

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

MINUTES

Regular Meeting - March 20, 2024 - 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
Mr. Michael Johnson (Proxy for Mayor Paul Finley)	City of Madison, City Engineer
Mr. Curtis Vincent	ALDOT
Mr. John Meredith	Huntsville City Council

Members Absent:

Mayor Mary Caudle	Town of Triana
Mayor Tony Craig	Town of Owens Cross Roads

MPO Staff Present:

Mr. Dennis Madsen
Mr. James Vandiver
Mr. James Moore
Mr. Kevin Bernard

Also Present:

Mr. Lynn Wood	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 November 15, 2023, were approved as submitted.

Chairman McCutcheon said that next on the agenda were action items, and he recognized Mr. Vandiver.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Vandiver said the first item was Resolution No. 18-23, which adopted the revised ALDOT Functional Classification Map for the Huntsville MPO Study Area.

Mr. Vandiver said functional classification was a categorization of road types, arterial, collector, that those were functional classifications for roads. He said the reason why it was important for them to update this map occasionally was because state and federal funding could only be used on functionally classified roads. He said that because of the rapid population growth, they had a lot of roads that had been previously local roads, or not functionally classified, that due to traffic counts, road construction, changes in the street width, and things of that nature, as well as land use, needed to be updated to be functionally classified roads in order to be eligible for that federal funding.

Mr. Vandiver said that during the TIP process in the prior year, they had asked the jurisdictions to submit changes for the Functional Classification Map. He said they had done a comprehensive review, which was the first one they had done in quite a while, of the changes that had been submitted to them, and then they sent them to FHWA and ALDOT, and 30 of those changes were approved by them.

Mr. Vandiver said he would go through a couple of changes in some of these major areas. He said the first one was in the Northwest Madison County/Monrovia area, and he indicated on the display US 72 West, noting it was indicated in red, which meant it was a major arterial. He also indicated Alabama State Route 53, or Jordan Lane, noting it was a major arterial, and Alabama State Route 255, or Research Park Boulevard, noting it was also a

major arterial, although the service roads were considered minor arterials, which they could see in green. He said the green was minor arterials, the purple was major collectors, and the yellow was minor collectors.

Mr. Vandiver said the last time they had made changes to this map was in 2020, and in comparing the 2020 map to the 2024 map, they had added quite a few major collectors in this area, including Douglass Road, Mt. Zion Road, Nance Road, Pettus Road, Pine Grove Road, and Sam Thomas Road, noting that a lot of that had to do with the population growth in this area.

Mr. Vandiver said another area where they were seeing major changes in this plan was in the Southwest Madison County and Southeast Limestone County area of the MPO. He said the first major change he would point out was Greenbrier Parkway, which in 2020 had not been completed, that it was just completed to the Mazda Toyota plant, and it was classified as a minor collector. He continued that there were changes in the road width, noting it was at this time a divided, four-lane highway, and it went between two major interstates, Interstate 565 and Interstate 65, and it was a major freight corridor, and they had requested this be changed to an arterial, and it was changed to a minor arterial, for the entire length.

Mr. Vandiver said the City of Madison had requested several changes in its portion of Limestone County, including Hardiman Road, Segers Road, Powell Road, and Bowers Road, which were previously local roads that were now classified as minor collectors. He said that Zierdt Road, because of the widening project that had been completed between Madison Boulevard and Martin Road, was upgraded from a major collector to a minor arterial.

Mr. Vandiver said he would show one more area where they had made some changes, and he said what he was indicating was Research Park. He said

some local roads had been upgraded to minor collector roads, including Old Monrovia Road, Sanderson Street, and Holmes Avenue, between Wynn Drive and Sparkman Drive. He said a lot of this had to do with the development at MidCity, with the increase in residential and commercial development in that area.

Mr. Vandiver said another addition that was suggested going from a local road to a major collector was Governors West, between Old Madison Pike and Madison Boulevard.

Mr. Vandiver said a couple of other changes outside of the map included Haysland Road, which was a new road in South Huntsville, and they had classified that, for the first time, as a major collector; and also in Meridianville, due to the population growth in that area, they classified Patterson Lane as a major collector.

Mr. Vandiver said they would have some copies of the maps that the Chairman would sign, and they would send those to ALDOT for the Highway Director to sign, and FHWA's Director would sign those as well, if this was approved at this time.

Mr. Meredith moved for approval of a resolution adopting the revised Functional Classification Map as prepared and presented.

(RESOLUTION NO. 18-23)

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Davis.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Vandiver if it was correct that once this was signed and it became official, they would update the MPO website to show the major classifications, the street map for the whole MPO area.

Mr. Vandiver said that was correct.

Mr. Meredith said he thought this was a very good addition.

