CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE HUNTSVILLE-AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MINUTES

Regular Meeting - August 24, 2026 - 5 p.m.

City Hall
Huntsville, Alabama

Committee Members:

Mr. Gary Whitley	Acting Chairman, City of Huntsville
Mr. John Ofenloch	City of Huntsville
Mr. Todd Slyman	City of Huntsville

MPO Staff Members:

Mr. James Vandiver
Mr. Kevin Bernard
Mr. James Moore

Acting Chairman Whitley called the meeting to order at the time and place noted above.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting on May 18, 2026, were approved as submitted.

JURISDICTION REPORTS

There were no jurisdiction reports.

ACTION ITEMS

FY 2024-2027 TIP Amendment

Acting Chairman Whitley recognized Kevin Bernard, MPO staff.

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 2026-13 adopted and supported the addition of projects #100081927, #100081957, #100081958, and #100081922,

to the Other State and Federal Aid Projects section of the 2024-2027 TIP, that Madison County had received $5.5 million in appropriations to install additional lanes on Capshaw Road/Old Monrovia Road, from west of Nance Road to Hunting Trail, and the remaining project phases were being added to the TIP, and no MPO funds would be used on this project.

Motion recommending approval of Resolution No. 2026-13, amending the "Other State and Federal Aid Projects" section of the "FY 2024-2027 TIP to add projects #100081927 (PE), #100081957 (RW), #100081958 (UT), and #100081922.

Motion by Slyman/Second by Ofenloch.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if this was a continuation of the project they had done to widen Capshaw Road several years prior.

Mr. Bernard said this was for all these different disciplines; that they had already received $5.5 million for the widening, that usually it ran in the order of design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and then construction; and they could see from the display that it was not fully funded, and they were just approving, and recognizing, that $5.5 million to go toward this project.

Mr. Slyman asked if they did not expect this project to be completed until 2031.

Mr. Bernard said that was the current estimate. He said with ALDOT, projects moved up and down, based on funding and availability.

Mr. Slyman said he would highly recommend that they get this done quicker than that.

Mr. Ofenloch said he thought they had approved funding to widen Capshaw several years prior, when they were going to widen University and

Capshaw, that they had even written a letter saying to do Capshaw first.

Mr. Slyman said that 10 years prior, they had started with those motions.

Motion Unanimously Approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

FINAL FY 2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 2026-16 adopted the Final FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program, known as the "UPWP," that this was the MPO's annual operating budget, that it was strictly for planning funds, and this year, they had a total of $2,020,694 for the budget.

Mr. Bernard said if they looked at the display on the screen, at the spreadsheet on the left, they would see that it was color coded, and on the right, there was the legend, and also below, that the yellow showed a greater than $25,000 change in the budget, an increase, and the gray would indicate there had been a less than $25,000 change in the budget, and the green was less than $1,000; and other changes would be 3.51, which had been renamed and reallocated to a new task number, that 3.5 was the past number; and “ICPR” was for Inner City Passenger Rail Study; and 5.2 had been removed altogether, that 5.2, as they could see on the left, specifically talked about electric vehicles, and by a mandate from the White House, that had been eliminated.

Mr. Bernard said they could see for the past three years, the allocations, and he said those that were in blue had been changed, or moved down to new tasks, task numbers, in the budget.

Motion recommending approval of Resolution No. 2026-16, adopting the FINAL FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Motion by Ofenloch/Second by Slyman.

Acting Chairman Whitley asked if the funding for the EVs that was removed was reabsorbed into another category.

Mr. Bernard replied in the affirmative, that every year, they did the budget based on the categories that were mandated, or that they saw fit, and the budget was based on that, the total sum of money they had, allocated throughout the different tasks.

Motion Unanimously Approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

FY 2024-2027 TIP AMENDMENT

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 2026-17 adopted and supported the addition of project #100081679 to the Other State and Federal Aid Projects section of the 2024-2027 TIP, that this was a resurfacing and drainage improvement project on Carpenter Road, to be funded through a Rebuild Alabama grant for FY 2026, with matching funds being provided by Owens Cross Roads, and no MPO funds would be used on this project.

Motion recommending approval of Resolution No. 2026-17, amending the "Other State and Federal Aid Projects" section of the FY 2024-2027 TIP to add project #100081679.

