



# TRANSPORTATION QUARTERLY



Volume 21, Issue 2

A publication of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)









Spring 2016

## News & Notes: Spring Cleaning our Sidewalk Plan and UPWP



Huntsville Area  
Metropolitan Planning  
Organization

The MPO writes plans, finds funds and oversees the schedules of these transportation projects for our local member jurisdictions:

-  ⇒ **Bridges: replacements and new additions**
-  ⇒ **Bicycle Lanes, Bicycle Plans, Bicycle options**
-  ⇒ **Intersections: Plus additional lanes**
-  ⇒ **Greenways: Plus more pedestrian options**
-  ⇒ **Road Maintenance and Beautification**
-  ⇒ **Interstates: Lane additions, on/off ramps**
-  ⇒ **Public Transit: Shuttle, TRAM, and Handi-ride**
-  ⇒ **Redstone Arsenal and Research Park Access**

### “Role” Call! Who is the MPO?

MPO membership is designated by the Governor, and consists of seven voting members from the City of Huntsville, City of Madison, Town of Owens Cross Roads, Town of Triana, Madison County, and the Alabama Dept. of Transportation (ALDOT). The MPO includes these non-voting members: The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG), State, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The voting members above are helped in their decision making by two committees. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is a volunteer committee. The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is made up of experts appointed by elected officials. Full MPO membership, as well as more details about roles and responsibilities, can be found here: [www.huntsvillempo.org](http://www.huntsvillempo.org)

### The Value of Sidewalks



Photo courtesy of Accessology. Not taken anywhere in Alabama, though the MPO does receive local reports of scenes like this.

There are many reasons to talk about sidewalks. Walkable neighborhoods are driving real estate trends and economic development in our region. Public Health goals and Complete Street plans both advocate pedestrian access. In order to keep federal transportation funds, MPO members are required to update their Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plans (TPs) for accessibility on local roadways. To help all the jurisdictions collaborate, the MPO hosted an Accessology Workshop on ADA TPs in March. Meanwhile, public demand for sidewalks is steadily increasing. Economics, health, and accessibility combined with federal pressure and public demand make sidewalks a new priority for all MPO jurisdictions.

### What’s the MPO doing next year? Check the UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM: UPWP

MPO staff are hard at work editing and updating our annual budget and work plan for FY 2017. This is a federally required document the staff updates every year. It schedules activities and lists all the plans or studies on which the MPO staff is working. See our FY 2016 UPWP: [huntsvillempo.org/plans-and-reports/](http://huntsvillempo.org/plans-and-reports/)



## The Bridges of Madison County

District One County Commissioner Roger Jones said: "The much needed Winchester Road widening and bridge replacement project will make this County road much safer when complete. This is the largest County road project in the history of Madison County." It is an Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (ATRIP) project. The County hopes to divert traffic to the newly constructed half of the Winchester Rd. bridge by mid-May. Then the County will remove the existing bridge and complete the remaining portion of the new bridge by early summer of 2017.



Winchester Road Bridge: old on the left, new on the right



## May is National Bike Month! Some local Events:

**May 14:** 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Huntsville Mayor's Bike Ride – 10:30 am, Campus No. 805, 2620 Clinton Ave. This 5-mile ride held in conjunction with Healthy Huntsville Super Saturday events.

**May 17:** 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Director's Tour d'Arsenal – 5 pm, Tuesday after work on RSA. MARS Team Redstone Alliance for Cycling (MTRAC) hosts a FREE ride on RSA.

**May 20:** Bike to Work Day - Meet 7am at Star Market in 5 Points to ride to work on RSA (escorted by experienced bike commuter).

More details and more events on our blog: [www.huntsvillempo.org/category/tqr/](http://www.huntsvillempo.org/category/tqr/)

Visit [BikeHuntsville.com](http://BikeHuntsville.com) Follow "See and Be Seen Huntsville" on Facebook and Twitter!

