations; businesses; and civic organizations that desire to be informed of transportation issues. The databases include the names of individuals and e-mail addresses, and in some instances mailing addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers. The databases are used for MPO meeting notices and other public participation processes as necessary. Citizens may, upon request be added to the appropriate database to receive MPO meeting notices or any other pertinent information. The databases are used to inform citizens of other public involvement activities per their request. The news media are e-mailed meeting notices of the MPO and are made aware of other public involvement activities. Federal land management agencies, as well as State and local agencies and organizations responsible for economic growth and development,

environmental protection, airport operations, freight movement, land use management, natural resources, conservation, historic preservation, and human service transportation providers (including those nonprofits that receive federal assistance from sources other than the Department of Transportation for nonemergency transportation services), will be consulted during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. This will occur so that conflicts with other agencies' plans will be eliminated or minimized. Additionally, the database will be used to identify which entities should be involved in the environmental impact and mitigation portion of the metropolitan transportation plan.

3.2.3 Press Releases:

Press releases are sent to local broadcast and print media, including minority publications, to announce MPO meetings and public involvement meetings. Press releases will be sent to announce meetings, public involvement meetings, and other MPO activities.

3.2.4 Legal Ads:

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, all draft, final, or amended plans and documents may be advertised via legal ad for public review and comment in a newspaper that has a wide circulation in the community. These ads are placed to announce MPO activities at the discretion of the MPO staff. The legal ad will describe the proposed action, when and where public meetings will be held, and where more information can be reviewed or obtained. The purpose of this is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest time before the MPO takes action.

3.2.5 Cable TV Announcements:

The City of Huntsville operates a government news channel through Comcast Cable Television. Information regarding regular MPO and Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings and other pertinent public information concerning MPO activities is provided to the City of Huntsville Mayor's office to be included in scrolling announcements displayed on the channel. The channel is available to Comcast Cable subscribers located in the City of Huntsville and in portions of Owens Cross Roads, Alabama. This method is used for regular meeting announcements and other pertinent public involvement activities administered by the MPO staff.

3.2.6 Project-Specific Websites:

Project-specific websites may be used for individual projects or plans that are significant in scope. The site may be used when the project information is too extensive to be included on the MPOs' web page. The specific site can include meeting announcements, comment forms, project updates, and project team contact information. This is to be used for major

planning studies and major MPO projects such as the metropolitan transportation plan or any other pertinent major planning activity.

3.2.7 Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses:

The MPO staff conducts open and informal meetings for the public to ask questions and provide comments concerning certain major transportation plans, such as the metropolitan transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MPO staff members can interact with the public on a one-on-one basis at these meetings. Additionally, the Alabama Department of Transportation conducts "open house" type meetings and public hearings concerning the design of certain transportation projects and the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). These project hearings are held by the State DOT for public information and feedback. The MPO staff attends these meetings as well, to support and supplement the State's public involvement process.

3.2.8 Availability of Draft Planning Documents and Amendments to the Current Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Public Comment:

The MPO staff will make available copies of draft planning documents and amendments to the current metropolitan transportation plan for public comment. These documents will be made available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division offices and through the MPO website. The MPO staff will make available draft planning documents and amendments to the current metropolitan transportation plan for public comment for a minimum of 14 days. In instances where the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differ significantly from the version originally submitted for public review, another opportunity will be made available for public comment.

3.2.9 Citizens' Advisory Committee:

Members of the Citizens' Advisory Committee are appointed by the elected officials that serve on the MPO Executive Committee. The objectives of this committee are listed on page 4. They provide valuable input to the planning process. This committee meets a minimum of four times a year and as often as required, to be presented and vote on the MPO staff's prepared transportation plans and amendments to other transportation planning documents. Public announcements of these meetings are made, inviting the participation of the general public in the meetings.

3.2.10 MPO Meetings:

All MPO meetings are open to the public, and all material to be brought before the MPO is available for public review through traditional sources identified in this document or upon request. Fees may be charged for copies. While the MPO holds public meetings, they may hold public forums during regular MPO meetings to in review of draft and final

planning documents and may attend, sponsor meetings, or hold ad hoc meetings as outreach for specific proposed projects or programs. The facilitator of any public involvement meeting has the right to set a time limit for comments to ensure fair representation.

3.2.11 Public Notices

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, all draft, final, or amended plans and documents may be advertised via public notice for public review and comment. This may be done in a newspaper of general circulation, and can be published in addition to or instead of a legal advertisement. The notice will describe the proposed action, when and where public meetings will be held, and where more information can be reviewed or obtained. The purpose of this is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest time before the MPO takes action. Public notices shall be posted no less than 2 weeks prior to the date the MPO is scheduled to take action on the proposal. The public notice will be made available at locations where and when draft and final plans are left for review, and posted at the City of Huntsville Municipal Building's meeting notice bulletin board.

3.2.12 Comment Forms:

Comment forms are the preferred way for the MPO to receive input pertaining to prepared transportation plans. Specialized forms will be created for each plan or issue requiring input. Comment forms will be made available to citizens at public involvement meetings and will accompany plans left at public facilities for review. Comment forms may be mailed in or handed in at the public involvement meetings. Additionally, comments may be received via the MPO's website.

3.2.13 Flyers:

Flyers may be used as one method to announce public involvement meetings and public hearings. Specifically, the flyers note the date, times, and location of the scheduled meetings.

3.2.14 MPO Logo:

A logo representing the MPO is used to identify products and publications of the MPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the MPO by providing a means of recognizing MPO products.

3.3 Public Involvement Policies and Objectives

The overall goal of the local MPO is to provide the public with detailed information on transportation planning programs and project development in a convenient and timely manner. The MPO also has a commitment to consult with and coordinate with other pertinent agencies and organizations responsible for other types of planning activities that may be impacted by the adoption of the

metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP. These goals are realized through engaging the techniques previously identified, and incorporating them into the following specific MPO policies and objectives:

3.3.1 Policy 1: The MPO will actively engage the public and appropriate agencies and organizations in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in this Public Participation Plan, and in accordance with state procedures and federal law.

3.3.1.1 Objective 1.1: The MPO will maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including at a minimum the following persons:

- Local elected officials
- Appropriate local government staff
- Local transportation agencies and other pertinent agencies/organizations responsible for planning activities that may be impacted by the adoption of transportation plans (such as transit, the Huntsville International Airport, etc.)
- Local broadcast and print media, including minority outlets
- Individuals interested in transportation planning activities, per their request

3.3.1.2 Objective 1.2: The MPO will, when feasible, mail meeting announcements to the MPO contact list for upcoming activities. It is preferred that these announcements be e-mailed.

3.3.1.3 Objective 1.3: The MPO will announce meetings on the local government cable television channel. This broadcast channel covers the communities of Huntsville and portions of Owens Cross Roads.

3.3.1.4 Objective 1.4: The MPO will provide a way for public comments originating in the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to be publicly addressed by the MPO Board. This will be done by posting the all committee meeting minutes to the MPO website, provide responses to all issues and comments raised at any point during the process, and provide for opportunities of discussion, comment and responses on the MPO website prior to and following meetings.

3.3.1.5 Objective 1.5: The MPO will conduct meetings in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and provide reasonable accommodations for the disabled community. The public involvement process, as required by federal legislation,

must include a methodology of informing the physically disadvantaged segment of the population that would like to participate in the planning process. Public officials must be notified no later than seven (7) days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting so that officials may make special arrangements, if necessary, in order to facilitate their participation in the proceedings.

3.3.1.6 Objective 1.6: The MPO will contact appropriate agencies and organizations for consultation prior to adoption of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. Refer to Policies 5 and 6 for additional information.

3.3.2 Policy 2: The MPO will keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities.

3.3.2.1 Objective 2.1: The MPO will make all draft and final adopted publications and other appropriate documents readily available to the public via the internet, the MPO staff office (City of Huntsville Planning Division), Madison County Courthouse public information desk, City of Madison Mayor's office, Town of Triana Mayor's office, and Town of Owens Cross Roads Mayor's office.

3.3.2.2 Objective 2.2: The MPO staff will be available to provide both general and project-specific information at the MPO staff offices during normal business hours and after hours at the request of groups, with reasonable notice.

3.3.2.3 Objective 2.3: The MPO will maintain an internet website. The website will be updated as required to provide the most up-to-date information available.

The website, at a minimum, will contain the following information:

- Current MPO and advisory committee membership
- Meeting calendars and agendas
- List of current and past authorized projects
- Links to transportation plans and other MPO publications
- Links to Twitter, Facebook, and other social media accounts managed by the MPO staff for public involvement purposes

Other transportation agencies, transportation related businesses, local governments, and interested groups will be encouraged to

provide a link to the MPO website on their organization's website.

3.3.2.4 Objective 2.4: The MPO will provide broader access to public information through social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. as these methods are developed by the MPO staff.

3.3.2.5 Objective 2.5: The MPO will, upon request and as feasible, provide information for inclusion in publications of various special interest groups that publish newsletters including, but not limited to homeowners and neighborhood associations, church groups, civic groups, and other community organizations.

3.3.3 Policy 3: The MPO will utilize visualization techniques to effectively communicate the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

3.3.3.1 Objective 3.1: Documents made available for public review and comment will include appropriate maps, photographs, and/or graphics to better communicate transportation planning goals and objectives.

3.3.3.2 Objective 3.2: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics depicting specific transportation projects and plans are readily available at the MPO office and will be used to discuss proposed transportation plans, projects, and initiatives to the visiting public.

3.3.3.3 Objective 3.3: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics related to transportation plans may be posted to the MPO's website, as appropriate and necessary.

3.3.3.4 Objective 3.4: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics related to the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP will be displayed and described during public meetings where the plans are being discussed, as appropriate.

3.3.4 Policy 4: The MPO will encourage the involvement of all citizens within its jurisdiction, especially including those identified by FHWA as "traditionally underserved", in the transportation process [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii)]. The MPO will furthermore work towards ensuring the full and fair participation in the transportation decision making process by all potentially affected communities.

3.3.4.1 Objective 4.1: The MPO will, whenever feasible, hold its public involvement meetings, at a location or locations convenient to potentially affected citizens, especially the traditionally

underserved population. As mentioned previously, the MPO staff will make available copies of draft planning documents for public comment. Additionally, the MPO will ensure that broadcast and print media outlets that serve primarily minority populations are included in media releases concerning upcoming meetings and the distribution of plans for public comment. The staff may also use flyers as a method of public outreach to contact those traditionally underserved to advertise meetings and request comments pertaining to planning documents. Comments will be considered from all citizens, especially the traditionally underserved, in the planning process.

3.3.4.2 Objective 4.2: The MPO will use data obtained from the latest U.S. Census to determine areas with a concentration of minority or low-income populations. This data will be displayed in map format. The concentration of minority populations is determined by calculating the percentage of the population at the census block group level that exceeds the countywide average for the non-white population. The concentration of low-income populations is determined by calculating the percentage of the population that is at or below the poverty level at the census block group level that exceeds the countywide average for being at the poverty level.