Motion by Slyman/Second by Ofenloch.

Acting Chairman Whitley asked if even though Owens Cross Roads had applied for this themselves, they understood that by not participating with them, they still had to approve the acceptance of these funds, and that they could reject these funds.

Mr. Bernard said he had not had a lot of interaction with the

representative at Owens Cross Roads, but his understanding was they did understand that fact, and he was able to get a commitment from the City Engineer to be at the MPO meeting on Wednesday, and, hopefully, they could have more conversations and better participation.

Acting Chairman Whitley said that separate from this particular grant, obviously, state grant funding was granted in this case to the MPO and not to the local entity directly, so they needed to understand that if the funds were not accepted, they could not get the funds.

Mr. Slyman asked why they would not accept the funds.

Acting Chairman Whitley said before Mr. Slyman arrived at the meeting, they had been going over the participation of the jurisdictions, and Owens Cross Roads had elected not to appoint their two representatives to send to this meeting.

Mr. Slyman asked why that made sense.

Acting Chairman Whitley said he did not say it made sense.

Mr. Ofenloch said they just did not feel like having representatives on this group.

Mr. Bernard said just for clarification, that based on federal guidelines, if you were getting federal monies, then it must go through the MPO, that a resolution had to be created, signed by the board, or approved by the board, in order for the process to continue, so, effectively, what was being said was if they did not go through that process, it would hold up their disbursement for that project, their disbursement or their funding.

Mr. Slyman asked if they participated in the MPO meetings.

Mr. Bernard said they had been absent for some time, but they had been working to get them there, that they had been working to get participation from

some of the smaller municipalities, and they were not sure why they had not attended, or why the participation was not there, but they had a plan, and they would be working that plan.

Mr. Slyman said if Mr. Bernard were to speculate, what he would think was the reason for why they were not showing up.

Mr. Bernard said he would choose not to speculate, that he did not speculate on MPO matters.

Motion Unanimously Approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

FY 2024-2027 TIP AMENDMENT

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said Resolution No. 2026-18 adopted and supported the addition of project #100073527 to the Safety Projects section of the 2024-2027 TIP, for railroad crossing improvements at the intersection of Norfolk Southern Railroad and Salty Bottom Road, which was County Road 69, near Gurley; that the improvements included signals with bells, gates, signs, markings, and legends, and preemptive signal coordination; and the total cost of the project was $360,000,which was 100 percent funded by the federal government, with a target start date was FY 2027.

Acting Chairman Whitley asked if this was where an accident had happened.

Mr. Bernard replied in the affirmative.

Motion recommending approval of Resolution No. 2-26-18, amending the "Safety Projects" section of the FY 2024-2027 TIP to add project #100073527 (CN).

Motion by Ofenloch/Second by Slyman.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if this was the one the State had suggested several years prior, and the County Commission had turned it down because there was some county expense. He said he had noticed that now it was 100 percent federal, and it was interesting to him that somebody had to get killed, and suddenly the guy that had turned it down was now approving it.

Mr. Ofenloch said there was an offer, he thought, by ALDOT, that they had said they needed to put a crossing in, but the county had chosen not to fund it, so the project was canceled, and then people got killed, and now it was 100 percent.

Motion Unanimously Approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee members present.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

FY 2024-2027 TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS

(Mr. Bernard made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Mr. Bernard said, for public information, they had Administrative Modifications, that they did not require a resolution, based on their process, that it was for informational purposes, and they did not usually vote on these.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification (a) was an increase in cost to project #100074512, that this was for Winchester Road additional lanes from Dominion Circle to Naugher Road, and this particular discipline was for utility relocation.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification (b) was adding this project, that it was Resurfacing on I-565, from approximately a quarter mile east of Intergraph Way to approximately a quarter mile east of the Triana Boulevard Overpass, approximately 8.12 miles.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification (c) was at the intersection

of Wall Triana Highway and Yarbrough Road, for a roundabout installation, and he was showing the funding sources; that this was a new safety project that would use Highway Safety funds, at 90 percent, with a local match of 10 percent, from Madison County, and no MPO funds would be used on this project.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification (d) was adding a project to the TIP, that it was a road resurfacing project on SR-53, from approximately one-half mile north of SR-255 to Jeff Road.