**MAY IS  
BIKE  
MONTH  
#BIKEMONTH**



## Maintenance: Statewide Gas Tax the solution to Road Maintenance Shortfalls?

This Spring, the Alabama State Legislature introduced two bills to fund road maintenance, Senate Bill 180 and House Bill 394. SB 180 sets rules for spending future transportation revenue. HB 394 creates new revenue through a six cent gas tax increase. SB 180 passed, but according to the Alabama County Commission Association (ACCA): "It is clear at this point that there is not enough time for the gas tax [HB 394] to complete the legislative process before final adjournment." More info: [www.drivealabama.org/funding/proposed-legislation/](http://www.drivealabama.org/funding/proposed-legislation/)



### Report a pothole or service request:

Huntsville app: [huntsvilleal.gov/huntsvilleconnect/](http://huntsvilleal.gov/huntsvilleconnect/)

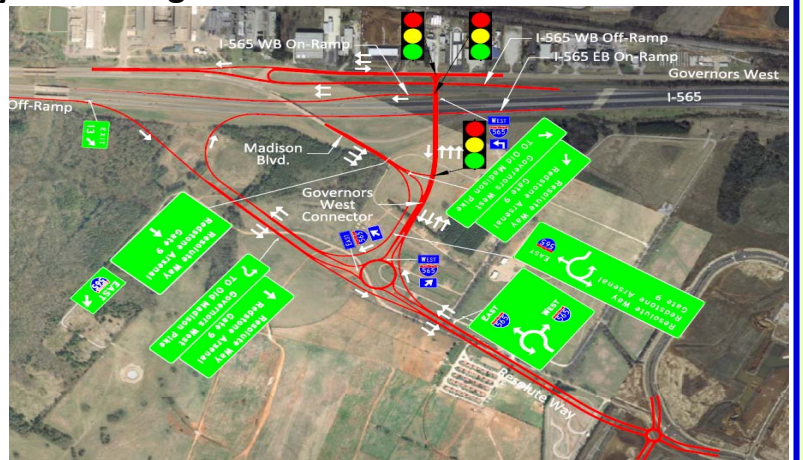
Madison: Call: 256-772-0000 or [madsional.gov](http://madsional.gov)

Madison County: Call your Commission District office. Find numbers here: [madisoncountyal.gov](http://madisoncountyal.gov)



## Rockets & Research: Resolute Way interchange for more access to Redstone Arsenal

This project will connect Madison Blvd and Governors West to the Redstone Gateway development, and provide access to Gate 9 from the west, avoiding the SR 255 interchange. Construction is scheduled for FY 2019 and will cost \$37.1 million. The construction should take 3 years, it may be completed in FY 2021. Currently, the project is in the preliminary development stages and a corridor study is 60% complete. The City of Huntsville will soon meet with the Federal Highway Authority about the corridor study.







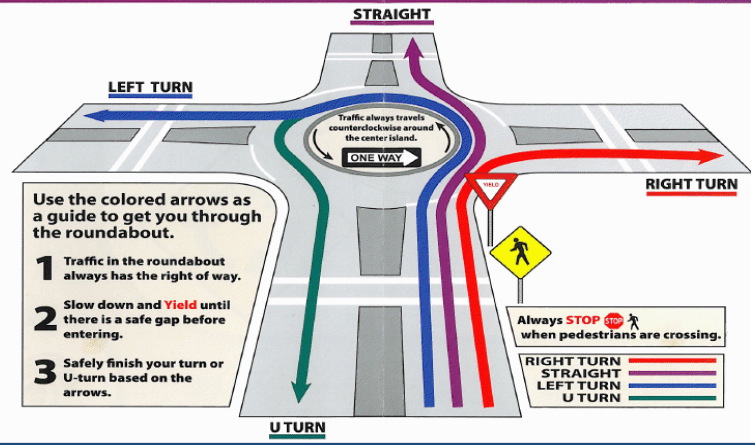
## Coming Soon: ALDOT's Intersection safety upgrades- Roundabouts!

Love them or hate them, more roundabouts are on the way. ALDOT has safety funding earmarked specifically for these circular intersection upgrades.

In our MPO area, the first new roundabout to be constructed with these funds will be in Limestone County at East Limestone Road and Capshaw. The project will begin construction in June 2017 and cost \$757,000. Many more roundabouts are expected to follow this first project, so here's a "How to Drive in a Roundabout" refresher to help you drive confidently:

## How to Drive in a Roundabout

Image courtesy of "Leucadia the Blog"



## SAVE THE DATE!



**Smart Growth America**  
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



**National Complete Streets Coalition**

## June 15, 2016: Complete Streets Evening Event



### Interstate Updates : FASTLANE- The New Grant in Town

MPO staff supported the City of Huntsville this Spring in the city's endeavor to create a grant application for the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant. This new grant opportunity was created by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the long-term transportation funding bill passed in December.

