

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE  
HUNTSVILLE-AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting - August 14, 2023 - 5 p.m.**

**Huntsville, Alabama**

**Committee Members:**

Mr. Trent Griffin	Vice Chairman, City of Huntsville
Mr. Matthew Brown	City of Huntsville
Mr. John Ofenloch	City of Huntsville
Mr. Todd Slyman	City of Huntsville
Mr. Taron Thorpe	City of Huntsville
Mr. Gary Whitley	City of Huntsville
Mr. Larry Mason	City of Madison
Mr. Houston Matthews	Madison County
Mr. Eddie Hoff	Town of Gurley

**MPO Staff Members:**

Mr. James Vandiver  
Mr. James Moore

**Also Present:**

Ms. Jo Beth Gleason	Planning Department, City of Huntsville
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The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Griffin at the time and place noted above.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee on May 15, 2023, were approved as submitted.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item on the agenda was Jurisdiction Reports. He asked if there was anything to be reported from Madison County.

Mr. Matthews stated there was not for this meeting, but he had talked to

Chuck Faulkner, and he said he would try to prepare something for the next meeting.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was a report from the City of Huntsville, the City of Madison, the Town of Triana, or the Town of Owens Cross Roads.

There was no response.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item on the agenda was MPO Self-Certification.

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 13-23 adopted the MPO Self-Certification. He stated this was a series of questions asked of the MPO by FHWA and ALDOT pertaining to the metropolitan planning process, as required by federal law. He stated this was updated every four years, and the questions and answers were included in the Transportation Improvement Plan, which was located in Appendix G of the new 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Vandiver stated that this resolution authorized the Chairman to sign and send this Self-Certification to the ALDOT director for his signature.

Mr. Mason asked if that was the Chairman of the MPO Board.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the affirmative.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked what this said.

Mr. Vandiver stated it said they were in compliance with all federal laws.

Mr. Mason recommended approval of Resolution No. 13-23, adopting the MPO Self-Certification and authorizing the Chairman to sign the document.

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Matthews.

Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Vandiver if the MPO Certification required the participating member organizations' certifications as well, if Huntsville and Madison County and all of the members certified to the MPO so they could provide this certification. He stated this had come up years ago when he had worked on this.

Mr. Vandiver stated that in this case, it did not, that this was just the self-certification, and it asked if they were compliant with the CFR regarding the metropolitan planning process, if their boundaries were compliant with federal law, if their boards were compliant with federal law, things like that.

Mr. Matthews stated that, then, it was relative to the MPO and not the specific member jurisdictions.

Mr. Vandiver stated that was correct.

Mr. Mason asked if this was the same certification they had gone through that was not a self-certification, that they had gone through about two years ago.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the negative, stating that was what was called a TMA, or Transportation Management Area, Certification Review. He stated that was also done every four years, but it was on a different cycle. He stated that was not a self-certification, and that was just because they were a large enough MPO that they required an in-person visit, or in that case, it was virtual, a couple of years ago, by necessity. He stated that was simply an in-person visit from FHWA and ALDOT, that it ran through a lot of the same things, but it was definitely a more in-depth review of the MPO.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any further discussion.

Vice Chairman Griffin called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item on the agenda was the Final FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Resolution No. 14-23.

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated this resolution would adopt the final FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program, or TIP. He stated this was their Short-term Plan for State/Federal/MPO-Funded Transportation Projects. He stated this was also updated every four years, and amended as necessary. He stated the CAC, TCC, and MPO boards adopted the Draft FY 2024-2027 TIP at the May meetings. He stated there were some highlighted Draft-to-Final changes they had made over the summer, that ALDOT had added some new projects in the Safety, Transit, and National Highway categories. He stated there were no changes to the projects in their Attributable Funds, which were the funds the MPO controlled, and that included the Surface Transportation Funds as well as the Carbon Reduction Funds.

Mr. Vandiver stated they had also added a Financial Plan, which included the year-by-year breakdown of the total project costs, and federal costs, by category. He continued that they had also added a System Performance Report, which was required by FHWA, which showed the total cost by Performance Measures. He stated the CAC members had seen the Performance Measurement amendments to the TIP in the past, and he stated they broke down the project costs by Highway Performance Measurements, and they got the Safety Performance Measurement, the Bridge and Pavement conditions, as well as Travel Time Reliability. He stated those were the three federally-mandated Performance Measures, and that was included in the Final

as well.

