



# TRANSPORTATION QUARTERLY

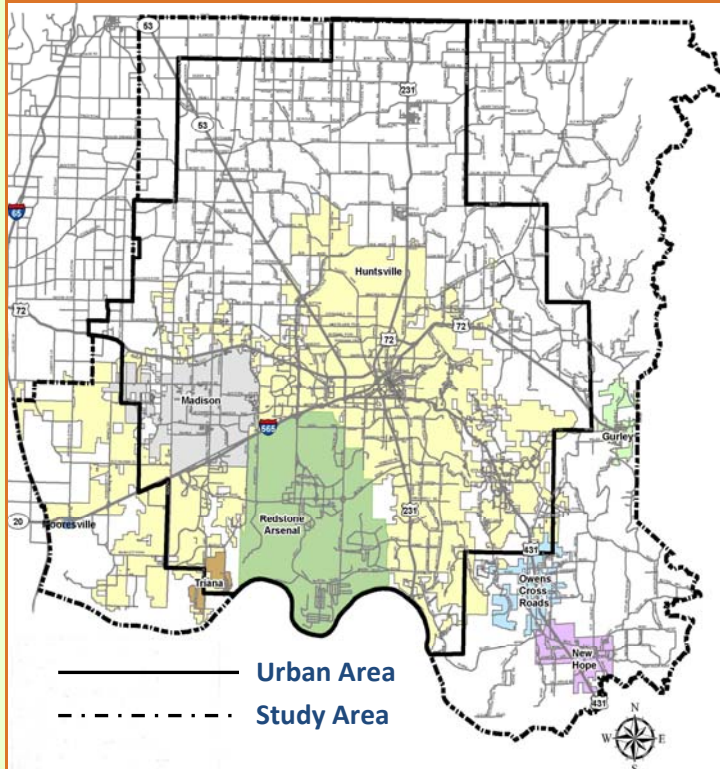


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## News & Notes: Mapping the MPO; Plus Money Sense



### Understanding the MPO Map

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is defined by the “**Urban Area**.” Every ten years, the US Census Bureau defines and maps urbanized areas nationwide. MPOs are designated for each urbanized area with a population over 50,000. While the MPO designation and membership is finalized by agreement between local jurisdictions and the Governor, the “Urban Area Boundary” is what’s used to determine MPO membership. The City of New Hope and the Town of Gurley are not members of the Huntsville -Area MPO as they are outside our **Urban Area**. However, Madison County represents them on the MPO Board. These two jurisdictions are part of our **Study Area**. The “**Study Area Boundary**” is the limit of the MPO’s transportation models. All of the MPO’s plans must be based on the **Study Area**. Both the Urban Area and the Study Area have the potential to be redrawn after the 2020 Census.









### Making Sense of the Money:

There are 14 funding categories listed in the MPO’s 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Of these, the MPO has discretionary power over only two funds; one for transit, one for roads. Transportation projects listed under the other 12 funds are selected by the FHWA and ALDOT. The non-transit fund the MPO can use to select local projects is called Surface Transportation Attributable Projects- Huntsville (STPHV). The MPO has access to this fund because Huntsville is an **Urban Area**, see map above, with over 200,000 population. All federal funds may be spent on functionally classified roads in the MPO **Study Area**; except the MPO’s discretionary STPHV, which can only be spent in the **Urban Area**.



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**



## **Bridges of Madison County:**

### **Shields Road Bridge gets drainage upgrades**

This bridge project affects several MPO member jurisdictions. The abutment back walls of Shields Road bridge were damaged when the ground settled more than expected after construction. Some additional drainage improvements around the bridge are also being installed. There are several contractors working on different phases of this very complex project. The projected schedule to pour concrete on the north abutment wall is mid to late October. The estimated cost is \$450,000 and it should be finished by November.



## **City of Huntsville to pursue grant: The BIG Jump Project from PeopleForBicycles**

The goal of the Big Jump Project, a technical assistance grant program from People for Bicycles, is to double or triple bicycle ridership in a small "Focus Area" of ten cities nationwide. This Big Jump in ridership is meant to "prove the concept" that if more comfortable and convenient bicycle infrastructure is paired with public outreach and education, the results will be increased safety for all modes, increased ridership, and increased economic development in the Focus Area. Learn more at [www.bigjumpproject.com](http://www.bigjumpproject.com)



## **Maintenance: MPO member jurisdictions add ADA planning to road updates**

Local jurisdictions will soon begin upgrading roads to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards as part of regularly scheduled maintenance such as resurfacing. At the MPO meeting in August, all MPO member jurisdictions presented their ADA compliance materials for self-certification. The MPO is required to self-certify compliance with several federal laws, like ADA, every four years. This year was a bit different, as FHWA and ALDOT required ADA Transition Plans from all MPO members. These plans specify road improvements to be made for ADA access. These plans also prioritize and list funding sources for such improvements.