3.3.4.3 Objective 4.3: The MPO will continue to promote diversity in the membership of its Citizen Advisory Committee. This will be done by encouraging the elected officials that make appointments to the committee, to select members that are of minority status and/or reside in areas that ensure geographic equitability among the membership.

3.3.4.4 Objective 4.4: The MPO, in accordance with its Limited English Proficiency Plan, will strive to accommodate and assist those individuals needing assistance to understand transportation plans, documents, and planning initiatives, so they may provide input into the transportation planning process. The MPO's Limited English Proficiency Plan is available as **Appendix C**.

3.3.5 Policy 5: In developing the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP, the MPO will consult with other agencies, officials, and organizations responsible for other planning activities within the metropolitan planning area that are affected by transportation, or coordinate its planning process to the maximum extent practicable with such planning activities.

3.3.5.1 Objective 5.1: The MPO will develop the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP with due consideration of other

related planning activities within the metropolitan area, to include those agencies or organizations receiving federal funds for mass transportation services or other non-emergency transportation services, federal land highways, and federal public lands in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316(b).

3.3.5.2 Objective 5.2: The MPO will maintain a database of Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations as indicated in Section 3.2.2 of this document. The database will include agency or organization roles, responsibilities, and the key decision points for consulting with the agencies during metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP development or update. These entities will be contacted so that plans, maps, and inventories, etc... developed by these agencies may be compared with the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP to ensure compatibility. Documentation of this process will be maintained to demonstrate who was contacted and how contact was made, responses received, results of comparison plans and programs, and how the information was used and its affect upon the metropolitan transportation plan or TIP development or update. This documentation will be incorporated in the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP documents.

3.3.6 Policy 6: In developing or updating the metropolitan transportation plan, the MPO will consult with appropriate agencies and organizations to identify potential environmental impacts and will consider how such impacts might be mitigated.

3.3.6.1 Objective 6.1: The MPO will maintain a database of appropriate Federal, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in accordance with 23 CFR 450.322(g). These agencies and organizations can assist in the identification of potential environmentally sensitive areas, environmental impacts, and mitigation strategies resulting from the development or update of the metropolitan transportation plan.

3.3.6.2 Objective 6.2: The MPO will consult with these agencies and organizations to determine environmentally sensitive areas in relation to transportation plans. The consultation will involve as appropriate, the comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps if available, and the comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources if available. Categories to be assessed may include historic sites and properties, protected lands, parks and landfills, topography,

flood plains, wetlands, and other potentially environmentally sensitive areas.

3.3.6.3 Objective 6.3: The MPO will further assess the impacts upon the area if the plan is implemented, will work with identified agencies and organizations to define potential areawide mitigation measures that may be needed, determine if the identified mitigation could be achieved, and adjust the transportation plan if necessary to minimize or eliminate the environmental concern.

3.3.6.4 Objective 6.4: Documentation will be made of this process to demonstrate what agency or organization was contacted, the location of capacity or regionally significant projects within the metropolitan area boundary, a description or category of the environmental inventory (i.e., historic properties, wetlands, etc...), and the assessment of any likely impacts resulting from proposed improvements and potential mitigation measures. This documentation will be incorporated into the metropolitan transportation plan.

3.3.6.5 Objective 6.5: The MPO staff will assess each project identified for improvement in the metropolitan transportation plan and determine if improvements will be in the existing right of way, add capacity, or modify traffic patterns. If no significant impacts are determined, documentation should indicate such. If impacts are realized, then a discussion of potential environmental mitigation (addressing the human and natural environment) will be incorporated into the plan. The discussion will be developed in consultation with federal, state, and tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies as appropriate, per 23 CFR 450.322(f)(7).

3.3.7 Policy 7: The MPO will actively participate in public involvement activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction and will actively participate in the public involvement efforts of other transportation-related government agencies and organizations.

3.3.7.1 Objective 7.1: The MPO staff will assist, upon request, the Alabama Department of Transportation, local governments, and transportation agencies in the development and implementation of their public involvement techniques for planning and other studies.

3.3.7.2 Objective 7.2: The MPO staff will assist the Alabama Department of Transportation by attending State sponsored public involvement meetings within the MPO jurisdiction. Additionally, the MPO staff can assist citizens on a limited basis that call or visit the office with questions concerning specific transportation projects.

3.3.7.3 Objective 7.3: The MPO staff will assist the Alabama Department of Transportation in the coordination of the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes when requested.

3.3.7.4 Objective 7.4: The MPO staff will participate in and strive to coordinate its public involvement efforts with other transportation-related government agencies and organizations, especially the Huntsville Department of Parking and Public Transit.

3.3.8 Policy 8: The MPO staff will provide feedback on public comments as required by federal legislation. Additionally, plans that have already been through the public involvement process; yet undergo major modifications, will go through the public involvement process again.

3.3.8.1 Objective 8.1: When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made a part of the final plan and TIP [23 CFR 450.316(a)(2)].

3.3.8.2 Objective 8.2: If any draft plans, documents, or proposals are substantially modified after being advertised for public comment, either due to comments or otherwise, the public notice cycle will be repeated and the new proposal will be made available for public comment.

3.3.8.3 Objective 8.3: If the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not have reasonably foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(viii)].

3.3.8.4 Objective 8.4: Any amendments to plans and documents that are proposed and approved by the MPO Policy Board should

formally go through the public involvement process again, if such modification to the plan or document is significant and raises new material issues which interested parties could not have foreseen from the public involvement efforts. This requires the public notice cycle to be repeated and the amended proposal be made available for public comment.

3.3.9 Policy 9: The MPO will work towards continually improving its public involvement practices.

3.3.9.1 Objective 9.1: The MPO will continuously evaluate its public participation and involvement techniques, according to the procedures outlined in **Appendix D - Public Participation Evaluation Procedures**.

3.3.9.2 Objective 9.2: This PPP will be reviewed and adopted, with modifications if necessary, at least every three years or as requested by the Federal Highway Administration and/or the Alabama Department of Transportation.

4.0 REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

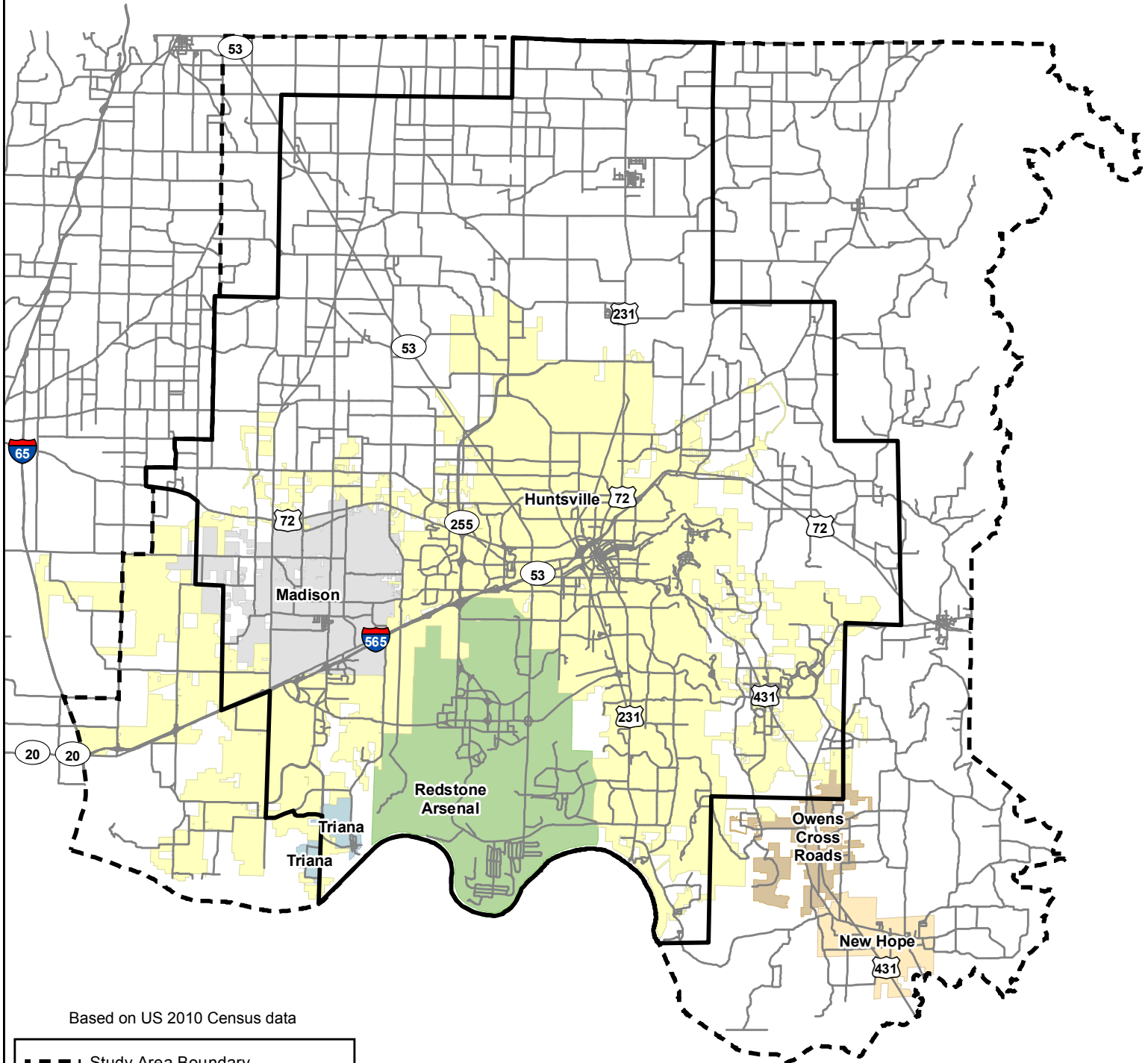
This Public Participation Plan reflects the current procedures of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. This plan will be reviewed every three years and revisions will be made if necessary. The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed by the MPO in terms of its effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all. Plan revisions will be based upon evaluation of the techniques implemented for public involvement. Additionally, plan revisions will be done in conjunction with Congressional legislative actions on new transportation bills.

The MPO shall publish these procedures and provide 45 days for written public comment before adoption by the MPO. This action will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation, including the locations where plans will be made available for review and comment. The same procedure shall be followed when the MPO makes revisions to this Public Involvement Plan.

This Public Participation Plan, dated January 15, 2014 supersedes the **Public Involvement Procedures for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Urbanized Area**, previously approved by the MPO, dated February 27, 2008. The adoption of this plan is made possible through the adoption of Resolution 8-14, approved by the MPO on January 15, 2014.