Mr. Mason recommended approval of Resolution No. 14-23, adopting the Final FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Thorpe.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Mason stated to Mr. Vandiver that he had said ALDOT had made some changes in the rail and the transit, and he had noticed that Agenda Item No. 7 was going to be voting on a cost increase for a level of effort rail and a decrease in a level of effort transit. He asked if those were related.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated those were not action items.

Mr. Mason stated he realized that, that he wanted to know if they were related to what ALDOT had put into this draft.

Mr. Vandiver stated those were modifications for the current TIP, the 2020-2023 TIP. He stated the changes they made to the 2024-2027 TIP were for those fiscal years, that those were brand-new Transit projects that were being added to this new TIP.

Mr. Mason asked if Mr. Vandiver would explain what they were.

Mr. Vandiver stated they were typically allocations, that if they had an urban funding allocation, that was their 5307 Funds from FTA, for example. He continued that they also had a rural allocation, which he believed was 5311. He stated they had different allocations, based on their population, that were given to them by FTA, and they estimated that for the next four years, as part of the TIP. He stated they had also added Alabama A&M's low/no emissions grant, which they had received one back in June for improvements to their bus storage facility, adding solar power and making sure they reached their goal of a zero-emissions fleet by 2024.

Mr. Vandiver stated that for National Highway, there were some Access Management projects on US 72 East, and he believed also Highway 53, and then Safety projects. He stated he would talk about this in the Administrative Modifications. He stated there was a Preliminary Engineering phase of one of these projects, and ALDOT had put in the Construction phase of what was called an "RCUT," a Reduced Conflict Intersection, where you had right turns, and you could make a U-turn, but it restricted left turns, so it was supposed to be safe. He stated those were the kinds of projects that were added. He stated there were no changes to the funding that MPO controlled, that on Surface Transportation and Carbon Reduction, they did not make any changes.

Mr. Mason asked about the Rail projects.

Mr. Vandiver stated those were Railroad Crossing Improvements, that there was one at Moores Mill Road that was added, and maybe a couple of other ones.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if this TIP was online, if he wanted to know what the total budget was for this, and what streets were being considered.

Mr. Vandiver stated the entire plan was on their website at this time, but it was subject to change until Wednesday at 4 o'clock.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any further discussion.

Vice Chairman Griffin called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item was FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated this was Resolution No. 15-23, and that the UPWP

was their Unified Planning Work Program, which was their annual budget for MPO planning funds, which were different from their construction funds, which were their Surface Transportation and Carbon Reduction funds. He stated this was for the day-to-day operations of the MPO, including salaries, equipment purchases, professional development, as well as funding the development of plans the MPO was required to do, such as the Transportation Improvement Plan and the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Vandiver stated the total budgeted funding for the MPO for FY 2024 was \$969,176. He stated this budget had not changed from the Draft to the Final UPWP. He stated they had made one change to the allocation of those funds, that they had moved \$40,500 from the Long-Range Transportation Plan Task to the Data Collection Task, and that this was to cover a purchase of StreetLight AADT, or Average Annual Daily Traffic, data, basically traffic-count data, for all roads in the MPO study area, which was all of Madison County and part of Limestone County. He stated this was something they had wanted to do for a while, and now that they were coming up to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, it was something they would like to use to validate their Travel Demand Model, and they would also like to use it to re-evaluate their Functional Classifications in their region, Functional Classified Roads, which was based on AADT data; and, also, the member jurisdictions would have access to this data for free, and they had expressed interest in having this data. He stated that was really the big change from the Draft to the Final, that everything else remained the same.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if this was the contractor that measured the time it took from "A" to "B," in a car, truck, or bus, if they still had that subcontractor.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the negative, but he stated this was the same

kind of data they used in that Commuter Study. He stated they had looked at zone data, say, from downtown to Madison, that they looked at how many trips were being made from there. He stated this would actually look at individual streets, that there were about 28,000 street segments in the MPO area, and they would look at the numbers along each one of those segments.

Mr. Brown recommended approval of Resolution No. 15-23, adopting the final FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Ofenloch.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any further discussion.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated he had a question, and he asked if they were getting all that data for \$40,000, 28,000 streets.

