



# TRANSPORTATION QUARTERLY



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## News & Notes: Greenway Master Plan Adoption and Progress



A new Greenway Master Plan was approved at the City of Huntsville Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, December 19th. The plan outlines both proposed and visionary greenway corridors. Proposed greenways are expected to be built within 1 – 5 years and visionary greenways within 5 or more years.

Greenlinks are a part of the plan and are defined as on-street neighborhood connectors, such as sidewalks, between existing and planned greenways and/or trails.

Complete Streets are included in the plan and are corridor projects designed to modify existing streets to better accommodate all modes of travel including bicycles and pedestrians.

An interactive map of the Greenway Master Plan can be found at:

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

Proposed projects that will get the new Greenway Master Plan rolling are:

- **Dry Creek Greenway**, which was recently funded by the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program.
- **The Ditto Landing Greenway**, which will hit the 1-5 years mark promised in the plan thanks to a grant from PeopleForBikes. Read more about this greenway expansion in the Bikes section.



Huntsville Area  
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⇒ **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**



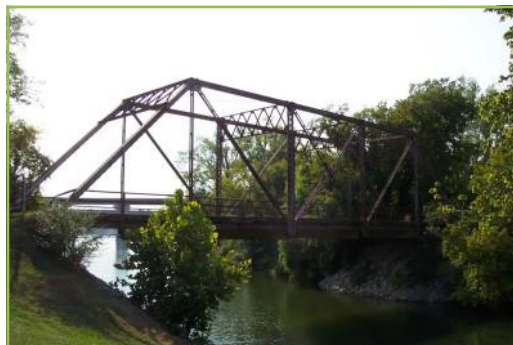
**Which greenways are next on the list?**

For more information and to comment on the plan, visit: [www.bigpicturehuntsville.com](http://www.bigpicturehuntsville.com)



## **The Bridges of Madison County: Ditto Landing Truss Bridge to Reopen**

The Huntsville-Madison County Marina & Port Authority has won a grant for Ditto Landing's two mile greenway expansion along the Tennessee River and underneath the US 231 bridge. The grant will be awarded in 2018 and the project is slated to begin immediately thereafter. The route of the expanded greenway will also include the historic truss bridge that crosses Aldridge Creek. The bridge was closed in August, 2007 due to the collapse of a similar truss bridge in Minneapolis that year. The goal of the Huntsville-Madison County Marina and Port Authority is to reopen the bridge exclusively for bikes and pedestrians to access the new greenway. Now that the funding for the new greenway has been secured, Ditto Landing leadership is working with engineers to safely reopen the bridge.



Courtesy : J.R. Manning



## **Bicycle News: Two Big Projects for Cyclists in late 2017, including a \$5,000 grant!**

The Ditto Landing greenway grant discussed above in "Bridges" was a grant from PeopleForBikes for \$5,000. The awarded funds will create the only separated, out-of-traffic, east to west crossing of Memorial Parkway for cyclists in the City of Huntsville. The new greenway addition to Ditto Landing will eventually travel north through TVA property and a subdivision to connect to the new Grissom campus west of Memorial Parkway. Another goal is to create a 5k bike and pedestrian loop on the Ditto Landing property.

Huntsville's first cycle track was opened with a ribbon-cutting in downtown Huntsville on December 14, 2017. It runs on Spragins Street, which connects Big Spring Park East with the EarlyWorks Railroad Depot. The track also includes the city's first bicycle signals at Holmes, Clinton, and Monroe streets. (continued on "BIG Picture Back Page")



## **Safety and Maintenance: Winter's Effects**

The freezing cold weather has affected more than schools and business' operating hours. Pavement treatments do not set if the weather is too cold, as most require heat to fully adhere to existing pavement. Many federal maintenance projects throughout the MPO area have been stalled or delayed due to the winter weather.

**Resurfacing on I-65:** from near I-565 to near HWY 72 has been suspended until Spring. **Maintenance Resurfacing on US-72 from Jefferson to near McCulley Mill Road** is as yet incomplete due to winter weather issues.

## **Potholes? Service Request?**

**Huntsville Connect app:**

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

**City of 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: Joint Land Use Study for future of Redstone Arsenal Property**

Two public meetings were held in the Fall of 2017 by the Redstone Arsenal Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) to discuss the scope and goals of the project with the community. These meetings were very well attended and the public was given an opportunity to tell the JLUS staff about their ideas for the area.

The JLUS will address compatible land use planning and sustainability between Redstone Arsenal and the neighboring communities. The primary objective of the JLUS is to reduce current and potential conflicts between Redstone Arsenal and surrounding communities while accommodating new growth and economic development, sustaining economic vitality, protecting public health and safety, and sustaining the operational missions of Redstone Arsenal. The JLUS will assess 25 compatibility factors, identify existing and potential issues, and develop strategies to address the issues. In order to develop a study and recommendations that are responsive to local needs, input from the community is essential! Head to [redstonearsenaljlus.com](http://redstonearsenaljlus.com) to send questions or comments.