Appendix A
Huntsville Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization Map

Huntsville Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Map



- Study Area Boundary
- Urban Area Boundary
- Yellow Huntsville City Limits
- Green Redstone Arsenal
- Grey Madison City Limits
- Blue Triana Town Limits
- Orange New Hope Town Limits
- Brown Owens Cross Roads Town Limits

0 2.25 4.5 9 Miles



Appendix B

Livability Indicators

Livability Indicators

Section 2.2 of this document provides the details of Livability Principles and Indicators required to make better informed planning decisions. The measurement of the sustainability of these Livability Principles are indicated with the maps and charts that follow. These measurements were collected through the US Census Bureau and other sources. The future provision of this data is dependent upon these agencies and organizations.

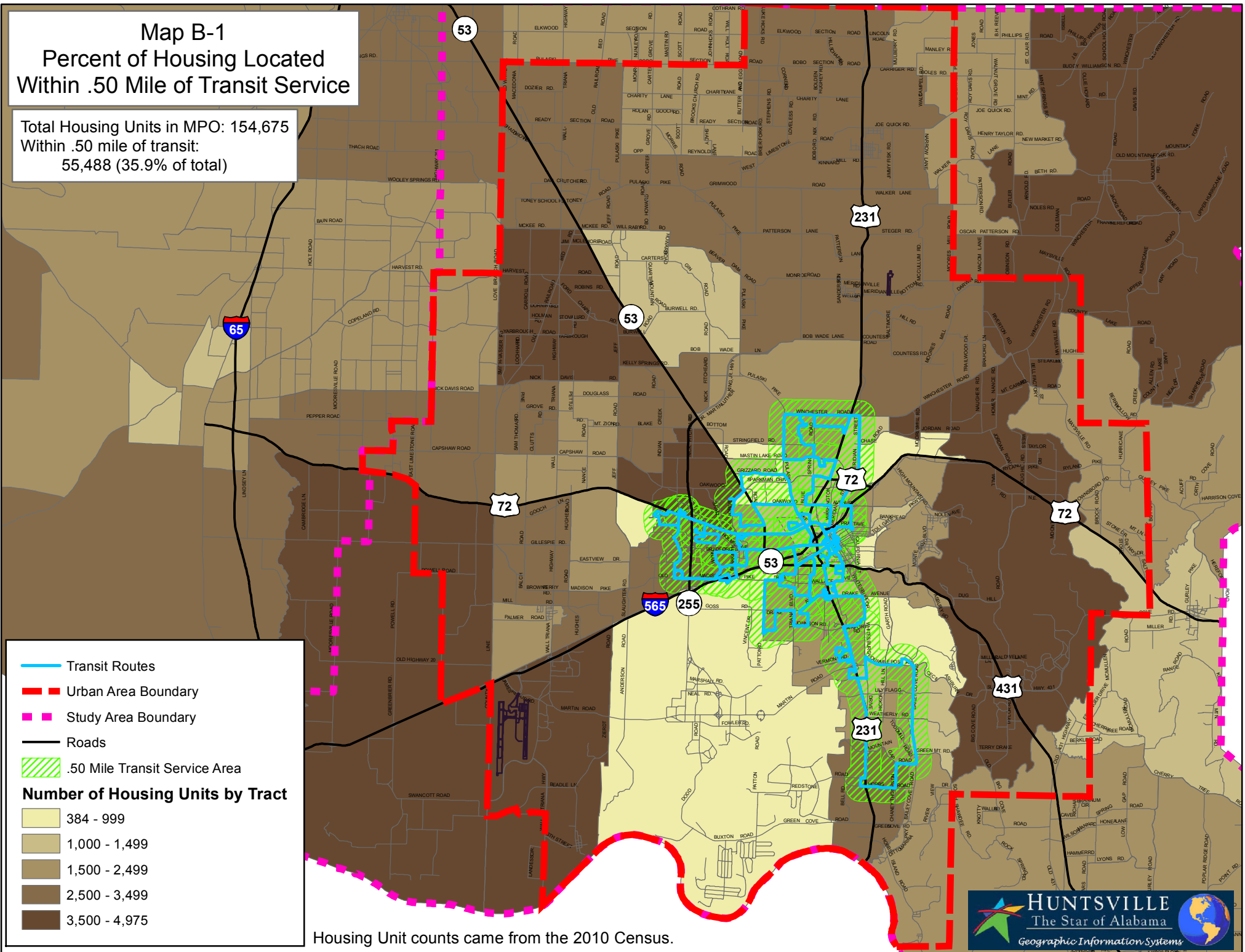
Following are the Livability Principles and the Livability Indicators that measure each:

1. Provide more transportation choices
 - Map B-1 Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area
 - Map B-2 Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing
 - Map B-3 Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing
 - Map B-4 Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation
3. Enhance economic competitiveness
 - Map B-5 Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or Less Commute Time
 - Map B-6 Percent of Workforce With 30 Minute or More Commute Time
4. Support existing communities
 - Table B-1 Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Existing Transportation Systems
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment
 - Table B-2 Percent of Transportation Projects Where More Than One Funding Source is Utilized
6. Value Communities and neighborhoods
 - Map B-1 Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area
 - Map B-2 Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service
 - Map B-7 Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Major Retail Services
 - Map B-8 Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Recreational Facilities

Map B-1

Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service

Total Housing Units in MPO: 154,675
 Within .50 mile of transit:
 55,488 (35.9% of total)



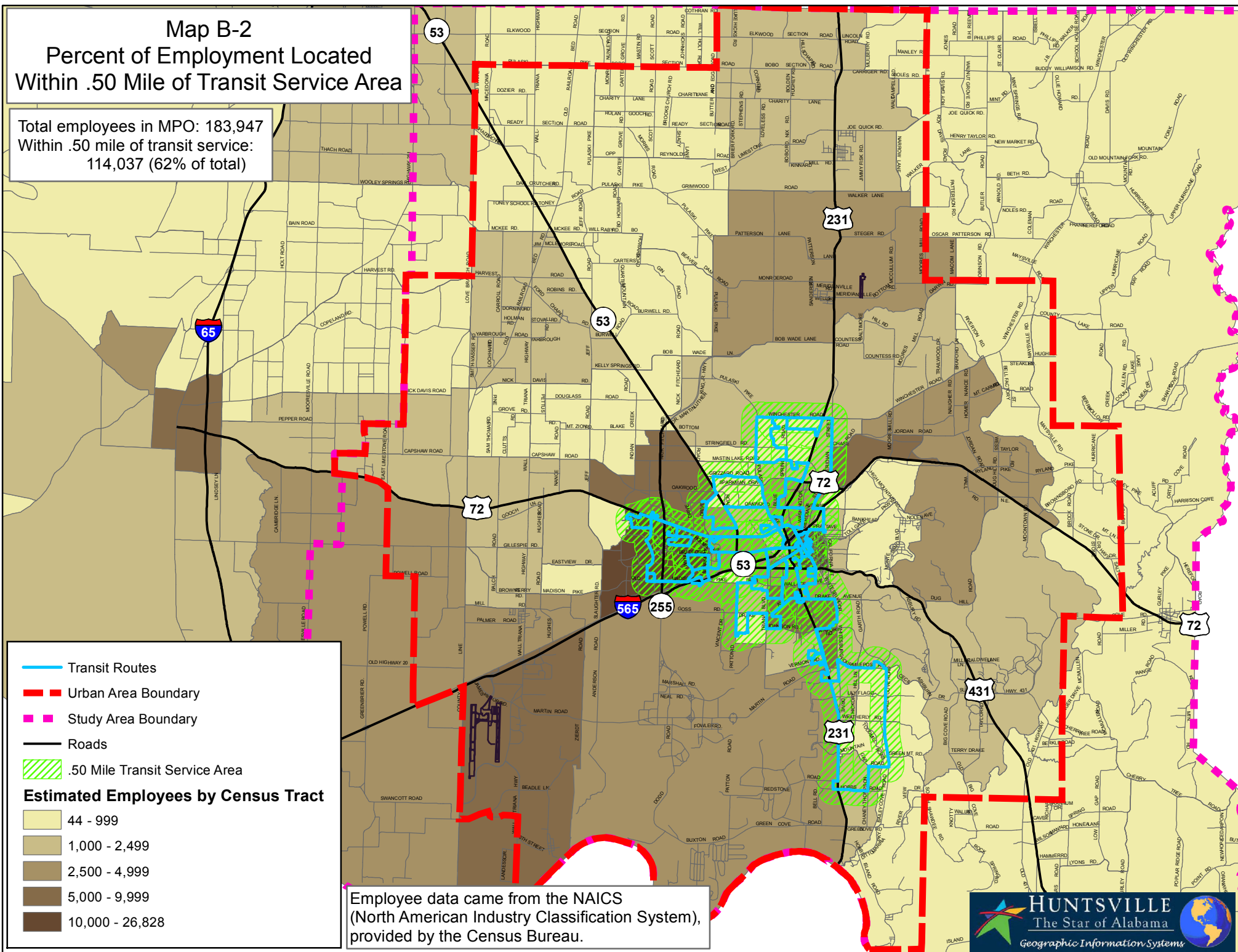
Housing Unit counts came from the 2010 Census.



Map B-2

Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area

Total employees in MPO: 183,947
Within .50 mile of transit service:
114,037 (62% of total)



Map B-3

Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing

— Roads

— Urban Area Boundary

— Study Area Boundary

Percent HH Income Spent on Housing

- Insufficient Data
- < 20%
- 20% to 30%
- 30% to 40%
- 40% to 45%

Regional Typical Household in Huntsville, AL
 Income: \$53,123
 HH Size: 2.5 People
 Commuters: 1.14 Workers

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology
 Housing and Transportation Affordability Index, 2011



Map B-4

Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation

Regional Typical Household in Huntsville, AL
 Income: \$53,123
 HH Size: 2.5 People
 Commuters: 1.14 Workers