Mr. Vandiver stated that was for 2021 and 2022. He stated there were many different ways to get that data, but what they were doing at this time was very simple, that they would get a 24-hour count. He stated that in the planning world, they liked to look at peak hours, but right now they were just looking at 24-hour counts for all street segments, and they would see how it would work out.

Mr. Thorpe asked how that data was compiled.

Mr. Vandiver stated that it was cell phones and connected vehicles, that everybody was getting counted. He stated it was totally anonymous, that they could not figure out where someone was driving.

Mr. Brown stated Mr. Vandiver had mentioned they would like to have that data by peak hours, and he asked if they would have that breakdown or it would be just the one number.

Mr. Vandiver stated it would be just the one number for now. He stated that would get them through the Long-Range Transportation Plan, using that



as validation for their Travel Demand model, and using it for Functional Classification. He stated that in the future, he would definitely want to have that. He stated they might come back later for an annual contract with StreetLight, if this data turned out to be very accurate.

Mr. Brown stated that, then, it was something StreetLight could provide.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the affirmative.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any further discussion.

Vice Chairman Griffin called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item was MPO ADA Transition Plan, Resolution No. 16-23.

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 16-23 would adopt the Final ADA, or Americans with Disabilities Act, Transition Plan. He stated the MPO boards adopted a Draft ADA Transition Plan back in September of 2021, and he stated that ALDOT was now requiring all MPOs to adopt a Final ADA Transition Plan before September 30th of the current year. He stated this Transition Plan was for ADA accessibility of MPO meeting facilities only. He stated the only change they had made from the Draft to the Final was that they had revised some language pertaining to the new City Hall, which would be completed in the following year. He stated that, unfortunately, they did not have exactly what kind of ADA facilities would be in the new City Hall, so they were just worried about what was currently on the ground at this time and the accessibility of those facilities. He continued that they would at some point need to revise this to account for the new City Hall, which was where the

MPO meetings would be held once it was completed.

Mr. Brown recommended approval of Resolution No. 16-23, adopting the Final ADA Transition Plan.

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Whitley.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there was any discussion.

Vice Chairman Griffin called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item on the agenda was Nonaction Items, FY 2020-2023 TIP Administrative Modifications.

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification A was new Level of Effort Transit Projects, that there were five of these, and they were all related, and it was Section 5310, Transit, Arc of Madison County (Rural) Capital Rolling Stock, which was legalese for Paratransit buses. He stated the total cost, respectively, for each project, was \$317,715; \$430,001; \$41,512; \$41,512; and \$25,780. He stated these were all for different years of this allocation. He stated that The Arc of Madison County used this funding to purchase their handicapped-accessible vans. He stated that at this time, they were working on a pretty massive expansion of their fleet, that they were trying to get up to, he believed, 60 vans, in Madison County, and they used these 5310 funds to do that.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification B was a cost increase to a Rail Safety project, that this was Railroad Crossing Improvements on James Record Road, at the Huntsville-Madison County Airport Authority. He stated the old cost estimate was \$600,000, and the new cost estimate was

\$644,569.51. He stated that \$300,000 of this new estimate would be funded 80 percent by the MPO and 20 percent by the City of Huntsville. He stated these were MPO funds that were previously approved in Resolution No. 09-23, which was one of those resolutions the CAC members had seen in May, for the James Record Road project. He stated this was a related project that would be done concurrent with that, that they were just taking that \$300,000 out of the construction of the James Record widening for this. He stated the reason the MPO had gotten involved in this was that Norfolk Southern required that the City install concrete panels in the road at this railroad crossing.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if the concrete panels would go between the tracks.

Mr. Vandiver stated they would be embedded there in the road. He stated the installation of the concrete panels were not eligible under the original grant funding, so they had to apply that funding to that.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if these panels were the result of some incidents they had had recently or if that had always been their policy.

Mr. Vandiver stated he did not know the reasoning behind it.

A question was asked concerning the cost of \$644,000 for concrete panels.

Mr. Vandiver stated that the \$644,000 included what was originally in the grant, the new signals, the mast arms, the gates, and all of that. He stated the \$300,000 was for the concrete panels.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification C was a cost decrease to a Transit project. He stated this was a Section 5310 Transit, City of Huntsville, that it was an Urban Apportionment for FY 2021. He stated the old estimate was \$152,508, and the new estimate was \$114,146. He stated that, typically, ALDOT moved funding around, especially now that they were getting

close to the end of the TIP, and they were starting to shift money into the new TIP, that that was what was going on with this, that this was an apportionment of funds that were allocated to the Huntsville Urban Area.

