

**HUNTSVILLE-AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
POLICY BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting - August 16, 2023 - 4:00 p.m.**

**Huntsville, Alabama**

**Members Present:**

Mr. Mac McCutcheon, Chairman	Chairman, Madison County Commission
Mr. Shane Davis (Proxy for Mayor Tommy Battle)	City of Huntsville, Director of Urban and Economic Development
Mayor Paul Finley	City of Madison
Mayor Tony Craig	Town of Owens Cross Roads
Mr. Curtis Vincent	ALDOT
Mr. John Meredith	President, Huntsville City Council

**Members Absent:**

Mayor Mary Caudle	Town of Triana
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**MPO Staff Present:**

Mr. James Vandiver  
Mr. James Moore

**Also Present:**

Mr. Rod Ellis	ALDOT
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The meeting was called to order by Chairman McCutcheon.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the MPO Policy Board held on May 17, 2023, were approved as submitted.

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

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 13-23 would adopt the

MPO Self-Certification, which was a series of questions asked of the MPO by FHWA and ALDOT, pertaining to the metropolitan planning process and the federal regulations surrounding those. He stated this certification was performed every four years, in concurrence with their Transportation Improvement Program process, and questions and answers of the Self-Certification were included in their 2024-2027 TIP, in Appendix G.

Mr. Vandiver stated this resolution would also authorize the MPO Chairman to sign the Self-Certification, and that once that was completed, they would send it to the ALDOT Director for his signature.

Mayor Craig read and introduced a resolution adopting the MPO Self-Certification and authorizing the Chairman to sign the document, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 13-23)

Mayor Craig moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which which motion was seconded by Mr. Meredith and was unanimously adopted by the MPO Policy Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was the Final FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 14-23 would adopt the Final FY 2024-2027 TIP. He stated the TIP, or Transportation Improvement Program, was a short-term plan for state, federal, and MPO-funded Transportation Projects. He stated this was updated every four years, as required by federal law, and it was amended as necessary.

Mr. Vandiver stated the MPO Policy Board had passed a

Draft 2024-2027 TIP back in May, and since that time, they had had several changes, including new projects in the Safety, Transit, and National Highway categories, which were projects that were added by ALDOT, to ensure that the TIP was in concurrence with their Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Vandiver stated they had also added a Financial Plan, which broke down, by funding category, how much funding was being spent in the MPO area for the next four years. He stated they also had a System Performance Report, which was a requirement by FHWA. He stated this broke down the cost of projects that satisfied the three Highway Performance Measures, which were Safety, Bridge and Pavement Conditions, and Travel Time Reliability.

Mr. Meredith read and introduced a resolution adopting the Final FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 14-23)

Mr. Meredith moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was seconded by Mayor Finley.

Chairman McCutcheon asked if there was any discussion.

Chairman McCutcheon stated he was aware the public was involved in this. He asked if it was correct that the new projects were listed based on their timeline.

Mr. Vandiver stated that the category was based on the funding, the primary funding source of each project. He stated that for the new projects, none of them were Attributable Funds, that they were not funded using MPO funds, that these were Safety, Transit, and National Highway categories, and those were all projects that were determined by ALDOT. He stated these were Railway Safety projects, Resurfacing projects, and also Transit projects. He

stated these were the allocations they got every year, being an urban area, for their Transit Authorities.

Chairman McCutcheon called for the vote on Resolution No. 14-23, and it was unanimously adopted by the MPO Policy Board members present.