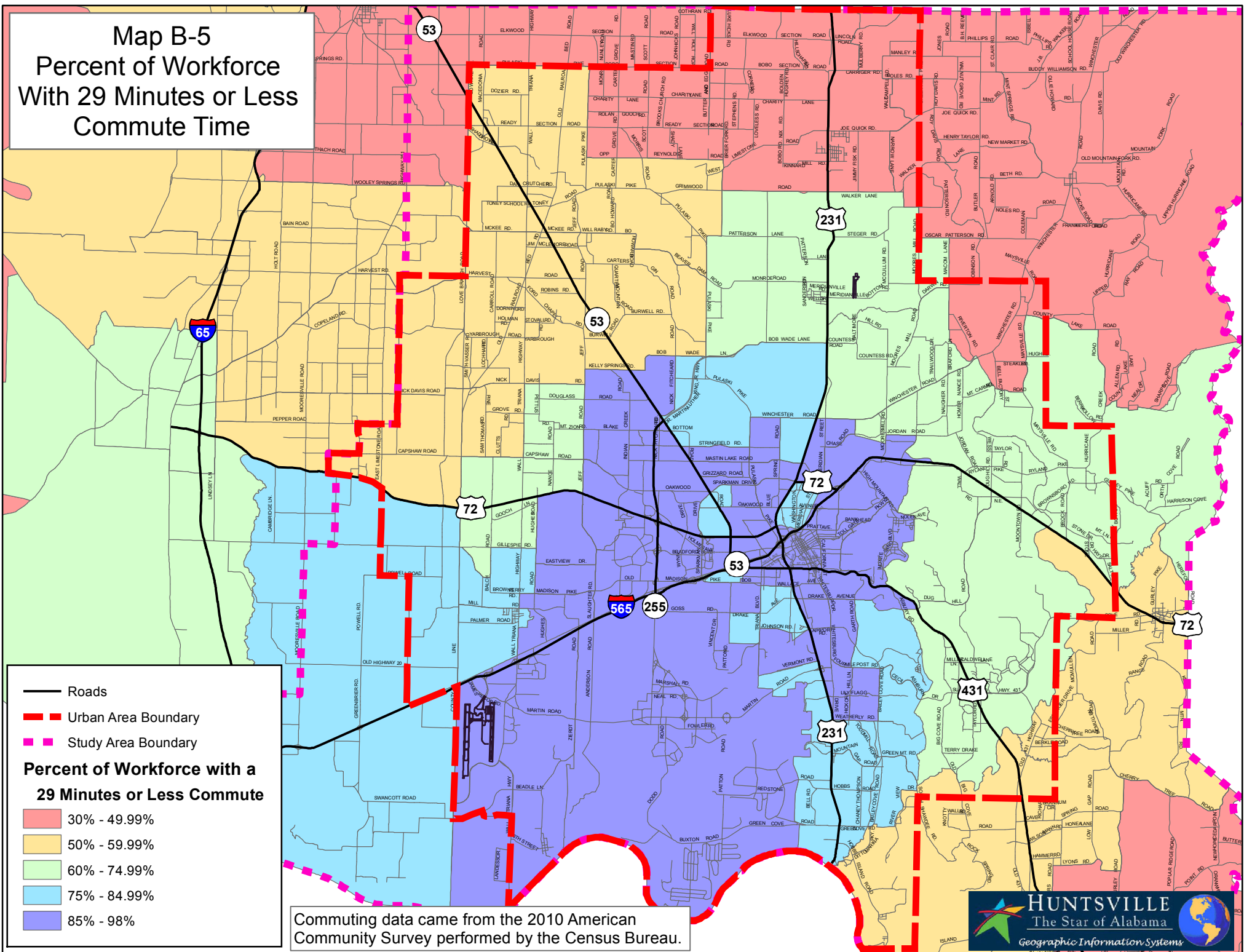
- Roads
- Urban Area Boundary
- Study Area Boundary

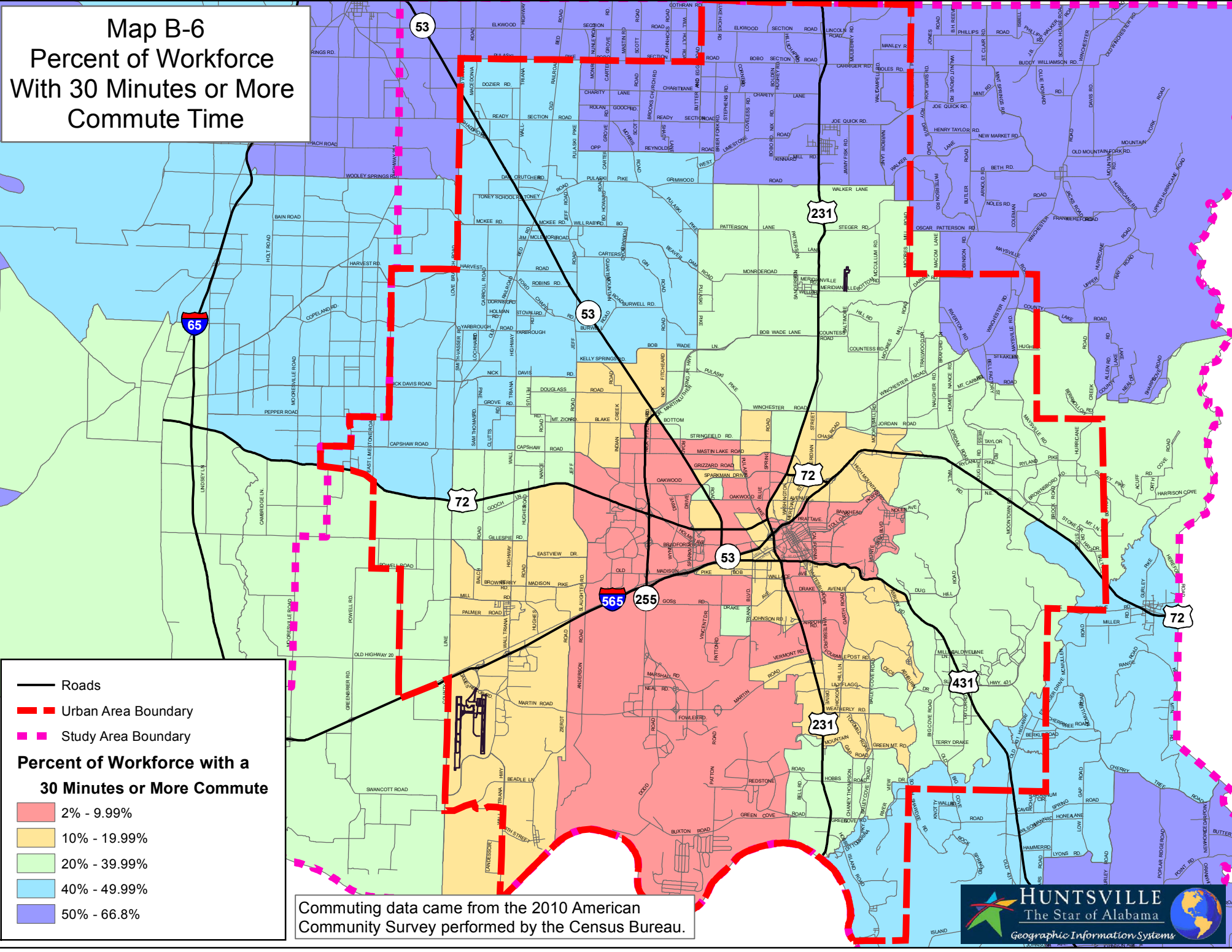
Percent HH Income Spent on Transportation

- Insufficient Data
- 15% to 25%
- 25% to 30%
- 30% to 35%

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology
 Housing and Transportation Affordability Index, 2011

Map B-5 Percent of Workforce With 29 Minutes or Less Commute Time





Map B-6
Percent of Workforce
With 30 Minutes or More
Commute Time

— Roads

— Urban Area Boundary

— Study Area Boundary

**Percent of Workforce with a
30 Minutes or More Commute**

2% - 9.99%
10% - 19.99%
20% - 39.99%
40% - 49.99%
50% - 66.8%

Commuting data came from the 2010 American Community Survey performed by the Census Bureau.



Table B-1: Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Transportation Systems

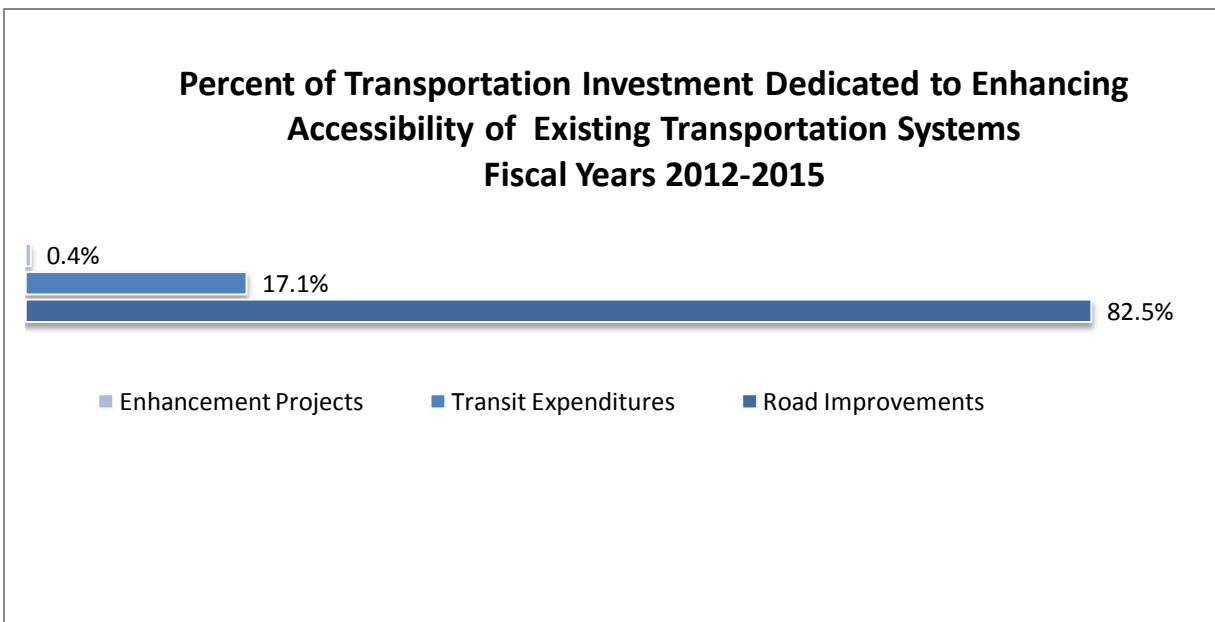
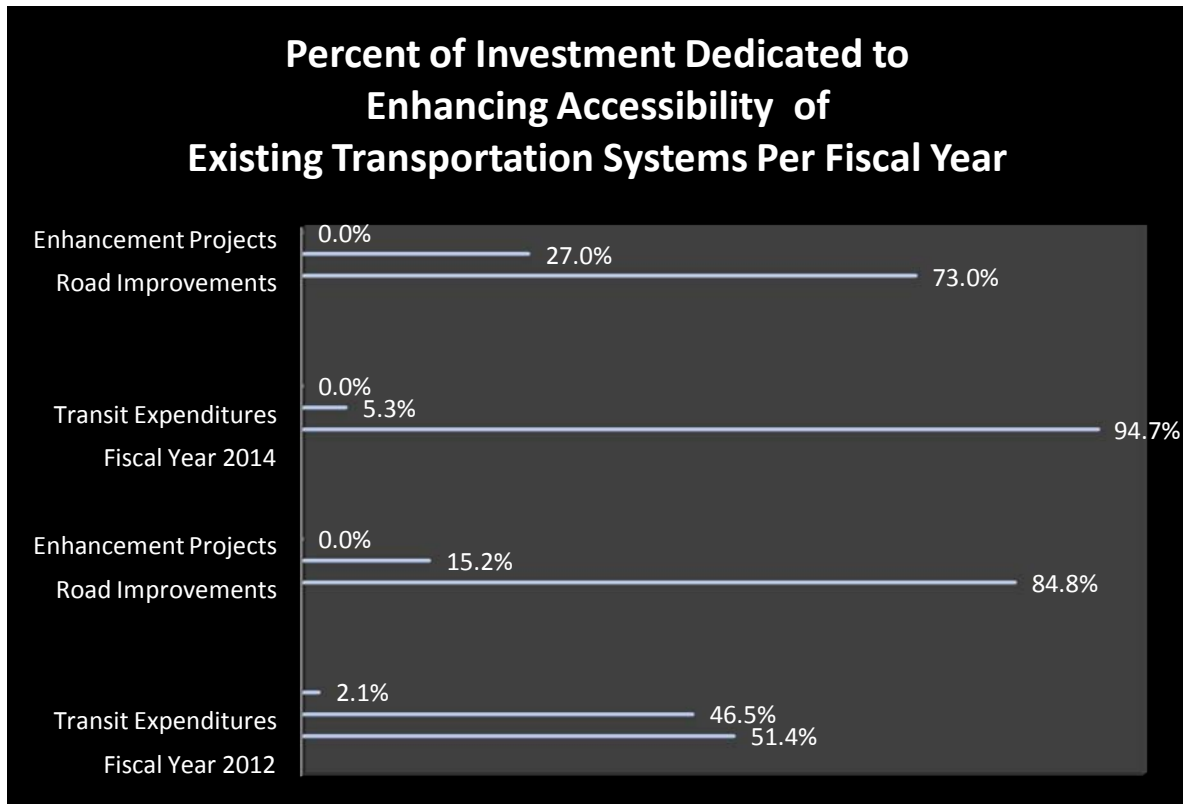