Mr. Ofenloch asked how ALDOT could say how much their facilities were going to cost.

Mr. Vandiver stated this was an apportionment, so it was all based on the urban area population.

Mr. Ofenloch stated that, then, they were going to give them so much.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Ofenloch stated that, then, they were going to give them less.

Mr. Vandiver stated they were moving their funds from this fiscal year to the new fiscal year. He stated there was only a certain amount of time that funding could be spent, so usually they tried to keep pushing it forward so it could still be spent.

Mr. Vandiver stated Administrative Modification D was a cost increase to a safety project in Madison County, that it was the installation of guardrail and guardrail end anchors at Elkwood Section Road over Brier Fork Flint River, and Pulaski Pike over Beaverdam Creek. He stated the old estimate was \$400,142, and the new estimate was \$432,709.08. He stated this was a final estimate prior to authorization, and it was authorized over the summer, and construction should begin soon.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification E was a new level of effort safety project, also in Madison County, that it was Intersection Improvements on State Route 53 at Burwell Road, and it was the PE phase, the Preliminary Engineering phase. He stated the total cost of the PE phase was \$97,500. He stated this was completely paid for by federal and state funds,

that no MPO funds were involved in this. He stated the Construction phase of this project was in the 2024-2027 TIP, and what they were looking at was one of those Reduced Conflict Intersections he had mentioned earlier, where they restricted the left turns, and they required people to make a U-turn.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification F was another cost increase to a project, that it was the Northern Bypass, from east of Pulaski Pike to east of Memorial Parkway, and it was the Utility phase. He stated this was an increase of \$1,511,100. He stated this was to cover a shortfall in gas line relocation funds, between the estimate and the lowest bid. He stated the MPO was funding this part, and they were taking the funds that were approved in Resolution No. 08-23, in May, for the Construction phase and putting it in the Utility phase. He continued that no new funds would be applied to this project beyond what had already been approved for the Northern Bypass.

Mr. Ofenloch stated that at the prior meeting, it was mentioned why this bypass had dipped below Countess Road, but he did not remember why. He asked if there had just been too much already built if they had gone straight.

Mr. Vandiver stated that if he remembered correctly, there was some residential where he was indicating on the map on Countess Road that they were trying to avoid, and it was also kind of the plan for the future, because this Northern Bypass would eventually make it down to Winchester Road and 72 East, along that route.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification G was Railroad Crossing Improvements at Pratt Avenue in Huntsville, and this was a cost decrease. He stated the old estimate was \$700,000, and the new estimate was \$587,123.45. He stated this was another final estimate prior to authorization. He stated that no MPO funds were being used on this, that this was just

Rail Safety Funds.

Mr. Ofenloch asked who contracted the improvements, if it was the railroad, the state, or the city. He asked who did the work and how they got the job.

Mr. Vandiver stated he believed the City bid the project. He stated it was bid through a contractor.

Mr. Ofenloch stated that, then, the railroad would allow the city to do that.

Mr. Matthews stated the railroad probably required the city to do it. He stated it would depend on where the right-of-way was, that it could be in the right-of-way, but it still would not matter, that the railroad was generally not going to maintain anything outside their tracks and ballast, that any intersection improvement, even if it was in the right-of-way, was the responsibility of the jurisdiction, generally.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item on the agenda was Agency Reports, the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Vice Chairman Griffin recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated the first project was the Northern Bypass, from Pulaski Pike to US Highway 231/431, Memorial Parkway. He stated this was ready to go, that he believed the project was scheduled to be bid in the current month, and the City of Huntsville was bidding the project. He stated the anticipated start date was by the end of the current year.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Martin Road, between Zierdt Road and Laracy Drive, and he stated Phase I was complete, and Phase II, the James Record Road widening project they had discussed in the