Mr. Bernard said Administrative Modification (e) was a cost increase for project #100080361, that this was for sign replacements on I-565 in Madison County, Madison County only.

Mr. Slyman asked if they were going to do all the signs.

Mr. Bernard said it would be all the static signs.

AGENCY REPORTS

Alabama Department of Transportation

Mr. Vandiver said he would present the Huntsville MPO Projects Update, on behalf of ALDOT.

(Mr. Vandiver made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Northern Bypass from Pulaski Pike to US Highway 231/431

Mr. Vandiver said the Utility work was close to completion, and the contractor was working on the roadway west of Derwent and southbound Memorial Parkway, that they had the curb and gutter and paving complete, and the project was approximately 75 percent complete, that they were aiming to get it done by the end of the year, and the project cost was approximately $43 million.

Martin Road between Zierdt Road and Laracy Drive

Mr. Vandiver said Phase I had been complete for several years, and on Phase II, the bridge was substantially complete, and the roadway was now open to traffic between Wall-Triana and Old Jim Williams, with the outside lanes closed; that the railroad crossing work would begin in September; that the project was approximately 85 percent complete, so they would probably see this by the end of the year or early 2027; and the total project cost was approximately $42 million.

North Parkway at Mastin Lake Road

Mr. Vandiver said the bridge structure was complete, and the contractor was working on lighting foundations, barrier rails, and asphalt to the mainline, and once traffic was switched over to the mainline, the northbound on-ramp would be constructed; that the project was 85 percent complete, and this was another one they were looking at to be completed by the end of the current year.

Access Management On US 231 Between Weatherly Road and Hobbs Road.

Mr. Vandiver said the plans were 85 percent complete, and the right-of-way acquisition was to begin soon; that the estimated cost had gone up a little bit, that they might recall that at the last meeting, it had gone up to about $30 million; and the anticipated start date was FY 2028 for construction.

Winchester Road from Dominion Circle to Naugher Road.

Mr. Vandiver said the plans were 90 percent complete, and they were about six parcels away from finishing the right-of-way; that the Utility design work was ongoing, and they were planning on Utility relocation in the current fall, that the Utility budget had increased to over $9 million; that the estimated cost for this project was approximately $28 million, and they still expected

construction to start on Winchester in FY 2027.

US 72 West Between Providence Main and County Line Road.

Mr. Vandiver said Phase I was Huntsville Memory Gardens to Providence Main, that the final draft was going to be submitted to FHWA very soon, and construction of Phase I was still projected for FY 2027; that the plans were 90 percent complete; and the estimated cost was $18 million.

US 72 West Between Providence Main and County Line Road.

Mr. Vandiver said Phase II was from Walnut Street to Huntsville Memory Gardens; that the consultant was working on a 65 percent review of design; and construction was currently scheduled for FY 2029, at an estimated cost of $36 million.

US 72 West between Providence Main and County Line Road.

Mr. Vandiver said Phase III was from County Line Road to Walnut Street, that the preliminary engineering was scheduled to start in the next fiscal year, with construction planned for FY 2030, and the estimated cost for this phase was $38.2 million.

SR-53 Widening from Taurus Drive to Harvest Road.

Mr. Vandiver said this project had just begun, that it was about 5 percent complete, and the estimated cost was about $10 million.

I-565 Additional Lanes from County Line Road to Wall-Triana Highway.

Mr. Vandiver said the median/inside widening was substantially complete, that they would be moving the lanes in the next couple of weeks, shifting the lanes over to a new section, and the bridges over Bradford Creek were nearing completion, and they would be starting again on the Intergraph Way/Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge in the fall, that the project was

approximately 45 percent complete, and they were looking at completion hopefully by end of the upcoming year, and the total cost of the project was $41.8 million.

Jeff Road Additional Lanes from South of Capshaw Road to north of Douglass Road.

Mr. Vandiver said the plans were 85 percent complete, that the environmental document had been approved, and they were expecting right-of-way acquisition to begin soon, being done by the County; that the projected start date was currently FY 2028; and they had an ATRIP grant of approximately $13.5 million for this project.

Widening Blake Bottom Road from Jeff Road to SR-255.

Mr. Vandiver said the Utility work was ongoing; that they anticipated the construction project to be bid by the County in the upcoming fall, subject to funding; and the estimated cost was a little over $20 million, with a start date of FY 2027.