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

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 15-23 would adopt the Final FY 2024 UPWP. He stated that the UPWP, or Unified Planning Work Program, was the Annual Budget for MPO Planning Funds. He stated this was used for the day-to-day operations of the MPO, including Staff Salaries, Equipment Purchases, Professional Development, as well as maintaining the documents, such as the TIP that was just adopted and the upcoming Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Vandiver stated that the Total Budgeted Funding for the next fiscal year was \$969,176. He stated this was not changed from the draft that had been brought before the Policy Board in May. He stated there was one change where they had shifted funds between two different tasks, that it was \$40,500, and it was for the purchase of StreetLight AADT, or Average Annual Daily Traffic, otherwise known as Traffic Count Data, for all roads in the MPO area. He stated that StreetLight was a company that provided traffic data, that they used connected vehicles and cell phones to get this traffic data. He stated what they were going to ask them to do was to get traffic counts for all roads in the MPO area, noting that would be all of Madison County and part of Limestone County. He stated they would be using this for two reasons, with

one being that they had a Long-Range Transportation Plan coming up, and they were going to use it as part of their validation for their Travel Demand Model, which was what they used to determine which projects, and the ranking of the projects, in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. He continued that they would also be using it to re-evaluate their Functional Classifications in the MPO study area. He stated this would allow them to look at roads that were currently not function classified and not getting traffic counts. He stated they would look at those to see if they needed to be upgraded to a Functional Classification.

Mr. Vandiver stated that as a side effect of getting this StreetLight data, they would be offering it to their member jurisdictions as well. He stated they had talked to the Engineering Departments of Huntsville, Madison, and Madison County, and they seemed pretty interested in this data as well, so they were offering this as a free service from the MPO, just as kind of a perk for their getting this data as well.

Mr. Meredith asked how often they got the MPO-wide traffic counts.

Mr. Vandiver stated this would be the first time they had ever done this. He stated they were getting 2021 and 2022 data, noting that they really needed 2021 data for their Long-Range Transportation Plan, and the 2022 data would be just a more up-to-date version, just to see what the traffic trends were going to be doing, as they had to come up with projected traffic counts as part of their Travel Demand Model.

Mr. Vandiver stated this would be the first time they had ever done this, but they had used StreetLight data in the past. He stated that in their Regional Commuter Study a few years ago, they had used it to determine origin and destination between different zones in the MPO area, but it was not specific to

certain street segments.

Mr. Davis stated he would add to that that prior to doing what was proposed by the MPO staff, that for traffic, they would not only rely on jurisdictions to provide that, the City of Huntsville, the State, Madison, and Madison County, that if there was a particular road that they did not have that count, they might go out and grab that count just for that road. He stated this would be much more unified.

Mr. Meredith read and introduced a resolution adopting the Final FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 15-23)

Mr. Meredith moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was seconded by Mayor Craig.

Chairman McCutcheon asked if there was any further discussion.

Mayor Finley asked how early in the year they were looking to do this, how quickly would it get back out to the different municipalities and the county.

Mr. Vandiver stated they were hoping to get it in October, that they were hoping to get the contract in October, once they got the funding for FY 2024. He stated it would take four to six weeks for them to get the data ready to go, and they would share it with the jurisdictions as soon as they got it.

Chairman McCutcheon stated he thought this was going to be some good information that they would be able to use in the cities as well.

Chairman McCutcheon called for the vote on Resolution No. 15-23, and it was unanimously adopted by the MPO Policy Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was the MPO ADA Transition Plan.

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated that Resolution No. 16-23 would adopt the Final MPO ADA Transition Plan. He stated that the ADA, or Americans with Disabilities Act, Transition Plan, was a plan the MPO was required to have that looked at the ADA accessibility of the MPO meeting facilities only, that it did not include the broader community, or the broader MPO area. He stated they had had a Draft ADA Transition Plan in place since September of 2021, that the MPO Board had adopted it at that point. He stated that ALDOT was now requiring all MPOs to have a Final ADA Transition Plan in place before September 30th of the current year, so they were bringing this before the MPO Policy Board as the final version. He stated they had not had any public comments since they had posted it online two years prior. He continued that they had modified some language, noting that the new Huntsville City Hall that was being constructed across the street would have different ADA facilities and features as well. He stated that at this time, they were just looking at their current facilities.

Mayor Finley read and introduced a resolution adopting the Final ADA Transition Plan, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 16-23)

Mayor Finley moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was seconded by Mr. Meredith and was unanimously adopted by the MPO Policy Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was the Nonaction Items, the FY 2020-2023 TIP Administrative Modifications.