Table B-2: Percent of Transportation Improvement Projects Where More Than One Funding Source is Utilized

Transportation Improvement Projects are funded through multiple funding sources, identified through various funding codes. The information presented below is based upon previous amendments to the TIP since its original adoption in August 2011. The tables below show that transportation funds are leveraged, split, and utilized among various funding categories to ensure that project delivery is efficient and streamlined. Additionally, programs listed apply only to corridor improvements. More information concerning funding categories can be found at:

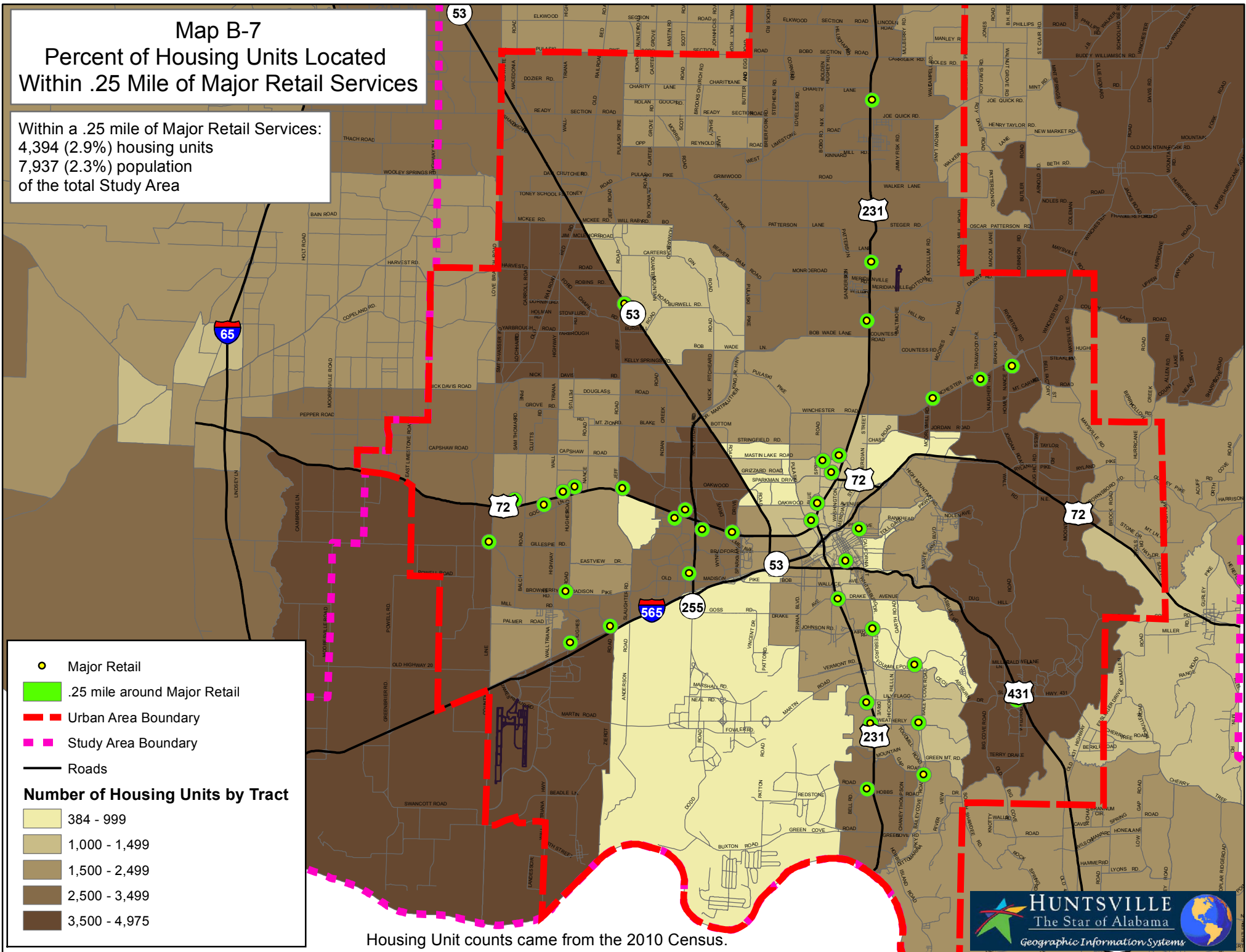
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/guide/guide_current.cfm

Program Identification Code	Funding Category Description	Total Funds Programmed	% of All Funds Programmed
STPAA-STPHV	Combination of Surface Transportation Any Area and Surface Transportation Urbanized Area funds (This match is paid by locals)	\$4,776,579	2.4%
STPHV or STPHVF	Surface Transportation Urbanized Area - Huntsville (Federal/local match)	\$25,740,946	12.7%
STPHV-DEMO	Demonstration Project - Surface Transportation Huntsville Urban Area (Federal Congressional Earmark/local match)	\$1,951,398	.96%
STPAA	Surface Transportation Program Any Area	\$16,639,686	8.2%
EB-xx-xxxx	Equity Bonus	\$5,283,475	2.6%
ACAAXxxxx-ATRIP	Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program	\$1,826,457	.90%
NH or NHF	National Highway System	\$30,980,568	15.3%
NH-HSIP	Combination of National Highway System and Highway Safety Improvement Program Funds	\$10,420,764	5.1%
APD	Appalachian Development	\$62,577,507	31%
IM	Interstate Maintenance	\$33,183,072	16.4%
IMD	Interstate Maintenance Discretionary	\$1,704,450	.84%
BR	Bridge Replacement	\$1,264,715	.62%
ST-xxx-xxx-xxx-()	State Funds	\$513,960	.3%
DE or DEMO	Demonstration Project Funds	\$3,486,448	1.7%
99-xxx-xxx-xxx-xxx	Any Numeric Sequence is State Funded Maintenance Project	\$59,565	.03%
SRTS	Safe Routes to School	\$171,350	.08%
STPRR	Surface Transportation Program Rail-Highway	\$93,600	.05%
HRRR	Highway Safety Improvement Program - Rural	\$49,940	.02%
HPPPH	High Priority Project Program via SAFETEA-LU	\$1,237,500	.6%
EB-DE-xxxx	Equity Bonus – Demonstration	\$490,000	.2%

Map B-7

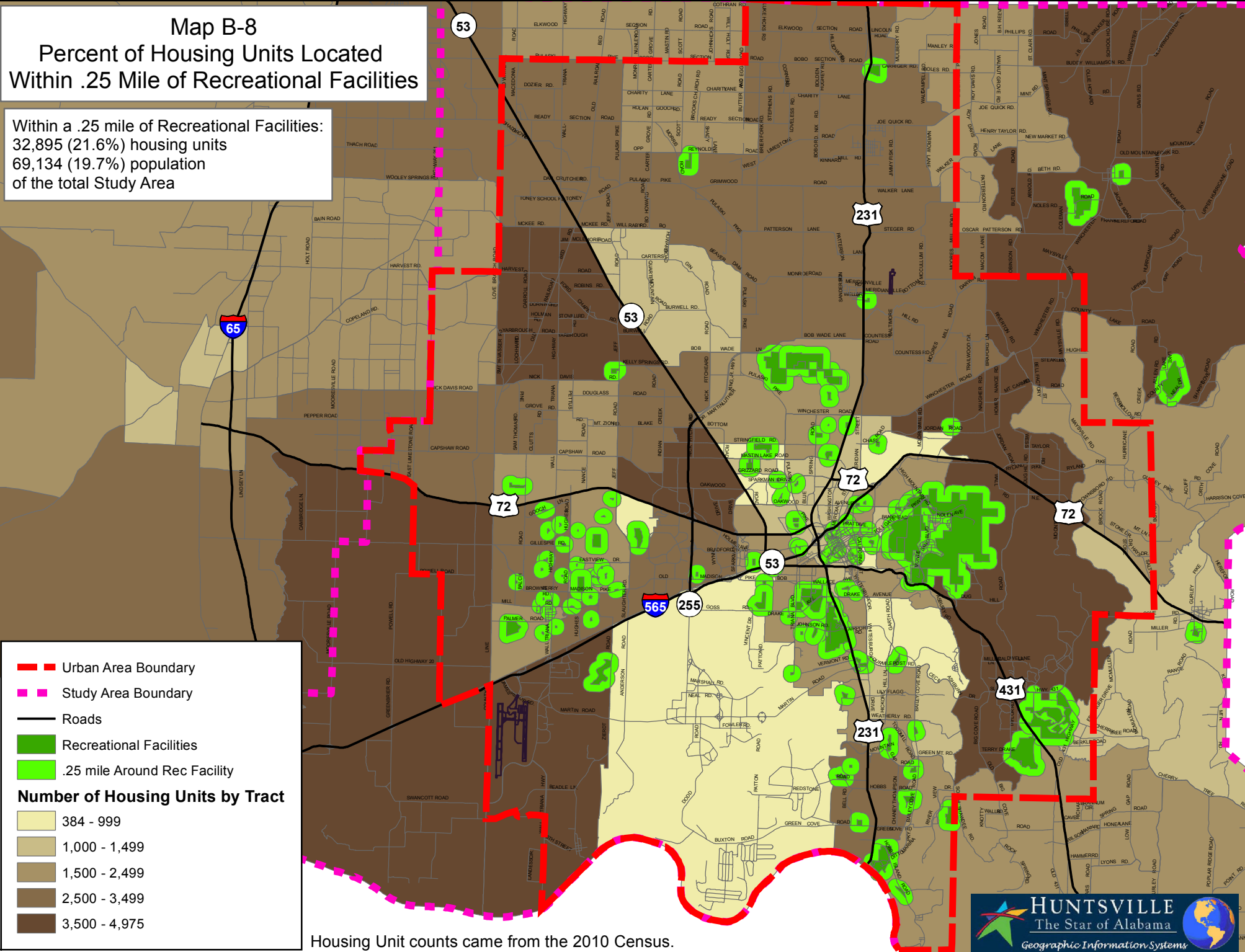
Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Major Retail Services