Chairman McCutcheon said it definitely showed the growth in the area, with traffic counts increasing the way they were. He said when they looked at 30 changes, that was pretty significant, within the MPO area.

Chairman McCutcheon called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously adopted by the MPO Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon said they would consider the next item on the agenda.

Mr. Kevin Bernard introduced himself.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 01-24 adopted and supported the addition of Project #100076466 to the Other State and Federal Aid Projects section of the 2024-2027 TIP. He said this was a new project that was being added to the TIP, that it was a guardrail being installed on Zierdt Road. He said this was south of Martin Road, Martin Road to the north, Beadle Lane to the south, as he was indicating, and he indicated Barren Fork Creek. He said they would be replacing the guardrails on both sides, at a total cost of \$289,096.50. He said \$250,000 was the current funding, and the remainder was local match.

Mr. Meredith moved for approval of a resolution amending the Other Federal and State Aid Projects section of the FY 2024-2027 TIP, to add Project #100076466 "GUARDRAIL INSTALLATION ON ZIERDT ROAD AT BARREN FORK CREEK BETWEEN BEADLE LANE AND NATURE VALLEY DRIVE."

(RESOLUTION NO. 01-24)

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Meredith said this was highly needed, that it was the perfect location for a guardrail, that there had been some accidents of major significance that

had occurred in that area.

Chairman McCutcheon called for the vote on the above resolution, and it was unanimously adopted by the MPO Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon said they would consider the next item on the agenda.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 02-24 adopted and supported updated Transit Safety Performance Measures for Huntsville Transit. He said these Transit Safety Measures for Huntsville Transit were done on an annual basis, that it was required by the Federal Transit Administration. He said the local Transit Department developed measures, that they were required to develop measures and targets and report this to the MPO, the safety measures.

Mr. Davis moved for approval of a resolution adopting and supporting the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Performance Measurements and Targets, as approved by Huntsville Transit.

(RESOLUTION NO. 02-24)

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Meredith and was unanimously adopted by the MPO Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon said the Board would consider the next item on the agenda.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 03-24 adopted and supported updated Transit Asset Management (TAM) Performance Measurements for Huntsville Transit. He said this was another requirement by the FTA for Transit Asset Management, to create these Performance Measurements, and to monitor it and report it to the MPO.

Mr. Meredith moved for approval of a resolution concurring with the recommendation of the Technical Coordinating Committee and adopting and supporting the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Performance Measurements and Targets, as approved by Huntsville Transit.

(RESOLUTION NO. 03-24)

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Davis and was unanimously adopted by the MPO Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon said the Board would consider the next item on the agenda.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 04-24 adopted and supported changes to the National Highway System/Interstate Maintenance section of the TIP, on Project #100068982. He said this amendment was the widening and resurfacing of I-565, just west of County Line Road to east of Wall-Triana Highway. He said this was coming back as a resolution because the total cost had decreased more than \$5 million. He said the old estimate was \$46,548,662, and the new estimate was \$41,361,309. He said the estimate had been revised down in terms of overall cost, but the scope of work had not changed.

Mr. Vincent moved for approval of a resolution amending the National Highway System/Interstate Maintenance section of the FY 2024-2027 TIP, with the total cost change on Project #100068982 "ADDITIONAL LANES AND RESURFACING ON I-565 FROM WEST OF COUNTY LINE ROAD TO EAST OF WALL TRIANA HIGHWAY."

(RESOLUTION NO. 04-24)

Said motion was seconded by Mr. Meredith.

Mr. Davis asked for an update on the start of construction on this project, for the benefit of the public.

Mr. Vincent said it should be let in May, and they would have three months from that time to get documents signed and everything in order, and he would think that sometime in July or August, they would see equipment rolling in and on the ground, and in the latter part of the summer, they should see construction getting kicked off.

Mr. Meredith asked how long they thought this process would take.

Mr. Vincent said it would be approximately 2 1/2 years.

Chairman McCutcheon called for the vote on the above motion, and it was unanimously adopted by the MPO Board members present.

Chairman McCutcheon said the next items on the agenda were non-action items, and he recognized Mr. Bernard.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification A dealt specifically with 17 projects that had been completed, that the monies had been expended, and they were being removed from the books. He said they had items 1 through 9 and 10 through 17 displayed.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification B was a clarification of local match funds on two specific transit projects, with the first one being #100077415, and this grant was at a total cost of \$8,122,850, with 85 percent federal funding and 15 percent local match. He said item No. 2 was #100077419, and it was a 50-50 split, in terms of the total cost of \$3,211,887.

Chairman McCutcheon said the next item on the agenda was Agency Reports, and the first one was from the Alabama Department of Transportation, and he recognized Mr. Lynn Wood.