Arsenal East Connector.

Mr. Vandiver said this was connecting Bob Wallace and I-565 to near where Redstone Arsenal Gate 10 was; that design was under way, that they had still not seen the proposed alignment, that they were waiting on Redstone Arsenal, for their approval; and the estimated cost was approximately $30 million, with an anticipated start date of FY 2028.

I-565/Memorial Parkway Interchange Modification Study.

Mr. Vandiver said they were awaiting the Study results on this, that they should be getting that very soon, and it would be submitted to ALDOT and FHWA for their review; and the cost of the Study alone was about $1.5 million.

Mr. Ofenloch said he had heard that the estimate to improve that

intersection was $600 million, and he asked if that was a decent number.

Mr. Vandiver said it would depend on what kind of construction they did, that if they did a full rebuild, it would probably be around half a billion dollars, that these were still very early estimates, and they could do some other options that could bring it down to $350 million, that those were some of the options that were being submitted to ALDOT, that this was definitely a project that MPO funds or local funds could not handle, that they needed federal and state help on this project, and that was why they needed their input on what needed to be done to this interchange.

I-565/Madison Boulevard Interchange, Phase I.

Mr. Vandiver said this was otherwise known as Resolute Way, that the plans were approximately 30 percent complete, that the design was being funded by the MPO, with a City of Huntsville match, that the estimated cost of this phase, to extend Madison Boulevard over 565 to connect with Resolute Way, was $10 million; and that Phase II would create a full interchange at Madison Boulevard, at a cost of about $50 million.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if Mr. Vandiver had a slide of that with everything in, all the bridges.

Mr. Vandiver said he did not have any drawings currently, that they were being redrawn; that he would not want to show them something that was going to be outdated very soon, and they were anticipating those.

Mr. Ofenloch asked if it was, like, four or five bridges.

Mr. Vandiver said that at one point, there were quite a few bridges, but they were doing some redesign, so he could not say for certain.

Mr. Vandiver said the total amount of work in Design and Construction was approximately $393 million.

Mr. Vandiver asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Slyman said on Highway 72, from Providence Main to Memory Gardens, if that deceleration lane was included, at Hillcrest.

Mr. Vandiver said they had informed ALDOT of the motion approved by the CAC at their last meeting, and it would be up to them to decide what they wanted to do with it, that it was an ALDOT project.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.

Acting Chairman Whitley said to Mr. Ron Lavender that this was his first time visiting with them, and he asked if there was anything he would like to formally share for the record.

Mr. Lavender said he lived on Mache Lane in Big Cove Estates, right off Old Big Cove, in the Huntsville city limits, and he represented a citizens group that had about 1500 members who were very interested in infrastructure and other amenities, like parks, bike lanes, and walking paths, all those kinds of things, in the larger Big Cove area, which included all the way out to Hampton Cove, and subdivisions beyond that.

Mr. Lavender said they had recently become a little more active and interested in these kinds of things because of projects that people were now seeing starting to happen, like the engineering design on the changes to Old Big Cove Road. He said it was amazing to look back and see how long that project had been developing, but only when people started to see little flags in the ground, and things like that, that they would actually have any interest in it, when they would realize that things might change there.

Mr. Lavender said what they were interested in were the longer term plans, and they saw that there were longer term plans for that area, and understanding how those came about, how solidified they were, and how much

opportunity there was for local public input. He said there were a lot of saber rattlers around that wanted to say a lot of stuff but not do anything.

Mr. Lavender said he was seeking to understand these processes that resulted in federal and state funding for these kinds of projects and the kinds of things the Huntsville-Area MPO was involved in, and understanding the level of input the local citizens could have on those processes and principally informing people about those opportunities and making sure their input was heard.

Mr. Lavender said he appreciated the opportunity to be present at this meeting, that it was a little discouraging to him to see that the little town just down below them did not seem to have appointed representatives, that he thought that was a travesty, that he thought they were really not understanding what was going on in the area, because a lot of the things they saw happening, the developments that were happening in the city of Huntsville, were bumping right against that town, and if they were not there, they were missing an opportunity to be a part of what was happening and to influence what was happening.

Mr. Lavender said one of the things he would like to understand more about was how this Citizens Advisory Committee's work interfaced with the MPO itself, if that could be explained.

