



TRANSPORTATION QUARTERLY



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News & Notes: Madison County & City of Madison Updates

Jordan Road Extension



Madison County is planning a project to extend Jordan Rd to U.S. Highway 72 E. Jordan Road currently terminates on its southern end at Ryland Pike. The County plans to extend the road and construct a new intersection approximately 1,800 feet south at U.S. Highway 72 E. The County is in the process of drafting preliminary engineering documents in preparation for the property acquisition required for the project. The County has initiated discussions with ALDOT to coordinate the design and construction of the required improvements within the State right-of-way. Commissioner Craig Hill from Madison County Commission District 3 described the importance of this project by saying, "Safety must always be a priority as we work to improve our infrastructure in Madison County. It is no secret that the Ryland Pike/US Highway 72 intersection is dangerous and we are working with our partners at the Alabama Department of Transportation and our team of local, state, and regional leaders to extend Jordan Road to US Highway 72." For more information about this project, contact Commissioner Craig Hill's office at: 256-776-2475 or County Engineers office: (256) 746-2900 or online: <http://madisoncountyal.gov/departments/public-works>.

Madison Transportation Master Plan Update

Madison has embarked on a comprehensive city-wide Transportation Master Plan update to identify future transportation needs, goals, policies and short-term and long-term capital investments for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Focusing on "complete streets" design, the plan will provide a framework for a balanced transportation system and offer residents travel choices, supported by a realistic approach to fund improvements. Madison is making a commitment to enable its transportation system to reinforce core values: smart and strategic growth, building strong neighborhoods and providing better connections. The City hired JRWA out of Atlanta to conduct the baseline network inventory, travel demand modeling and prepare the Master Plan. Initially, the team will work with a Steering Committee to develop the baseline data. During the remaining phases of the process, residents will have an opportunity to participate in a public outreach meeting to voice their opinions on transportation and highlight what factors are important to them. There will be several more opportunities at key milestones to review the progress of the Plan concepts and policies. Keep an eye on the City website for further details about this effort. www.madisonal.gov



Huntsville Area
Metropolitan Planning
Organization



⇒ 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: TRAM, Handi-ride and Shuttle



⇒ Redstone Arsenal and Research Park



Limestone County Bridge Updates

After experiencing initial delays, three bridge replacement projects in Limestone County are moving forward. Below is a status update on those three projects.

- **Bridge Replacement on Thach Rd over an unnamed creek:** Engineering design for Limestone County ATRIP project. Plans Complete. Bidding moved to September.
- **Bridge Replacement on Liberty Way over Limestone Creek:** Engineering design for Limestone County ATRIP project. Layout/alignment approved. Currently waiting on foundation report to be approved to proceed with Bridge Design. Currently is scheduled for August bidding.
- **Bridge Replacement on Old HWY 20 over Limestone Creek:** This bridge was damaged during the Christmas flooding disaster in Limestone County in 2015. Funds have been authorized for the engineering process to repair the bridge. Fish and Wildlife completed the environmental assessment and it was submitted in April 2017. Plans 60% complete.



Bicycle News: Metropolitan Planning Organization begins MPO-wide Bike Plan

In the previous issue of the Transportation Quarterly, we mentioned the partnering of MPO Staff and the MPO Multimodal Technical Committee to create an MPO Bike Plan. As that process continues, it is important to understand why such a plan would benefit the community. The Huntsville MPO has set a target in the Long Range Plan to increase cycling and recognize the importance of well-planned and integrated bike networks in creating more accessible, sustainable, and connected communities.

If properly implemented, a bike plan can contribute to a healthy, active and livable community, help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and reduce dependency on private motor vehicles. It will also reduce road congestion, increase mobility and independence for those without cars, increase capacity for local public transit networks, and reduce health costs, travel times, noise and vehicle operating costs.



Safety and Maintenance: Federal Maintenance

Several federal maintenance projects are planned in the near future for the Huntsville-Area MPO. These projects are fully federally funded and occur on the state or federal roads in our area.

Two Projects on HWY 53 / Jordan: Resurface from North of Taurus Drive to Limestone County Line, Cost: \$2.9 Million; Began: July, 2017; and Resurface from south of I-565 to south of intersection with Mastin Lake Road; Cost \$3.6 Million; began April, 2017, to be complete June, 2018

US HWY 72 / University: Resurface, access management, and intersection safety improvements; read more in "Intersections & Additional Lanes" section

Potholes? Service Request?