## **Intersections & Additional Lanes : Blake Bottom Road Interchange Approved**

At its August meeting, the MPO gave project approval for the Blake Bottom overpass at Memorial Parkway. Travelers and commuters along Research Park Boulevard just south of Alabama Highway 53 are seeing construction equipment moving. Reed Contracting has begun construction on the ATRIP-funded Interchange at Blake Bottom Road and Research Park Boulevard. The project will provide access to and from Blake Bottom Road from each direction of Research Park Boulevard. The construction activities currently underway include: clearing existing vegetation from the construction areas, removal of unsuitable subgrade materials, and installation of structural fill material. Future activities will include installing the drilled shafts for the bridge supports. Drivers using this area are encouraged to be aware that various equipment and personnel will be active during normal business hours and that traffic conditions may change. Motorists should be aware of the traffic control signs and personnel and heed all advance warnings and instructions to ensure a safe construction zone as progress continues on the project. The project will cost \$7.8 million dollars and is currently 10% complete with construction work expected to continue throughout the year.



## **Aldridge Creek Greenway Expansion is Complete!**

The much-anticipated expansion of Aldridge Creek Greenway from Weatherly Rd. to the Valley Hill golf course was completed in December 2017. This expansion has spurred discussion about how to connect to the prior end of the Aldridge Creek Greenway, which currently T's into Bailey Cove Road. Several options are being discussed by City of Huntsville Engineering and the BIG Picture staff. Currently, the hope is to extend the connection along the creek itself, behind existing businesses adjacent to the creek. This will become a continuation of the Aldridge Creek flood mitigation project, as well, if approved. Several key assessments must be done prior to moving forward with this option. Meanwhile, the new section is ready for use!



Photo courtesy of Jamie Miernik



## **Interstate Updates: Multiple interchange projects continue along I-565**

The City of Huntsville continues to pursue improved traffic flow at Redstone Arsenal Gate 9 with an interchange planned from I-565 to Rideout Road and the Redstone Gateway office park. The design of the project has returned to the drawing board recently due to federal requirements. In the meantime, the City of Huntsville is looking into conducting a corridor study to improve the interchange of I565 and US231. The City of Madison continues to prepare to create the Hughes Road interchange that will cross I-565 and connect to the new Town Madison development along Zierdt Road.

### **New Redstone Gate 9**



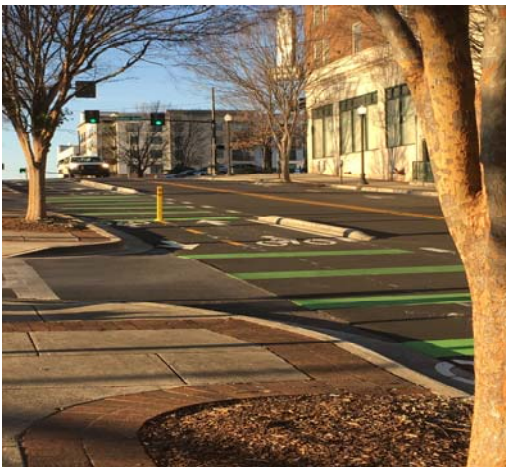
## **Transit: MPO sponsors Transit Study in 2018**

At the August 2017 MPO meeting, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was adopted for FY 2018. This document is the budget for the MPO each year. For 2018, this budget includes an important transit study. This will be the first transit study since the City of Huntsville completed one in 2012. The results of that study, once implemented, increased ridership significantly. The goals of the study are as follows: evaluating Saturday service, modifying fixed routes, reduction of cost for paratransit, a transit fare idea known as "Freedom Pass," providing regional transportation in non-traditional ways such as vanpools, and a proposed five year capital improvement plan. The target start date for this study is in April, with the study to be completed by July. The MPO looks forward to improving public transit in the City of Huntsville as well as learning how to potentially expand transit to include the entire MPO area.



## Urban Design Associates Downtown Master Plan Continues : Alley Plan to connect downtown's alleyways

This past summer, the Huntsville City Council and Planning Commission unanimously approved the Downtown Huntsville Master Plan Update. This was the culmination of months of exhaustive planning led by Urban Design Associates, the City of Huntsville, and Downtown Huntsville, Inc. While very specific and focused in geographic scope, the plan recommended a diverse set of action items to continue the revitalization of the city center. One of these action items emphasized the improvement and expansion of the Downtown alley network into an increasingly multi-modal experience. In particular, the plan promoted the concept that urban alleyways can serve as useful and even vibrant spaces for pedestrians and cyclists in addition to the vehicles that typically utilize alleys. Downtown Huntsville already includes several public alleyways that meet this goal through public art, pocket parks, performance stages and other pedestrian-scale activation strategies. The 2017 Downtown Master Plan Update will expand the activation of additional alleyways in Downtown--ultimately creating an additional grid network for pedestrians and cyclists in the city center. The first step has been taken with the hiring of creative placemaking firm Project for Public Spaces. The initial scope will include a one block alleyway strategically situated within a key growth corridor of Downtown.



## City's First Cycle Track Opens in Huntsville

(contd from Bicycle Section) The State's first cycle track is also the first pilot project of the Downtown Master Plan. The bi-directional bike path is painted in bright green lines, and separated by a concrete barrier from traffic. A wide pedestrian path is adjacent to the cycle track, creating a truly Complete Street in downtown Huntsville. Soon, this new infrastructure will continue through the Huntsville Depot and connect to the Gateway Greenway that traverses beneath I-565 to the dog park and skate park on Cleveland Ave. The city's experience with the Spragins route will help determine if cycle tracks could be used in other areas of the City.

### **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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