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver stated these Administrative Modifications were for information only, that no action was needed.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification A was new level of effort transit projects, and they were all pretty closely related, that this was Section 5310 FTA funds, Transit, Arc of Madison County Capital Rolling Stock. He stated that Section 5310 was Paratransit funds from FTA. He stated this was an allocation that was given to the urban area, based on population. He stated that The Arc of Madison County used these funds to purchase handicapped-accessible vans. He stated they had been growing their fleet rather significantly in the past couple of years, and they would use this funding to continue to do so.

Mr. Vandiver stated the reason there were five projects was because that was just the way FTA funding worked, that there were different pots of funds that they grabbed, based on the year of allocation.

Mr. Vandiver stated the first project was \$317,715; the second project was \$430,001; the third and fourth projects were \$41,512 each; and the last project was \$25,780.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification B was a cost increase to a safety project, that it 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 by the MPO, using funds that were approved in Resolution No. 09-23, back in May, for the James Record Road widening project, which would be done concurrently with this Railroad Crossing Improvement Project. He stated the



reason why they were getting involved with the rail safety project was that Norfolk Southern required the City to install concrete panels at this railroad crossing as part of this project, and those concrete panels were not eligible with the Rail Safety funds that were previously granted to this project, and this was what the funds would go toward.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification C was a cost decrease to a Transit project, and it was also Section 5310 FTA Paratransit funds, the City of Huntsville Urban Apportionment FY 2021. He stated the old estimate was \$152,508, and the new estimate was \$114,146.

Mr. Vandiver stated they typically saw these decreases right around the end of a TIP or a STIP because ALDOT would be trying to move some funds away from some previous years, just to make sure these funds would not expire.

Mr. Vandiver stated that 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 of this project, and he believed work would begin on this in the upcoming winter.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification E was a new level of effort Safety Project in Northwest Madison County, that it was intersection improvements on SR-53 at Burwell Road, and it was the PE Phase only. He stated the total cost was \$97,500. He stated the Construction Phase of this project was in the 2024-2027 TIP.

Mr. Vandiver stated this was what was called a "Reduced Conflict

Intersection," where they restricted left turns, that it was called an "RCUT," where there would be restricted left turns, and one would have to turn right and then take a U-turn to either go straight or left.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification F was a cost increase to a project, that it was the Utility Phase of the Northern Bypass, from east of Pulaski Pike to east of Memorial Parkway, and it was an increase of \$1,511,100. He stated this was to cover a shortfall in a gas line relocation, between the estimate and the bid. He stated this would use MPO funds that were previously authorized for the Northern Bypass, in Resolution No. 08-23, for the Construction Phase, and no new funds that were not previously authorized for the Northern Bypass would be used for this Utility Phase.

Mr. Vandiver stated that Administrative Modification G was a cost decrease to a project, that it was Railroad Crossing Improvements at Pratt Avenue in the city of Huntsville. He stated the old estimate was \$700,000, and the new estimate was \$587,123.45. He stated this was another Rail Safety project. He stated this would not have MPO funds applied to it, and it was also another final estimate prior to authorization.

Mr. Meredith asked, concerning item 6.b, if on this railroad crossing, they would add safety arms.

Mr. Vandiver replied in the affirmative, stating that would be part of the project, that that was the original intent to that project, to have a new crossing there.

Mr. Meredith stated he was aware they were going to do James Record Road, and he asked if that would be expanded to four lanes as well, or if the four-lane would end at Wall-Triana Highway.

Mr. Vandiver asked if Mr. Davis would like to answer that question.

Mr. Davis stated that, actually, the Martin Road, or James Record Road, widening would go all the way into the Airport, that it would cross the Wall-Triana Highway.

Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was Agency Reports, and he recognized Mr. Rod Ellis of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

(Mr. Ellis made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Ellis stated the first project was the Northern Bypass, from Pulaski Pike to US Highway 231/431, and he stated the plans for this project were complete, that right-of-way acquisition should be completed very soon, and the Utility relocation design was complete. He stated the estimated cost was approximately \$47 million, and it was currently scheduled to bid sometime before the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Ellis stated the next project was Martin Road between Zierdt Road and Laracy Drive, and this was two separate projects, and the first phase was substantially complete, that the contractor and ALDOT were working through what they called "punch list items," just to make sure they took care of everything that needed to be done. He stated the second phase, which was discussed earlier, was currently scheduled for a September letting. He stated the combined estimate, for both projects, was approximately \$42 million.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was the North Parkway at Mastin Lake Road project, to construct an overpass and improvements to the service roads, that it was currently under construction, and probably 5 percent complete. He stated the contractor was working on constructing improvements to the outside, for the service roads, and once those were finished, they would move traffic out there, and they would start building the overpass, very similar to the way they had phased other overpass projects. He stated the project budget was

approximately \$45 million.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was Access Management on US 231 between Weatherly Road and Hobbs Road, and the plans were approximately 85 percent complete, and they anticipated beginning right-of-way acquisition in the upcoming fall. He stated the estimated cost for the project was approximately \$15 million, and construction was scheduled for Fiscal Year 2024.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was Winchester Road from Dominion Circle to Naugher Road, that the plans were approximately 90 percent complete, and the right-of-way acquisition was ongoing, and Utility relocation design should begin soon. He stated the anticipated budget was approximately \$28 million, and construction was currently scheduled for Fiscal Year 2025.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was State Route 255 (Research Park Boulevard) widening from US 72 to south of Old Madison Pike. He stated this project was substantially complete, that the contractor was working through punch list items. He stated the project cost was approaching \$23.5 million.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was US 72 West between Providence Main and County Line Road. He stated they had completed Public Involvement on this project, which would be broken into multiple phases. He stated the first phase would construct the bridges at Indian Creek, out to around the cemetery. He stated that at this time, they were looking at two other phases, that one would go to just west of Nance, and the third phase would go over to County Line Road. He stated the plans for the first phase were 90 percent complete. He stated the critical path for them at this time was completing the environmental assessment. He stated the total project budget was approximately \$85 million.

Mr. Ellis stated the next project was State Route 53 widening from Taurus Drive to Harvest Road. He stated these plans were approximately

85 percent complete, and the estimated cost was approximately \$10 million, and the Construction Phase was scheduled for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was Madison Boulevard from Westchester Road to Flagstone Drive, that it was resurfacing some access management and intersection improvements in the city of Madison. He stated the plans were approximately 30 percent complete, that the estimated cost was approximately \$5.5 million, and it was currently scheduled for Fiscal Year 2024.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was Four Bridge Replacements on Old Highway 431, and the project was substantially complete, that the contractor was working through a punch list, he believed, and getting a healthy stand of grass as part of closing out the project. He stated the project cost was approximately \$13.5 million.

Mr. Ellis stated the next project was I-565, Additional Lanes from County Line Road to Wall-Triana Highway, that the plans were approximately 95 percent complete, and the estimated budget was \$46.8 million, and it was currently scheduled for a November letting, so if everything went well, they would let it in the upcoming fall.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was Jeff Road widening, from south of Capshaw Road to north of Douglass Road, and the plans were approximately 75 percent complete, that the Public Involvement was done in April 2021, and the right-of-way acquisition should begin sometime early in the next fiscal year, and the construction phase was currently scheduled for FY 2025. He stated the construction budget was approximately \$13.5 million.

Mr. Ellis stated the next project was Intersection Improvements on Wall-Triana Highway at Graphics Drive. He stated this was under construction, and it was approximately 50 percent complete, and it was

anticipated to be completed in late fall, or around the first of the year, and the estimated cost was approximately \$1.9 million.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was the widening of Blake Bottom Road from Jeff Road to State Route 255. He stated the plans for this project were complete, that the right-of-way acquisition should be completed soon, and utility work and clearing and grubbing should begin shortly after that. He stated the estimated cost was approximately \$21 million, and the Construction Phase was scheduled for FY 2024.