FASTLANE is a competitive, national grant program, similar to the popular TIGER grant, but the goals are very different. FASTLANE grants support freight efficiency improvements to our national interstate and freight highway networks. The table at right shows the annual funding for FASTLANE grants in the FAST Act. Learn more:

[www.transportation.gov/FASTLANEgrants](http://www.transportation.gov/FASTLANEgrants)

Fiscal year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Authorization	\$800 M	\$ 850 M	\$ 900 M	\$ 950 M	\$1.00 B



### Public Transit : Hop Around Huntsville launches a local Transit Advocacy Group

This Spring, one of the developers of [www.HopAroundHuntsville.com](http://www.HopAroundHuntsville.com), featured in our last issue and on our blog, created a public transit advocacy group. The group's preliminary meeting was held in March. The draft mission and vision of the, as yet unnamed, group are: "to support economic development in north central Alabama through advocacy of smart transportation systems and mobility throughout the Huntsville metropolitan area," and that "the residents, visitors and workers of north central Alabama will have flexible, cost-effective transit options supporting their travel needs to go anywhere anytime throughout the metropolitan area." MPO staff are members of this new organization and look forward to the strategic initiatives the group plans to implement.



## BIG Picture Principles Survey Results

During the winter and holiday break, BIG Picture conducted a public survey to help us phrase our BIG Picture Principles. 619 people responded, sharing their views for the future of Huntsville. The BIG Picture Principles will provide guidance for developers and elected officials to determine whether a project needs to be built, or plans need to change, to fit the public's vision for our city.

As with everything in the BIG Picture, the public helped write our Principles. A BIG public event is coming up to present the Principles, as well as culminating the first two years of BIG Picture's efforts in Huntsville.

## BIG Picture On Display– Major Exhibition

The BIG Picture is preparing a BIG display for the public, to unveil our Principles this Summer. The display will be a series of 40+ boards, set up like a science fair or museum exhibit. By perusing the boards, the public will learn all the aspects of The BIG Picture planning process and have the opportunity to comment and ask questions. The BIG Picture On Display will travel around Huntsville, giving many different residents an opportunity to see the BIG Picture Principles and boards. In the future, we'll use these Principles to help ensure the city is working on projects the public actually wants.

## Campus No. 805 to host BIG Picture and Smart Growth America



## Complete Streets Workshop June 15!

Campus No. 805, the former Stone Middle School campus, is located at the three-way intersection of Governors Drive, Clinton Ave, and Triana Blvd in Huntsville. It is a mixed-use entertainment venue situated between both of the BIG Picture's visionary Complete Street projects: Holmes Ave and Clinton Ave. Campus No. 805's location will give us the opportunity to visualize future Complete Streets projects up close. When you step out of the workshop, you will face Clinton Ave and can imagine its update.

The goal of the workshop is to explain Complete Streets to the public and outline the benefits of creating a Complete Streets Policy for Huntsville. After the June 15th event, city decision-makers will attend eight hours of training to begin writing Huntsville's first Complete Streets Policy and lay the groundwork for the Holmes and Clinton projects.

## Transportation Quarterly Goals:

1. Report news of multi-jurisdictional transportation projects in the cities of Huntsville, Madison and throughout Madison County in a user-friendly, easy to digest and visually pleasing format.
2. Educate the public on transportation plans and connect transportation projects of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with the BIG Picture Huntsville visions and goals for the Huntsville area.

Questions or comments? Call me, Planner Paige, at 256-427-5188 or email me at [paige.colburn@huntsvilleal.gov](mailto:paige.colburn@huntsvilleal.gov)

Transportation Quarterly– Metropolitan Planning Organization- City of Huntsville Urban Development Dept. - Planning Division  
P.O. Box 308 Huntsville, AL 35804 - Visit our website: <http://huntsvillempo.org> or

**CHECK OUT our Monthly Blog! :** <http://www.huntsvillempo.org/category/tqr/>