(Mr. Wood made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Wood said the first project was the Northern Bypass, and he said this project had let in the latter part of the prior year, and most of the clearing work had been completed, that the utility work was ongoing, and the contractor was under way with some of the drainage structure placement, with a project cost of approximately \$43 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Martin Road from Zierdt Road to Laracy Drive, that this project was being built in phases, and the first phase was complete, from Old Jim Williams Road to Zierdt Road, and for Phase 2, the bids had been received in the prior year, and the contractor was moving into possibly starting the bridge construction soon, that some of the construction signs were being installed, and the cost of both projects was approximately \$42 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project, the North Parkway at Mastin Lake overpass project, was currently under construction, and it was approximately 15 percent complete, that the contractor was working on building the frontage roads, and once that was completed, they would start on the overpass, and the project cost was approximately \$44.2 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Access Management on US 231 in South Huntsville, and the plans were approximately 85 percent complete, and the right-of-way acquisition should start soon, that the estimated cost was approximately \$15 million, with an anticipated start date of FY 2025.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Winchester Road, a City project, and the plans were 90 percent complete, that right-of-way acquisition was ongoing, and the utility relocation design work should begin soon, and the estimated cost was approximately \$28 million, with an anticipated start date of FY 2025.

Mr. Wood said the next project was a State Route 255 widening project, and it was substantially complete, at a project cost in excess of \$23 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was US 72 West, that it was a corridor project from Providence Main to County Line Road. He said the Draft EA, the environmental document, would hopefully be submitted soon, noting that it would cover the entire corridor, and the project would be broken into phases as well, with the first phase being to build a bridge over Indian Creek. He said those plans were 90 percent complete, and as soon as this got under way, the additional phases would be identified.

Chairman McCutcheon asked if Mr. Wood could give them a little more information concerning the environmental document, as to the timeline, noting that he kept hearing different times on this, one year, two years, three years, on the environmental side of this.

Mr. Wood said they had done quite a bit of the environmental work, as far as public outreach and public meetings. He said at this time, FHWA had requested that there be an environmental assessment, so they had hired a consultant to do those resource studies and things of that nature. He said what he had been told was that, hopefully, within the next month or two, those would be completed, and a draft would be sent to them for review, and then sent to FHWA for review.

Mr. Vincent said part of that was trying to get an answer out of the Federal Highway Administration as to what level of documentation they would need. He said they were handling it in-house, with their own environmental group in Montgomery, and it got to a point where they felt it might be expedited if they turned it over to a consultant that could focus solely on that, and they anticipated getting that very soon.

Chairman McCutcheon said he thought that was where some of the questions were coming from, the timeline on that, and he said he appreciated that, that it was helpful information.

Mr. Wood said he would wrap that up with saying that the entire corridor was estimated at \$85 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was State Route 53 widening, north of Huntsville, from Taurus Drive to Harvest Road. He said the plans were 90 percent complete, that the estimated cost was \$10 million, and they were hoping to start acquiring right-of-way soon and get this project under way in the current year.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Madison Boulevard, a City project with mainly resurfacing but some other improvements as well, that it was estimated at \$5.6 million, and the plans were pretty much complete, and they hoped the contractor would get started on this in the current year.

Mr. Wood said the next one was Four Bridge Replacements on Old Highway 431, that the project was substantially complete, and the project cost was approximately \$13.5 million.

Mr. Wood said next was I-565 Additional Lanes from County Line Road to Wall-Triana Highway. He said they had covered this project previously in this meeting in a resolution. He said the plans were pretty much complete, and they were getting ready to let, that the estimated cost was \$41.4 million, and they were hoping to get this started in the current year.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Jeff Road Additional Lanes, that the plans were 85 percent complete, that the environmental document had been submitted for ALDOT and FHWA review, and once that was approved, the right-of-way acquisition could hopefully start in the current year. He said the

project start date was estimated for FY 2026, at an estimated cost of \$13.5 million.

Mr. Wood said next was Intersection Improvements on Wall-Triana Highway at Graphics Drive, that the project had been accepted for maintenance, that it was complete, and the estimated cost was in excess of \$1.8 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was Widening Blake Bottom Road from Jeff Road to State Route 255, that the plans were complete, that the right-of-way acquisition was ongoing, that there were a few tracts left to obtain, and once they were obtained, the utility work could begin. He said the estimated cost was in excess of \$20.8 million, and it would hopefully be started in FY 2025.

Mr. Wood said the next one was Intersection Improvements on State Route 53, that this was an ATRIP project that he believed the County had gotten, and it had been let, but he was unsure of who had gotten the contract. He said hopefully this would begin in the next two months or so, and the estimated cost was \$3.7 million.