### **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: Construction Underway to Move Arsenal's Gate 9**

Construction began in June to relocate Redstone Arsenal Gate 9. This yearlong project will culminate with a new Gate 9 located three-quarters of a mile south on Rideout Road. This gate receives the most traffic of any Redstone Arsenal entrance. The project will also improve access to the Redstone Gateway retail, office, and hotel center, where four new restaurants hosted their Grand Opening in October, 2016. The project will also move the Arsenal's fence to open parts of the base, such as the golf course, to the public. The project will cost approximately \$8 million dollars and is a joint financial effort with many public and private partners from throughout North Alabama.

Learn more here: <http://www.theredstonerocket.com/>



Courtesy: [www.RedstoneGateway.us](http://www.RedstoneGateway.us)



## **Intersections & Additional Lanes : MARTIN ROAD IS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE!**

The new elevated intersection of Martin Road and US 231-431 Memorial Parkway is **300% ahead of schedule** according to ALDOT. The project may be finished one or even two years ahead of schedule.

**Benaroya Lane Extension Connects S HSV Businesses Amidst Construction**  
Motorists have a new connection to avoid Martin Rd. construction thanks to the South Huntsville Business Association (SHBA) who suggested extending Benaroya Lane. The Martin Road project spurred the creation of the SHBA, a group of retail stores and restaurants affected by the construction. Benaroya Lane now connects Martin Road to Byrd Spring Road, and is an important entrance for Redstone Arsenal employees into Main Street South, Office Park South, and the hotels, restaurants, and businesses in the surrounding area. Read more here: <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov/>



Photo courtesy of [www.huntsvilleal.gov](http://www.huntsvilleal.gov)



## **City of Huntsville formalizes partnership with the Land Trust for more greenways!**

In September, the City of Huntsville entered into an agreement with the Land Trust of North Alabama “for the acquisition, maintenance, and promotion of greenway space.” The goal of this agreement is to facilitate the build out the Greenway Master Plan’s network of 180+ miles of interconnected greenways. This agreement was in negotiation for the better part of two years. The City is financially committed to the expansion of the greenway network. The city allocated \$125,000 per year for the next three years to the Land Trust of North Alabama for the purposes of this new agreement. The Land Trust will begin prioritizing greenway projects and developing a plan of action in the coming months. See the Greenway Master Plan here: [bigpicturehuntsville.com/greenways/](http://bigpicturehuntsville.com/greenways/)



## **Interstate Updates : PUBLIC MEETING on I-565 Interchange near Zierdt Road**

I-565 is growing wider, from mile marker 11.1 to 13.22, including widening four bridges, to accommodate and provide access for the new development called Town Madison. The City of Madison and Madison County are also adding a new I-565 interchange heading into the Town Madison development. Note the plans at the right are a draft and are not official. To see current plans, attend the **public meeting scheduled for 5pm on November 1, 2016 at the Madison City Hall 100 Hughes Rd, Madison, AL 35758.**



## **Public Transit : New Freedom and FTA 5310 Grants approved at MPO meeting**

At the MPO meeting in August, two new transit grants were approved by the MPO Board for local non-profits.

- The New Freedom grant is an older Federal Transit Authority (FTA) grant for which funds are soon expiring. Genesis Residential, Inc. applied for and received \$31,919 in funds for transit operating expenses in FY 2016 as well as \$29,205 for a new passenger van for the purpose of transporting residents with disabilities.
- The FTA 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities fund is the newer version of the New Freedom grant. The ARC of Madison County applied for and received \$146,024 from this grant for new vehicles for their program.

**FAREWELL** to Phyllis Seymore who has worked on Madison County public transit’s TRAM program for 28 years! She’ll be retiring in November, 2016. MPO staff loved working with Phyllis and wish her a happy retirement.

## Check out Transportation in the BIG Picture Exhibition!

There's lots to learn about the future of transportation from The BIG Picture Exhibition. You've still got plenty of opportunities to see the Exhibition, too. The Exhibition is entering its third month with plans to continue "on the road" throughout November and December. There are several banners in the Exhibition pertaining to Transportation, including:



That's only a few of the Exhibition's transportation banners.

Go see for yourself! To find the Exhibition visit:

<http://bigpicturehuntsville.com/events/>

To read all the Exhibition banners online visit:

[www.bigpicturehuntsville.com/exhibition](http://www.bigpicturehuntsville.com/exhibition)



BIG Picture Huntsville staff continues to work on the results of our **Complete Streets Workshop**, held in June, 2016. Emiko Ather-ton, from Smart Growth America, visited Huntsville again in late September to check on progress of the city's first Complete Streets Policy. She offered advice for the city moving forward. The Mayor will soon make a resolution authorizing the Department of Urban Development to draft a Complete Streets Policy to be adopted by the City Council in March, 2017. Stay tuned for opportunities to comment on the new policy!

## 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)

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