Within a .25 mile of Major Retail Services:
4,394 (2.9%) housing units
7,937 (2.3%) population
of the total Study Area



Map B-8 Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Recreational Facilities

Within a .25 mile of Recreational Facilities:
32,895 (21.6%) housing units
69,134 (19.7%) population
of the total Study Area



Appendix C

TITLE VI DOCUMENTATION LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PLAN

**PREPARED BY
HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

January 15, 2014

**LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY [LEP] PLAN
IN THE HUNTSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
1.0 Introduction.....	C-1
1.1 Public Involvement.....	C-1
1.2 Plan Summary.....	C-2
2.0 Meaningful Access: Four Factor Analysis.....	C-2
2.1 The Number or Proportion of LEP Persons Serviced or Encountered in the Eligible Service Population.....	C-2
2.2 The Frequency With Which LEP Persons Come in Contact With the Program..	C-3
2.3 The Nature and Importance of the Program, Activity, or Service Provided by the Program to the LEP Population.....	C-3
2.4 The Resources Available to the MPO and the Costs to Provide LEP Assistance.....	C-3
3.0 Language Assistance and Identification of Limited English Efficiency People...	C-4
3.1 Identification of LEP Persons.....	C-4
3.2 Language Assistance Measures.....	C-5
4.0 Staff Training.....	C-6
5.0 Translation of Documents.....	C-6
6.0 Formal Interpreters.....	C-7
7.0 Informal Interpreters.....	C-7
8.0 Outside Resources.....	C-8
9.0 Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan.....	C-8
10.0 Dissemination of the LEP Plan.....	C-8
Attachment C-1: Language Identification Card.....	C-10

HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY [LEP] PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This *Limited English Proficiency Plan* has been prepared to document the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (HATS-MPO’s) procedures for integrating persons with limited English proficiency into the transportation planning process. The MPO, as the official decision-making body of the transportation planning process, determines how federal highway and transit funds are spent in the MPO Study Area. The HATS-MPO as a body does not receive any direct or designated transit funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The City of Huntsville Department of Parking and Public Transit, a direct recipient of FTA funds and as a participant of the MPO, has in place a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Plan that has been approved by the Federal Transit Administration. Madison County’s transportation service, TRAM, is a sub-recipient of FTA funds through the Alabama Department of Transportation and is a participant of the HATS-MPO. Madison County’s program has in place a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Plan and works with the Alabama Department of Transportation as the direct recipient to ensure that all requirements are met. This specific document expands upon the City of Huntsville’s and Madison County’s plan and covers the entire MPO Study Area. The plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq, and its implementing regulations, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Executive Order 13166, titled *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person’s inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each federal agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds, including metropolitan planning organizations. The MPO receives federal assistance through the U.S. Department of Transportation [U.S. DOT].

1.1 Public Involvement

The Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO adopted this LEP as part of its Public Participation Plan on January 15, 2014. Prior to its adoption, the availability of the plan was advertised through press releases to local news media and agencies and organizations that work with minorities, low income persons, those with disabilities, and elderly individuals. The draft plan was published on the MPO’s web site and was also made available at the MPO office and the City of Huntsville’s Parking and Public Transit Department. The plan was discussed at

the MPO Committee meetings held on January 13 and 15, 2014. The MPO accepted comments regarding the plan from October 21, 2013 to December 4, 2013. The public was given the opportunity to provide comments either in person, at the MPO Committee meetings, or via postal mail, e-mail, fax, and/or phone.

1.2 Plan Summary

The HATS-MPO has developed this *Limited English Proficiency Plan* to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency [LEP] who wish to access services provided. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available. In order to prepare this plan, the MPO staff coordinated the U.S. DOT four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population.
- The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program, activities, or services.
- The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to the LEP population.
- The resources available to the MPO and the costs to provide LEP assistance.

2.0 MEANINGFUL ACCESS: FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

The Department of Justice indicated that the required four-factor analysis is intended to balance meaningful access for the LEP population against imposing undue burdens upon small local governments. A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is presented below.

2.1 The number or proportion of LEP persons serviced or encountered in the eligible service population..

The MPO staff reviewed the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey and determined that 18,097 persons in the MPO Study Area [5.9% of the population] speak a language other than English. Of those persons in the MPO Study Area, 3,287 persons [1.1%] have limited English proficiency; that is, they speak English "not well" or "not at all". In the MPO Study Area, of those persons with limited English proficiency, 2,123 speak Spanish, 758 speak Asian and Pacific Island language, 390 speak other Indo-European languages other than Spanish, and 13 speak other languages.

2.2 The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with the program, activities, or services.

Over the nearly 40 years since the HATS-MPO's existence, the MPO staff has not had any contact with anyone who did not speak English very well. During that same period, no individual or group has requested the MPO to provide an interpreter or to translate a document. Future interaction with individuals possessing limited English proficiency is expected to be infrequent and unpredictable.

2.3 The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the program to the LEP population.

There is not a large geographic concentration of any type of LEP individuals in the HATS-MPO Study Area. An overwhelming 94.1% of the population speaks only English. As a result, there are few social, service, professional and leadership organizations within the MPO Study Area that focus on outreach to LEP individuals. Since the HATS-MPO plans how federal transportation funds are used within its Study Area, the MPO's work impacts every resident. However, the MPO does not provide direct, immediate, vital, or emergency services such as medical treatment, meals, or shelter. Involvement in the HATS-MPO's transportation planning process is voluntary.

2.4 The resources available to the MPO and the costs to provide LEP assistance.

The HATS-MPO has reviewed the available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. Additionally, the HATS-MPO has determined which of its documents would be most valuable for translation if such services are needed. Currently, the HATS-MPO has about 3.5 full-time equivalent persons on staff. Approximately 4.5% of the MPO's annual work program budget is available for Title VI/LEP activities. The cost to provide interpretation and translation service vary greatly depending upon the frequency and volume of work as well as the methods used. Despite its financial limitations, the HATS-MPO is committed to maintaining an open and inclusive planning process that allows LEP individuals to participate. The MPO, working within its budget, will implement the most cost-effective methods for interpretation and translation work based upon requests and anticipated demand for such services. To further meet this end, the MPO staff will work with other organizations that may be able to assist for outreach and translation efforts. The HATS-MPO has developed an inventory of available organizations that could be partnered with for outreach and translation efforts. The Alabama Hispanic Association based in Huntsville can be tapped for assistance when necessary. This organization is composed of dedicated volunteers assisting in the needs of the Hispanic Community in North Alabama. There is also a Japan-American Society of Alabama (JASA) based in Birmingham, AL. In addition, two (2) local universities have foreign or international student programs.

These programs are designed to accommodate the needs of the students whose first language is not English. The City of Huntsville, Police Departments' Communications Division is also available as a resource for Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Spanish and French. During 2009 the City of Huntsville created the Office of Multicultural Affairs which will be beneficial towards LEP assistance.

3.0 LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AND IDENTIFICATION OF LIMITED ENGLISH EFFICIENCY (LEP) PEOPLE

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to HATS-MPO programs and activities. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language. The HATS-MPO staff will determine when interpretation and/or translation are needed and are reasonable.

3.1 Identification of LEP Persons

Within the HATS-MPO Study Area, approximately 1.07% of the population do not speak English at home. Spanish is by far the largest language group, representing .69% of the population. The other language groups following (Indo-European and Asian-Pacific and other) make up about .38% of the population. The HATS-MPO staff may identify a LEP person who needs language assistance by the following methods:

- Examine records to see if requests for language assistance have been received in the past, either at meetings or over the phone, to determine whether language assistance might be needed at future events.
- Have the Census Bureau *Language Identification Flashcard* (Attachment C-1) available at MPO sponsored meetings and events. Individuals self-identifying as persons not proficient in English may not be able to be accommodated with translation assistance at the event, but it will assist the sponsoring agency in identifying language assistance needs for future events. Identified LEP persons will have the option to being added to the MPO's public notice/news release mailing list.
- Have the *Language Identification Flashcard* available at the front desk at the HATS-MPO office to accommodate walk-in requests.
- Post notice of LEP Plan and the availability of *Language Identification Flashcard*.

- Encounters with LEP persons will be tracked in a spreadsheet that will be updated after each MPO meeting or sponsored event. The spreadsheet will list the type of service provided and any other relevant information. The spreadsheet can be made available upon request.

3.2 Language Assistance Measures

Although there is a very low percentage of LEP individuals in the HATS-MPO Study Area (persons who speak English “not well” or “not at all”), the HATS-MPO will strive to offer the following measures:

- The MPO staff will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP individuals who have difficulty communicating in English.
- The HATS-MPO will provide interpreters and translation services as their budget allows. The HATS-MPO will use free websites and programs whenever possible to translate correspondence and documents. In-person or telephone interpreters will be utilized as needed. If volunteer interpreters are not available, the HATS-MPO may pay for such services as their budget permits.
- There are several resources available to the HATS-MPO to accommodate LEP persons.
 - The Communications Division of the City of Huntsville, Police Department, has limited interpretive assets that can be utilized for Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and French languages.
 - The Alabama Hispanic Association (AHA) made up of volunteers to assist the needs of the Hispanic community in the North Alabama area can be accessed for interpretive assistance.
 - A brand new City of Huntsville office, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, can also be utilized when needed.
 - Foreign or International Student Program Administrators at Alabama A&M University or University of Alabama, Huntsville (UAH).
 - Language assistance services available on websites. The HATS-MPO staff will use free translation websites and programs to respond to written communication from LEP persons. If the translation websites fail, the MPO staff will confer with local or telephone interpreters to ensure proper communication.