Huntsville Connect app:

huntsvilleal.gov/huntsvilleconnect/

City of Madison:

Call: 256-772-0000 or madsional.gov

Madison County: Call your Commission District office. Find numbers here:

madisoncountyal.gov



Rockets & Research: Cargo Spaceplane Dream Chaser is closer to HSV airport landing

In July, the City of Huntsville City Council moved forward with a process to acquire a Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) license to land a Sierra Nevada Corporation spaceplane called "Dream Chaser," at Huntsville International Airport. This small shuttle-like ship would make flights carrying equipment to the International Space Station (ISS) and return, carrying scientific research, to the airport landing like a plane on the runway. The Marshall Space Flight Center hopes this is an opportunity for Huntsville to participate in the future of space flight. The FAA license process will take 18 months. For questions, contact the Huntsville-Madison County Chamber of Commerce: (256) 535-2000 | info@hsvchamber.org |



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Intersections & Additional Lanes : Access Management on University Drive / US 72

Access management refers to the regulation of intersections, driveways and median openings to a roadway. University Drive / US 72 has an access management problem. The far right lane on either side of the six lane road is often slow or blocked due to turning vehicles. When ALDOT or FHWA perform maintenance, access management must be evaluated and, if necessary, controlled. On Tuesday, July 18th, the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) held a public involvement meeting to discuss proposed resurfacing, access management and intersection safety improvements on Highway 72 from Providence Main St to Memorial Pkwy. The project will begin in March, 2018 and cost \$3.4 Million dollars. The areas in green are paved turns that will be closed. Email comments or concerns to bellt@dot.state.al.us



Big Picture: Greenway Master Plan Update

In May , the City of Huntsville and the Land Trust of North Alabama held three public involvement meetings for the City of Huntsville's Greenway Master Plan Update. The plan outlines both short range and future greenway corridor projects. Also included are "greenlinks" which are sidewalk connections between greenway segments, trails and proposed Complete Streets corridor projects. Complete Streets are projects designed to modify existing streets to better accommodate all modes of travel including bicycles and pedestrians. If you are interested in learning more, an interactive map of the Greenway Master Plan can be found at:

<http://bigpicturehuntsville.com/greenway-master-plan-update/>



Interstate Updates: INFRA - The New Grant Option

In a previous issue of the Transportation Quarterly, we highlighted the features of the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant passed in 2015. The new Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant serves as an update of the old FASTLANE grant. Like FASTLANE, INFRA is a competitive, national grant program, but the goals are somewhat different. INFRA grants will support both small and large projects to address critical issues facing highways and bridges. The INFRA grant program encourages local sponsorship from private partners working together with federal, state, and local funding to decrease obstacles to funding and increase speed in moving to construction.

Learn more: www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infragrants



What's Blue and Grey and Driven All Over? GREYHOUND!

The City of Huntsville Public Transit Division is one step closer to establishing a multi-modal transportation center with the relocation of Greyhound to the City of Huntsville Public Transit Transfer station this fall. In May 2017, Greyhound Lines, Inc. and the City of Huntsville signed a 3-Year Agreement bringing all Greyhound Buses and Shuttle Buses together at one transfer station located at 500 B Church Street. Travelers will now be able to seamlessly transfer between City buses and Inter-city Greyhound buses traveling to and from locations such as Nashville, Atlanta, Chicago, and beyond. Ticket sales for City Shuttle buses, HandiRide and Greyhound will be available in one ticket office on the 2nd floor of 500 B Church Street.





(Photo courtesy of Nevada DOT)

What is BRT?

Among the issues outlined in the Big Picture's transportation section are expanded transportation options and greater transportation network efficiency. Bus Rapid Transit, or BRT, could be an avenue to serving these interests. BRT services are different from typical bus services in several ways. For one, BRT systems have their own right-of-way separate from automobile traffic to both decrease rider travel time and to help alleviate traffic congestion on major roads. Travel time for BRT riders can be further reduced with the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to use real-time data collected from roadway sensors and BRT vehicles to manage traffic signaling, cut down on time spent waiting on red lights, and make bus routes as fast, efficient, and consistent as possible. BRT vehicles also typically provide a higher level of accessibility than traditional buses. The separate lane system allows BRT to use larger, lower-floor vehicles that carry more passengers and allow for level boarding between vehicle and platform for ADA accessibility. These features make BRT a realistic travel option for residents with mobility challenges for whom traditional buses may be less accommodating. As Huntsville continues to thrive and grow, BRT could serve to increase transportation options and accessibility to further allow residents to enjoy all the city has to offer.

Huntsville Downtown Masterplan Development: Spragins Ave Separated Bike Lane

On August 2nd, the city held a public meeting to introduce a possible protected bike lane on Spragins Ave. The project will be a small segment of Huntsville's long-term downtown development strategy. In order to make downtown a more attractive destination, the city plans to make streetscape enhancements and to provide additional pedestrian and bike friendly infrastructure throughout the downtown area. Input from the meeting will be considered when making project decisions. Citizen feedback and transparency are important to the City, and these public meetings provide a great opportunity for planners and city officials to interact and engage with the community. For more information and to comment on the plan, visit: www.bigpicturehuntsville.com



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

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/>