Mr. Wood said the next project was the Arsenal East Connector, and this was the preliminary Engineering Phase of the project, and it was under way, and the estimated cost was approximately \$30 million, with an anticipated start date of FY 2028.

Mr. Wood said the total amount of work in design and construction was in excess of \$420 million.

Chairman McCutcheon recognized Mr. Vandiver for the presentation of a Regional Development Review.

Mr. Vandiver said he would like to give a quick report on the Regional

Development Review, noting this was the second year they had done this. He said this was based off a report the City of Huntsville had done for the past 40 years, and they were doing an abridged version of it. He said it primarily focused on residential construction and residential real estate data. He said he would go through some of the numbers, and a full report would be on the MPO website on the following day, at huntsvillempo.org.

Mr. Vandiver said he would highlight some of the numbers, and he said the first one was looking at Residential Building Permits and New Construction Housing, and there were 7,161 permits issued in the MPO area the prior year. He said that while that was down from about 9,000 in 2022, it was much higher than the pre-pandemic levels. He said they were still seeing a lot of demand for housing in this area.

Mr. Vandiver said the area that had the most building permits issued for New Construction/Single Family, or for Single Family and Multi-Family combined, was the 72 West area, which was 72 on the south side, Capshaw on the north side, and on the east and west sides, Jeff Road and Old Railroad Bed Road. He said that was the Clift Farm area, and it also had some areas of the city of Huntsville and the city of Madison.

Mr. Vandiver said for certificates of occupancy, 7,998 were granted in the Huntsville MPO area. He said while this was the second year they had done this, it was probably one of the highest levels they had ever done in this area, or at least in modern times. He said that was an increase of 28 percent over the prior year. He said 72 West was also the top tract there, with about 948 new homes just in that one census tract. He said other areas where they saw increases in housing included Triana; Town Madison; Cummings Research Park, which had seen a lot of multi-family development; as well as

Meridianville.

Mr. Vandiver said on the real estate side, they had seen about 6,910 homes sold, which was, once again, a decrease from 2022, but still much higher than pre-pandemic levels. He said this was also a good indicator that demand was still very strong in this area. He said the top tract for that was in Meridianville. He said the average sales price for a single-family home in the MPO area was \$381,408, which was an increase of about 2 percent from 2022.

Mr. Vandiver said looking at the total number of housing units, which was particularly important for them when they were doing the Long Range Transportation Plan, that was 210,756, which was an increase of more than 24,000 housing units since the 2020 census was taken. He said in less than four years, they had added approximately 24,600 housing units in the MPO area, which was an incredible amount of growth, almost unprecedented.

Mr. Vandiver said he would be happy to answer any questions any of the members might have about this at this time.

Chairman McCutcheon said the next item was the 2050 LRTP Update, and he recognized Mr. Vandiver.

Mr. Vandiver said they had collected a lot of the data he was just talking about in the Regional Development Review for their Long Range Transportation Plan. He said they were coming up on their next update. He said they had a 25-year plan for the LRTP, the Long Range Transportation Plan, so the next one would be for 2050, and it was due March 31, 2025, that they had to do one every five years, that it was FHWA mandated, that they had to get one done by that point.

Mr. Vandiver said that over the next year, they would be looking over their project list, and they would be asking the jurisdictions, over the next

month or two, to begin looking at reviewing the project list they already had for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, to see if there were any changes, based on capital planning projects. He said anything they might think needed state or federal funding needed to be in the Long Range Transportation Plan. He said that could be anything that was going to be built between this time and 2050. He said in the case of the Long Range Transportation Plan, it was a little bit different from the TIP they had just gone through, because the TIP was what they called "fiscally constrained," so only projects that were funded could be in the TIP, and in the Long Range Transportation Plan, they could include what were called "visionary projects," which were currently unfunded projects they would like to get funded.

Mr. Vandiver said one example of a project that had gone from visionary to funded during this cycle was the 565 widening project that had been discussed in a previous resolution in this meeting.

Mr. Vandiver said they would be reaching out to the jurisdictions, probably within the next month, with a project list, and they would just have them review it. He said he was aware Huntsville and Madison both had capital improvements that got updated yearly, and they would like to get something back, so they could have a good project list ready by the upcoming summer because they were going to start working on the Traffic Demand Model.

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

Chairman McCutcheon said the next item on the agenda was Opportunity for Public Comment.

Chairman McCutcheon said the next item on the agenda was MPO Policy Board Member Comments.

Mr. Vandiver said the next meeting of the MPO would be on
June 12, 2024.

Chairman McCutcheon said the meeting was adjourned.

Chair, Metropolitan
Planning Organization

ATTEST:

Secretary, Metropolitan
Planning Organization

(Meeting adjourned on March 20, 2024, at 4:35 p.m.)