last couple of meetings, was scheduled for bid the following month, and construction should begin later in the current year.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was North Parkway at Mastin Lake Road, and he stated that construction had commenced, and it would take approximately three years for completion.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Access Management on US 231 between Weatherly Road and Hobbs Road, and he stated that plans were 85 percent complete, and right-of-way acquisition would begin in the next fiscal year, and he believed the construction would begin in 2025.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was Winchester Road from Dominion Circle to Naugher Road. He stated this was the last gap of the road that needed to be widened on Winchester, that the plans were 90 percent complete, that utility relocation would begin the following year, with widening to be in FY 2025.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was Research Park Boulevard widening, from US 72 to south of Old Madison Pike, and he stated this was complete.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was US 72 West between Providence Main and County Line Road, that the plans for Phase I were 90 percent complete, and it was scheduled to begin in FY 2024.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was SR-53 widening from Taurus Drive to Harvest Road, that the plans were 85 percent complete, and construction would commence the following year.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Madison Boulevard from Westchester Road to Flagstone Drive. He stated this was a resurfacing project, with intersection improvements, at Wall-Triana and Madison Boulevard. He stated the plans were 30 percent complete, with construction to begin the

following year.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Four Bridge Replacements on Old Highway 431, over the Flint River, in the Hampton Cove area, and it was complete.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was I-565 Additional Lanes from County Lane Road to Wall-Triana Highway, and the plans were 95 percent complete. He stated this was a State project, and the anticipated start date was the following year.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Jeff Road Additional Lanes from south of Capshaw Road to north of Douglass Road, that the plans were 75 percent complete, and the right-of-way acquisition was to begin the next fiscal year, with construction to begin in FY 2025.

Mr. Vandiver stated the next project was Intersection Improvements on Wall-Triana Highway at Graphics Drive, that construction was 50 percent complete, and it should be completed in the fall.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was widening Blake Bottom Road from Jeff Road to State Route 255, that the plans were complete, and the right-of-way acquisition was almost complete, with an anticipated start date of FY 2024.

Mr. Vandiver stated that next was Intersection Improvements on State Route 53 at Harvest, McKee, and Old Railroad Bed roads, that the plans were complete, and the project should be bid soon, and they expected construction to begin by the end of the current year.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if they were adding lanes.

Mr. Vandiver stated they were adding turn lanes at these intersections, left-turn lanes.



Mr. Vandiver stated that next was the Arsenal East Connector, that Preliminary Engineering was under way, and the anticipated start date was FY 2025. He stated that currently, they were working to see what the schedule would be on that project.

Mr. Vandiver stated the total amount of work in design and construction was \$432,499,600.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Vandiver if he would go back to the last slide, noting that the amount seemed low.

Mr. Vandiver stated he would note that the route had not been identified yet, that there were a couple of routes that could be determined. He stated, concerning the anticipated start date, that it said FY 2025, but it might be pushed back a little bit because, like Mr. Brown had said, the estimated cost was a little bit low.

Mr. Mason stated he thought there was also some consideration for bike lanes, down Bob Wallace, getting across, whether it was going to go under or over.

Mr. Vandiver stated that, as he had said, they had not decided on which route they were going to take, and that would determine what Bike/Ped Improvements would be needed.

Mr. Brown asked if the plan was still for this to be an expressway.

Mr. Vandiver stated that was one of the design ideas, to either make an expressway, at-grade or elevated, or just improve Bob Wallace and Patton. He stated those were the three choices.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated that at this time, there would be the opportunity for Public Comment.

There was no response.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated the next item was CAC Member Comments.

Mr. Ofenloch stated he had a comment about the Drake Farm development. He stated he had no interest in this other than the school zoning, noting that if they put 900 more families in that one chunk of land, and the system could not build a high school out in Hampton Cove, there would be a real zoo going on at Grissom and Huntsville. He stated that the people who lived out there now, over by Goldsmith-Schiffman School, thought the only way they could get out of there was through Old Big Cove Road, and if this development did what they were saying now, which was five-story apartment buildings on either side of Big Cove, with probably a median down the middle, that was not going to be a solution for getting those people out. He stated that some place further south on Big Cove, they were going to have to cut around this thing, he thought. He stated that was something to look at.

Vice Chairman Griffin asked if there were any further comments.

Mr. Slyman asked if there was any update on the widening of Old Monrovia and Capshaw.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Mr. Slyman would be happy to know they were talking about that at a Transportation Improvement Program work session, and the City of Huntsville, the City of Madison, and Madison County had all agreed that Capshaw Road needed to be a priority project, so he thought they were making progress. He stated it was very interesting to see all three of them in agreement on that.

Vice Chairman Griffin stated if there were no further CAC member comments, the meeting was adjourned.

**(Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m. on August 14, 2023.)**