- If a client asks for language assistance and HATS-MPO determines that the client is an LEP person and that language assistance is necessary to provide meaningful access, reasonable efforts will be made to provide free language assistance. If reasonably possible, the HATS-MPO will provide the language assistance in the LEP client's preferred language. The HATS-MPO has the discretion to determine whether language assistance is needed, and if so, the type of language assistance necessary to provide meaningful access.
- The HATS-MPO's website has a Google Translate plug-in that is installed at the bottom of every page. The plug-in supports nearly every language spoken in the MPO Study Area.
- When an interpreter is needed, in person or on the telephone, staff will attempt to determine what language is required and then access language assistance at one or more of the available resources identified under Section 2.4.
- After an interpretation or translation service is provided, the HATS-MPO staff will ask the LEP individual if they understood what was communicated and if they require additional or an alternative language service. If additional service is required, the HATS-MPO will change interpretation or translation providers.

4.0 STAFF TRAINING

The HATS-MPO staff will review the LEP Plan every year to ensure they understand their responsibilities. During the annual review, the staff will verify the continued availability of interpretation and translation resources.

5.0 TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

Document translation is required only if a secondary population segment is at or exceeds 5.0% of the total population. Based upon the MPO Study Area's failure to reach this threshold, there is not a requirement to publish any documents and/or plans in a secondary language. The HATS-MPO weighed the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups and considered the expense of translating the documents, the barriers to meaningful translation or interpretation of information, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents, the existence of multiple dialects within a single language group, the apparent literacy rate in a LEP group, and other relevant factors. At this time it is not a requirement, and it is an unnecessary burden to have any documents translated. If documents are translated in the future, the ALDOT Planning Bureau will require advance notification before any PL/5303 funds are expended for this purpose.

Due to the very small local LEP population, the HATS-MPO does not have a formal outreach procedure in place. Translation resources have been identified and are limited in this region. However, in the rare instance when and if the need arises for LEP outreach, the HATS-MPO may consider the following options:

- When staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include a large concentration of LEP individuals, then documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas may be translated in an alternative language based on the known LEP population.
- HATS-MPO maps, documents, plans, or other publications may be made available in an alternative language when and if a specific and concentrated LEP population is identified and requests made.

6.0 FORMAL INTERPRETERS

When necessary to provide meaningful access for LEP clients, the HATS-MPO will provide qualified interpreters, including any bilingual staff of the City of Huntsville, if available. At important stages that require one-on-one contact, written translation and verbal interpretation services will be provided consistent with the four-factor analysis used earlier.

The HATS-MPO may require a formal interpreter to certify to the following:

- The interpreter understood the matter communicated and rendered a competent interpretation.
- The interpreter will maintain private information. Non-public data will not be disclosed without written authorization from the client.
- Bilingual City of Huntsville employees, when available, can provide limited assistance to the HATS-MPO staff and LEP clients as part of their regular job duties.

7.0 INFORMAL INTERPRETERS

Informal interpreters may include the family members, friends, legal guardians, service representatives or advocates of the LEP person. HATS-MPO staff will determine whether it is appropriate to rely on informal interpreters, depending upon the circumstances and subject matter of the communication. However, in many circumstances, informal interpreters, especially children, are not competent to provide quality and accurate interpretations. There may be issues of confidentiality, competency, or conflict of interest.

An LEP person may use an informal interpreter of his or her own choosing and at their expense, either in place of or as a supplement to the free language assistance offered by the HATS-MPO. If possible, the HATS-MPO should accommodate an LEP client's request to use an informal interpreter in place of a formal interpreter.

If an LEP individual prefers an informal interpreter, after the HATS-MPO has offered free interpreter services, the informal interpreter may interpret. In these cases, the LEP person and informal interpreter should sign a waiver of free interpreter services.

If an LEP individual wants to use his or her own informal interpreter, the HATS-MPO reserves the right to also have a formal interpreter present.

8.0 OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Outside resources may include community volunteers. Outside resources may be used for interpreting services at public or informal meetings or events if a timely request has been made.

9.0 MONITORING AND UPDATING THE LEP PLAN

The HATS-MPO staff will update the LEP as required by the U.S. DOT. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the 2010 or later U.S. Census (American Community Survey) is available, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the HATS-MPO Study Area. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP person contacts encountered annually.
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed.
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need.
- Determine whether the HATS-MPO's financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed.
- Determine whether the HATS-MPO staff fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the HATS-MPO's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

10.0 DISSEMINATION OF THE LEP PLAN

A link to the HATS-MPO LEP Plan will be included on its website,

www.huntsvillempo.org. Any person or agency with internet access will be able to access and download the plan from the HATS-MPO website. Alternatively, any person or agency may request a copy of the plan via telephone, fax, mail, or in person, and shall be provided a copy of the plan at no cost. LEP individuals may request copies of the plan in translation which the HATS-MPO staff will provide, if feasible. Questions or comments regarding the LEP Plan may be submitted to the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – Metropolitan Planning Organization, P.O. Box 308, Huntsville, AL 35804, phone (256) 427-5100.

United States
**Census
2000**

U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of the Census



LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION FLASHCARD

☐

املاً هذا المربع اذا كنت تقرأ أو تتحدث العربية.

Arabic

☐

Խոսողով եմք նշում կատարեք այս քառակուսում,
եթե խոսում կամ կարդում եք հայերեն:

Armenian

☐

যদি আপনি বাংলা পড়েন বা বলেন তা হলে এই বাক্সে দাগ দিন।

Bengali

☐

សូមបញ្ជាក់ក្នុងប្រអប់នេះ បើអ្នកមាន ច្បាប់យាយភាសា ខ្មែរ ។

Cambodian

☐

Matka i kahhon komu un taitai pat un sang i Chamorro.

Chamorro

☐

如果您具有中文閱讀和會話能力，請在本空格內標上X記號。

Chinese

☐

Make kazye sa a si ou li oswa ou pale kreyòl ayisyen.

Creole

☐

Označite ovaj kvadratić ako čitate ili govorite hrvatski jezik.

Croatian (Serbo-Croatian)

☐

Zaškrtněte tuto kolonku, pokud čtete a hovoříte česky.

Czech

☐

Kruis dit vakje aan als u Nederlands kunt lezen of spreken.

Dutch

☐

Mark this box if you read or speak English.

English

☐

اگر خواندن و نوشتن فارسی بدرهستین، این مربع را علامت بگذارید.

Farsi

<input type="checkbox"/>	Cocher ici si vous lisez ou parlez le français.	French
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kreuzen Sie dieses Kästchen an, wenn Sie Deutsch lesen oder sprechen.	German
<input type="checkbox"/>	Σημειώστε αυτό το πλαίσιο αν διαβάζετε ή μιλάτε Ελληνικά.	Greek
<input type="checkbox"/>	अगर आप हिन्दी बोलते या पढ़ सकते हैं तो इस गोले पर चिह्न लगाएँ।	Hindi
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kos lub voj no yog koj paub twm thiab hais lus Hmoob.	Hmong
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jelölje meg ezt a kockát, ha megérti vagy beszél a magyar nyelvet.	Hungarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markaam daytoy nga kahon no makabasa wenno makasaoka iti Ilocano.	Ilocano
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marchi questa casella se legge o parla italiano.	Italian
<input type="checkbox"/>	日本語を読んだり、話せる場合はここに印を付けてください。	Japanese
<input type="checkbox"/>	한국어를 읽거나 말할 수 있으면 이 칸에 표시하십시오.	Korean
<input type="checkbox"/>	ໃຫ້ໝາຍໃສ່ຊ່ອງນີ້ ຖ້າທ່ານອ່ານຫຼືປາກົດພາສາລາວ.	Laotian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Zaznacz tę kratkę jeżeli czyta Pan/Pani lub mówi po polsku.	Polish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assinale este quadrado se voce lê ou fala Português.	Portuguese

<input type="checkbox"/>	Însemnați această căsuță dacă citiți sau vorbiți Românește.	Romanian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Пометьте этот квадратик, если вы читаете или говорите по-русски.	Russian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maka pe fa'ailoga le pusa lea pe afai e te faitau pe tusitusi i le gagana Samoa.	Samoaan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Обележите овај квадратик уколико читате или говорите српски језик.	Serbian (Serbo-Croatian)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Označte tento štvorček, ak viete čítať alebo hovoriť po slovensky.	Slovak
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marque esta casilla si lee o habla español.	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markahan ang kahon na ito kung ikaw ay nagsasalita o nagbabasa ng Tagalog.	Tagalog
<input type="checkbox"/>	ให้กาเครื่องหมายลงในช่องดำผ่านอ่านหรือพูดภาษาไทย.	Thai
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faka'ilonga'i 'ae puha ko'eni kapau 'oku te lau pe lea 'ae lea fakatonga.	Tongan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Відмітьте цю клітинку, якщо ви читаете або говорите українською мовою.	Ukrainian
<input type="checkbox"/>	اگر آپ اردو پڑھتے یا بولتے ہیں تو اس خانہ میں نشان لگائیں.	Urdu
<input type="checkbox"/>	Xin đánh dấu vào ô này nếu quý biết đọc và nói được Việt Ngữ.	Vietnamese
<input type="checkbox"/>	צייכנט דעם קעסטל אויב איר שרייבט אדער ליינט אידיש.	Yiddish

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION PROCEDURES

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Federal regulation 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x) requires that the MPO evaluate the effectiveness of its public involvement program on a periodic basis. In evaluating its processes, the MPO may determine to no longer utilize techniques that are deemed ineffective, or to initiate the use of other innovative techniques that provide better response and more positive feedback. The purpose of this appendix is to establish guidelines for the evaluation of public involvement techniques identified in the **Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area**.

This appendix will outline the steps to be taken to evaluate the identified public involvement techniques and will identify measures to quantify success rates and outline strategies to improve the MPOs' public involvement process.

Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement tools identified in this document, methods need to be established to measure or gauge performance. The methods used for evaluating the performance of the public involvement techniques in this plan consist of surveys, quantitative analysis, and qualitative analysis. A definition of each of these methods is provided below. Additionally, **Table D-1** lists each public involvement technique, along with performance goals and the methods for reaching those goals.

Surveys

Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, by mail, or by e-mail. The selection of the best type and extent of survey for evaluation purposes is dependent upon the actual public involvement technique being evaluated. For example, persons may be asked if the meeting notices shown on the local government cable channel is an effective notification tool.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis can be achieved through the use of statistics. For instance, the number of persons attending a public involvement meeting can be compared to the number of persons notified of the meeting.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis is more objective. It deals primarily with MPO staff review of certain techniques, with improvements listed and/or changes proposed. Qualitative analysis can be used to evaluate web sites as well as the content of newsletters.