Acting Chairman Whitley thanked Mr. Lavender for attending the meeting and wanting to learn, and he suggested that he get with Mr. Bernard and Mr. Vandiver after the meeting, and to read the BIG Picture Master Plan for the city, and, also, to meet with Dennis Madsen, the City's long-range planner, to specifically drill down into the section that applied to Big Cove.

Acting Chairman Whitley said this committee was a citizens group of the

MPO, that the members were appointed by their respective jurisdictions, as Mr. Lavender could see on the front page of the agenda, and the staff told them the action items the MPO would be reviewing and approving, accepting funds and approving funds to allocate for projects that were, as Mr. Lavender could see, not all happening tomorrow, that he had heard Mr. Slyman say they had been working on portions of the 72 plans for at least 10 years, that nothing they did happened overnight; and he expressed that he thought it was good that Mr. Lavender was at this meeting, that he could learn and understand and share with his community what they did.

Mr. Ofenloch said it was abominable that all these representatives appointed by the City Council and the different towns never showed up for these meetings, that whether they knew they had been appointed, he did not know, and he did not know if the Committee's staff could get these people to attend or whether they should go back to the City Council, if it was Huntsville, and tell them they had appointed someone to this, and they expected them to show up; that he thought some action had to be taken, and he was just looking for some guidance as to where they would start, that he was just looking for some advice on this.

Mr. Slyman asked how many people were supposed to be coming from each of the jurisdictions.

Mr. Ofenloch said there were two from each, except eight from Huntsville.

Acting Chairman Whitley asked if the Town of Gurley should be represented at this meeting.

Mr. Vandiver said the Town of Gurley was not currently in their urban area, that they were not part of the MPO, so they did not have a voting member

on the CAC, but since they were very close to their urban area boundary, they had actually engaged the Mayor and the Chief of the Planning Commission there, and they were on the CAC mailing list and had attended several times in the last few years; that they had Gurley-related projects, that they had had one a few months prior for the intersection of Little Cove Road and US 72 East, and they were in attendance for that, that they had had pretty good participation from Gurley, compared to some of their member jurisdictions, that they were non-voting members, but they did engage with them.

Mr. Lavender said that having read about this part of the MPO organization, and the larger MPO group that met on Wednesday, it appeared to him that this particular committee was a required legal part of their process, and he asked if he was correct on that.

Acting Chairman Whitley replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Lavender asked that he be corrected if he was wrong, and he said they had a Citizens Advisory Committee that provided, basically, citizen input, representing each of the entities, and this went to the larger MPO, and that in order for them to be able to approve a project, they would have had to have said, "We have had the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, and that has been approved."

Mr. Slyman said they could go against what they said, that they didn't have to follow what they said, that they did not say something and they had to do it.

Mr. Lavender said he understood that having this entity was required, so they at least would have had to have acted on these projects, and they would take what they did under advisement.

Mr. Ofenloch said that, generally, it was more their understanding of

things, but on occasion, they would object to something that was going on, and they would write a letter to the MPO, saying they would suggest they look at something a different way, or do a different thing, but, obviously, they could accept or ignore that.

Mr. Bernard said as far as attendance went for each of the member jurisdictions, they had been working on talking to those individuals who recommended and appointed, and also at least one individual they had visited personally, and they had sent emails, and they had made phone calls, that they had chosen a non-punitive route at the moment, in terms of engaging their members, but they intended to wrap that up and have more serious conversations in the future with some of these jurisdictions. He reiterated that he had been successful in getting a commitment from Owens Cross Roads, their engineer, and he was going to be there for the meeting on Wednesday, and they thought that was a step in the right direction, in terms of getting a commitment from him, and, hopefully, the mayor would show as well.

Mr. Slyman asked for Madison County, if that would be the County Commission that made that appointment or the Chairman.

Mr. Bernard said it would be the Chairman, that Houston Mathews was their representative, and he was usually present for the meetings.

Mr. Slyman asked who Eddie represented.

Mr. Vandiver said Eddie was one of their non-voting members from Gurley, Eddie Hoff, who was Chairman of the Planning Commission, he believed.

Mr. Bernard said the MPO staff needed to be more aggressive, in terms of finding solutions and encouraging members to come out.

ADJOURN

Upon motion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m. on August 24, 2026.