Chairman McCutcheon stated he had a question concerning that project. He asked if they were having any issues with the environmental.

Mr. Ellis stated he was not aware of any. He stated the environmental documents should have already been completed, with the County, in the Right-of-Way Acquisition Phase.

Chairman McCutcheon stated a question had come up about that recently.

Mr. Ellis stated he could ask their local Transportation engineer and get back to Chairman McCutcheon, but he was not aware of anything.

Chairman McCutcheon stated there were some questions about the environmental section, especially in that low area coming through there.

Mr. Ellis stated the next project was Intersection Improvements on State Route 53 at Harvest, McKee, and Old Railroad Bed roads. He stated the plans for this project were complete, and it was scheduled to bid in the current month. He stated the budget on this project was approximately \$5 million.

Mr. Ellis stated that next was the Arsenal East Connector. He stated this project was in the Preliminary Design Phase, looking at concepts and determining the appropriate route. He stated the budget for this project was

approximately \$30 million, and it was currently scheduled for FY 2025.

Mr. Ellis stated that the total amount of work in design or under contract was in excess of \$430 million.

Chairman McCutcheon asked if there were any questions for Mr. Ellis.

Mr. Meredith asked, concerning the widening of 72, he was presuming from the Providence Main area to Nance, where they were with the engineering studies, and particularly related to the bridge project.

Mr. Ellis stated that the first phase would widen the highway and construct the bridges at Indian Creek. just west of Providence. He stated that was the first phase, and it would go out to somewhere in the vicinity of the cemetery there on the north side of the highway. He stated they had plans almost completed for that project. He continued that the environmental document had to cover the whole corridor, so that was kind of their critical path in being allowed to move forward with the first phase, completing the environmental studies for all three phases.

Mr. Meredith asked if there was any estimate on when that would happen.

Mr. Ellis stated he would think that completing the environmental might be another six to eight months. He stated they would have to buy right-of-way at that point, and there would be some Utility work after that.

Chairman McCutcheon stated he had a question concerning the punch list, and he asked when the contractor was working on the punch list, if there was a timeline involved, or what the procedure was on that.

Mr. Ellis stated they typically did not try to charge a contractor time, that when they said the project was substantially complete, they froze the time charges. He stated that a punch list could be just minor things, like cleaning

up a pile of asphalt they might have left on the side of the road, or maybe there would be a little section of the road, or shoulder, that was not graded properly, or something like that, that, typically, it was not anything major, but sometimes it could drag out, and he thought their staff, the construction staff, tried to stay on them, and there were times when they would have to say, "If you can't get this completed, we will have to start charging time again." He stated there was not a defined time period for that.

Chairman McCutcheon stated that, then, a lot of it would just depend on what the item on the punch list was, and looking at it from a realistic standpoint, how long it would take to do it.

Mr. Ellis stated that was correct.

Chairman McCutcheon stated they had had some calls and complaints on Research Drive, with the water standing, that it was not draining properly. He stated he was aware that was supposed to be on the punch list, but he did not know, from the standpoint of informing the public, how long it was going to take to get that done.

Mr. Ellis stated he would have to find out about that and let Chairman McCutcheon know.

Mr. Vincent stated they could actually see some new markings on the pavement, some work they had been doing the last couple of days, that they were trying to resolve that issue, as to what could actually be done and who was responsible.

Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was Opportunity for Public Comment, and he asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak concerning any of the issues that had been discussed.

There was no response.



Chairman McCutcheon stated the next item was MPO Policy Board Member Comments, and he asked if any of the members had any comments.

There was no response.

Chairman McCutcheon adjourned the meeting.

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Chair, Metropolitan  
Planning Organization

ATTEST:

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Secretary, Metropolitan  
Planning Organization

**(Meeting adjourned on August 16, 2023, at 4:35 p.m.)**