TABLE D-1
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES EVALUATION

Public Involvement Tool	Performance Measure	Performance Goal	Actions to be Taken to Meet Goal
Public Participation Plan	No measure used. The PPP should reflect the policies and preferences of the MPO.	None.	The PPP will be updated every three years, and will include the improvement strategies determined through public involvement evaluations.
MPO Website	Number of hits to site.	Minimum of 25 hits a quarter, with a goal of increasing hits by 3% per quarter.	Use other public involvement tools to promote the use of the website.
MPO Database	Number of returned mail and e-mail items.	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing.	Immediately correct database when mail is returned.
Press Releases	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public.	None.	Keep media continually informed of meetings and opportunities for public input.
Legal Ads	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public.	None.	Provide plan review notices and meeting announcements to newspaper in timely manner, so the public can be effectively notified and the news media can highlight upcoming meetings and issues.
Cable TV Announcements	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from public.	Minimum of 5% of public involvement meeting attendees/survey respondents in coverage areas indicate that they saw the meeting notice.	Provide plan review notices and meeting announcements to Mayor's office in timely manner, so announcements can be broadcast more frequently.
Project Specific Websites	Phone calls, letters, e-mails from public, number of site hits.	Minimum of 25 hits a month when used, with a goal of increasing hits by 3% over life of page.	Use other public involvement tools to promote the use of the website.
Social Media	Establish a baseline of "followers", "shares", "likes", and "comments."	Attempt a 3% increase of interaction per quarter.	Advertise use of social media via MPO website, cable tv announcements, other partner websites, letterhead, and public meeting notices.

TABLE D-1
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES EVALUATION (*Continued*)

Public Involvement Tool	Performance Measure	Performance Goal	Actions to be Taken to Meet Goal
Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public, attendance. (ALDOT sponsored meetings will not be evaluated by MPO staff.)	Minimum of 15 persons in attendance per meeting. (This goal may not be met, as the public tends not to attend involvement meetings en masse, even though meetings are widely advertised.)	Multiple meetings will be scheduled at times and locations convenient to public. Will use other public involvement tools to promote meeting locations, dates, and times.
Availability of Draft Planning Documents for Public Comment	Phone calls, letters, e-mails, comment sheets.	Number of persons returning comments concerning the plans.	Staff should monitor number of blank comment sheets left with plans at public facilities. Draft planning documents should be left at multiple central locations throughout the MPO study area.
Citizen Advisory Committee	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from invitees.	N/A. These members are appointed by elected officials in the study area.	The MPO should encourage members to attend meetings. Elected officials should be encouraged to appoint citizens that promote racial, geographic, and economic diversity.
Comment Forms	Phone calls, letters, e-mails, number of responses.	60% of meeting attendees returned a form, or 20% of completed comment sheets were returned with plan left at public facilities.	Stress importance to citizens of receiving public comments. Use other public involvement tools to advertise locations of comment forms and desire to receive input.
Flyers	Calls, letters, e-mails, number of persons reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees indicate that they saw the meeting advertised via flyer.	Place public notices prominently on bulletin boards or other central locations offered by public facilities.

Improvement Strategies

The Huntsville Area MPO strives to improve public participation through increasing public awareness and by improving upon the public involvement techniques highlighted in this document. The decisions made by the MPO affect the residents of the community, and the public must be aware that their involvement is critical to the transportation planning process.

It is important that public involvement be evaluated, and its effectiveness measured. Utilizing the performance measures detailed in **Table D-1** to evaluate each technique, and periodically testing its effectiveness is critical if public involvement is to be successful.

Within one month of completing a major public involvement process, the evaluation of techniques utilized in the process should be conducted. For on-going activities, such as internet websites and MPO newsletters, the evaluation should be performed semi-annually. **Attachment D-1** provides a form to record the type of evaluation conducted. **Attachment D-2** is provided as a template or guide for the evaluation process, and is used to record improvement strategies. Each time an evaluation is conducted, specific improvement strategies should be identified for implementation the next time the technique is employed. If an improvement is needed for a routine public involvement activity, such as the website or MPO newsletter, deadlines for implementing the improvement should be set.

ATTACHMENT D-2
HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY OF THE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION
IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FORM

Technique being Evaluated:
Date Evaluation Completed:
Recommended Improvement Strategies:
Date(s) of Implementation:

APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations may appear in this document and are commonly used by the MPO when communicating transportation plans and initiatives to the public.

3-C – Cooperative, Continuous, Comprehensive
ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
ADEM – Alabama Department of Environmental Management
ADT – Average Daily Traffic
ALDOT - Alabama Department of Transportation
CAC - Citizens Advisory Committee
CMP - Congestion Management Process
CN – Construction
DBE – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA - Federal Highway Administration
FONSI - Finding of No Significant Impact
FTA - Federal Transit Administration
GIS - Geographical Information Systems
HATS - Huntsville Area Transportation Study
ISTEA - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)
ITS - Intelligent Transportation Systems
LRTP - Long Range Transportation Plan
MAP-21 – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MPA – Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization
PE - Preliminary Engineering
PIP/PPP - Public Involvement Plan/Public Participation Plan or Process
PS&E - Plans, Specifications, and Estimates
RW - Right of Way
SAFETEA– LU - Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users
STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program
TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program
TAZ – Traffic Analysis Zone
TCC - Technical Coordinating Committee
TIP - Transportation Improvement Program
TMA – Transportation Management Area
TSM – Transportation System Management
UPWP - Unified Planning Work Program
VMT – Vehicle Miles Traveled

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APPENDIX F

PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED REGARDING THE DRAFT 2013 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public Comment:

General Observation

Although this document talks about the solicitation of public feedback, it's been my experience that when feedback is provided, it's not readily apparent that the feedback is incorporated into the various plans. Is there a better way to publicize the feedback that's been received and/or show the feedback that's being incorporated into changes? Janie Miernik's earlier feedback on the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan is a good example of something that should be formally captured and commented on.

Response:

The FHWA provided the MPO with recommendations concerning how to address issues such as this at the MPO's TMA Certification Review. Their recommendations were added to the updated Public Participation Plan under Section 3.3.1, Policy 1, at point 3.3.1.4, below:

3.3.1 Policy 1: The MPO will actively engage the public and appropriate agencies and organizations in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in this Public Participation Plan, and in accordance with state procedures and federal law.

3.3.1.4 Objective 1.4: The MPO will provide a way for public comments originating in the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to be publicly addressed by the MPO Board. This will be done by posting the all committee meeting minutes to the MPO website, provide responses to all issues and comments raised at any point during the process, and provide for opportunities of discussion, comment and responses on the MPO website prior to and following meetings.

Additionally, written public comments that are received during the public comment phase are to be added to the appendix of documents prior to final MPO approval and the responses/action pertaining to those comments provided as part of the published plan.

Public Comment:

Page 1

Looking at the representation on the MPO, there's no one from Limestone County, which has geography included in the Urban Area. I recommend adding the Chairman of the Limestone County Commission to the MPO.

Response:

While a small portion of Limestone County is within the MPO's Study Area and Urbanized Area, the MPO Boundary Map, approved by the MPO in June 2012 geographically decreased the land mass of the MPO Study Area that lies within Limestone County. Additionally, the

population growth seen within the MPO Study Area in Limestone County shows a 1,167% increase in population of City of Huntsville and City of Madison residents in Limestone County. Conversely, the population of the remaining unincorporated area of Limestone County in the MPO Study Area decreased by over 17%.

By law, the establishment of the MPO and its committees is done through agreement that is signed by the Governor, Alabama Department of Transportation, and the local jurisdictions that are members of the MPO. To add a new member to the MPO requires the agreement concerning the transportation planning process to be changed. This further requires approval by the Governor, the Alabama Department of Transportation, and all jurisdictions currently represented on the MPO; specifically the units of general purpose local government that together represent at least 75% of the metropolitan planning area population (including the largest incorporated city, based on population). The decision to add a new member lies with those in the capacity to change the agreement.

The elected officials represented on the MPO do interface with the elected officials of Limestone County, and the Limestone County officials are provided updates concerning transportation projects and activities on a monthly basis. Additionally, the MPO staff requests input and recommendations from the Limestone County Engineering Department pertaining to the transportation planning process.

It is the opinion of the MPO staff that the addition of the Limestone County Commission Chairman as a member of the MPO is not required at this time.

Public Comment:

Page 3

I know that the Citizens' Advisory Committee typically meets at 5:00 pm on the Monday during the same week as the scheduled MPO meeting, but in my opinion this isn't enough time to have questions answered that may come up in the CAC meeting. I suggest that the CAC meeting be held at least a week before the associated MPO meeting.

Also on page 3: if the Limestone County Commission Chairman is added to the MPO, then the TCC needs a technical representative from Limestone County on it as well.

Response:

The meeting schedule can be changed so that the CAC will meet on Monday, a week before the MPO meeting. Based upon this change, the MPO staff will make plans and meeting materials available at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled MPO meeting instead of 2 weeks prior to the CAC meeting. This will place the timing of the CAC meeting in the midst of the public involvement component.

Mr. Richard Sanders of the Limestone County Engineering Office is invited to the meetings of the Technical Coordinating Committee. Additionally, Mr. Allen Teague of ALDOT District 2, with the responsibility for transportation project management in Limestone County, is a member of the Technical Coordinating Committee. They are invited to all meetings and are requested to

provide input to the transportation planning process. Additionally, if there are any transportation projects that occur in the Limestone County portion of the City of Huntsville and City of Madison, the respective jurisdictions do communicate those projects and plans with Limestone County officials.

Public Comment:

Page 4

There is no representation from Limestone County on the CAC. Additionally, the representation that is there is skewed such that the city of Madison (2010 population 42,938) has the same representation as the city of Triana (2010 population 496), even though the latter is 86 times smaller. I recommend the following change in representation:

- * 7 reps - Huntsville (population 182,956)
- * 3 reps - Madison County (population estimate in Urban Area ~60,000) - someone that lives or works on Redstone Arsenal should be included in this number.
- * 3 reps - Madison (population 42,938)
- * 1 rep - Limestone County (population estimate in Urban Area ~10,000)
- * 1 rep - Owens Cross Roads (population 1,521)
- * 1 rep - Triana (population 496)

Response:

Previous federal legislation required that the MPOs develop and adopt a prospectus that outlines how the MPO would operate. Included in the prospectus was the official composition of the Citizens Advisory Committee. While Limestone County does not have a formal representative on the CAC, the Mayor of the City of Huntsville has appointed a resident of Limestone County/Huntsville to the CAC.

The CAC is comprised of 16 members: 8 from Huntsville and 2 representing all other jurisdictions. Based upon population, the City of Huntsville has half the members representing over half of the population in the Study Area, with one of those members representing Limestone County. Madison County does have a resident on the CAC that is an employee on the Redstone Arsenal installation. Historically, other jurisdictions have had 2 representatives on the CAC and the current composition has worked well.

Public Comment:

Also, public announcements that invite the general public to participate in the CAC meetings need to happen through "modern" communication methods such as various websites, Facebook, Twitter, email, etc. This needs to be updated here and throughout the document.

Response:

The MPO staff has recently updated its website to improve its public outreach. The staff also communicates with the public via e-mail lists. The MPO staff will be exploring other methods of social media in the future and will be utilizing these communication techniques. This has been

added to the document under **Section 3.2.1. MPO Website and Social Media**, and **Section 3.3.2.4 Objective 2.4**.