

DRAFT  
2017 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
HUNTSVILLE METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AREA



HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (HATS)  
Prepared by the Huntsville Planning Division in cooperation with the  
Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs, Alabama Department of Transportation

ADOPTED JANUARY 15, 2014  
REVISION DRAFT DECEMBER 7, 2016



**HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

***DRAFT***

**2017 Public Participation Plan**

This document is posted at:

<http://www.huntsvillempo.org>

For further information, please contact the  
Long Range Planning Staff of the  
City of Huntsville Planning Division,  
Huntsville, Alabama

E-mail: [LongRangePlanning@huntsvilleal.gov](mailto:LongRangePlanning@huntsvilleal.gov)

This report was financed in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the Alabama Department of Transportation, and local governments in partial fulfillment of Task 4.1 of the FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program. This document is produced by the City of Huntsville Planning Division as staff to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, in fulfillment of requirements set forth in Title 23 USC 134 and 135, as amended by the FAST Act, Sections 1201 and 1202, December 2015. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

---

Adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization

January 15, 2014

Revision Draft

December 7, 2016

# HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

## *MPO and Advisory Committee Officers*

### **Huntsville Area Transportation Study, MPO**

Dale Strong, Chairman

Tommy Battle, Vice-Chairman

Troy Trulock, Secretary

Chairman, Madison County Commission

Mayor, City of Huntsville

Mayor, City of Madison

### **Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)**

Shane Davis, Transportation Planning Coordinator

Tommy Brown, Vice-Chairman

Richard Grace, Secretary

Director, City of Huntsville Urban Development

Director, Huntsville Parking and Public Transit

Director, Madison County Public Works  
Department

### **Citizens Advisory Committee**

John Ofenloch, Chairman

Pat Mason, Vice-Chairman

Bob Devlin, Secretary

City of Huntsville

City of Madison

Madison County

### **City of Huntsville Department of Urban Development - Planning Division**

*Serving as staff to the Huntsville Area Transportation  
Study (MPO)*

Shane Davis

Michelle Jordan

Dennis Madsen

Connie R. Graham

Tanjie Kling

James Moore

Ken Newberry

James Vandiver

Paige Colburn

Director, Urban Development

Director, Planning

Manager of Urban and Long Range Planning

Planner III

Planner III

Planner III

Planner III

Planner II

Planner II

## ***MPO and Advisory Committee Members***

### **Huntsville Area Transportation Study, MPO**

Mayor Tommy Battle – City of Huntsville  
Mayor Troy Trulock – City of Madison  
Jennie Robinson – Huntsville City Council  
Dale Strong – Madison County Commission  
Mayor Tony Craig – Owens Cross Roads  
Mayor Mary Caudle – Town of Triana  
Curtis Vincent – Alabama Department of Transportation

Mark D. Bartlett – Federal Highway Administration (non-voting)  
Robert J. Jilla – ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs (non-voting)  
Nancy Robertson – Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

### **Technical Coordinating Committee**

Shane Davis- Transportation Planning Coordinator  
Clint Andrews – Federal Highway Administration  
Abigail Rivera - Federal Transit Administration  
Mary Beth Broeren – City of Madison Planning  
Emmanuel Oranika Ph.D. – Alabama Department of Transportation  
Dan Sanders- City of Huntsville Traffic Engineer  
Nicholas Nene – City of Huntsville Traffic Engineering Division  
Richard Grace – Madison County Engineer  
Anne Burkett – Madison County Planning and Economic Development  
Karen P. Monroe – Huntsville-Madison County Railroad Authority  
  
Kathy Martin – City of Huntsville Engineer  
  
Connie Graham – City of Huntsville Planning  
Diana Standridge – U.S. Space and Rocket Center  
Glen Partlow – Huntsville Utilities  
Carson Smith – Huntsville Utilities

Quisha Riche – Huntsville Housing Authority  
Gary Chynoweth- City of Madison Engineer  
Brandi Quick – Huntsville Marina and Port Authority  
Janet Watson - Huntsville Planning Commission  
Rick Tucker – Huntsville/Madison Airport Authority  
Les Hopson – Alabama Department of Transportation  
Nancy Robertson – Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments  
Kaela McGuire – Redstone Arsenal  
Melvin McKinstry – Marshall Space Flight Center  
Tommy Brown – City of Huntsville Parking and Public Transit  
Daniel Shea – City of Huntsville Natural Resources  
Bryant Moss – Limestone County Engineer (Ex-Officio Member)  
Marc Massey – Assistant Limestone County Engineer (Ex-Officio Member)

### **Citizens Advisory Committee**

John Ofenloch – Huntsville  
Tony Smith – Huntsville  
Gary Whitley – Huntsville  
Dave Cousins – Huntsville  
Todd Slyman – Huntsville  
Jennifer Nelson – Huntsville  
Trent Griffin – Huntsville  
Russ McDonald - Huntsville

Bob Devlin – Madison County  
Chris Robinson – Madison County  
Curtis Potts – Madison  
Pat Mason – Madison  
Jurlene Rogers – Triana  
Luis Ferrar – Triana  
Scott Baker – Owens Cross Roads  
Larry Furlough – Owens Cross Roads



This page intentionally left blank

**RESOLUTION 19-16**  
**HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
**ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT 2017 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study is the organization designated by the Governor of the State of Alabama as being responsible, together with the State of Alabama, for implementing the applicable provisions of 23 USC 134 and 135 (amended by the FAST Act, Sections 1201 and 1202, December, 2015); 42 USC 126, 2000d-1, 7401; 23 CFR Parts 450 and 500; 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93; and

**WHEREAS**, 23 CFR Section 450, Subpart C, Section 316(a) requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process; and

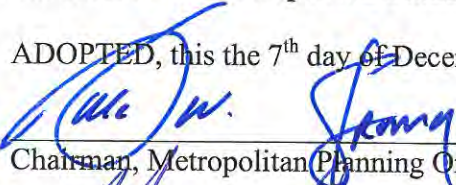
**WHEREAS**, the US Department of Transportation requires specific public involvement actions to occur as a result of the legislation including a minimum comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised [23 CFR 450.316(a)(3)]; and

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Planning Organization has prepared a **Draft 2017 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area** in accordance with federal legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Planning Organization has made available a **Draft 2017 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area** for public review for a period of 45 days or more;

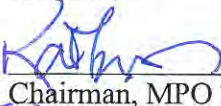
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Metropolitan Planning Organization of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study that it hereby adopts the **Draft 2017 Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area**.

ADOPTED, this the 7<sup>th</sup> day of December 2016.

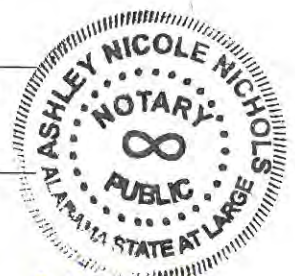
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Metropolitan Planning Organization

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Metropolitan Planning Organization

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, MPO TCC

Date 12/7/16





MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 8-12-2020

**DRAFT 2017 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
HUNTSVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AREA**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>Section</u></b>	<b><u>Pg.</u></b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	ES-1
<b>Purpose</b> .....	ES-2
<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	1
1.1 Legal Authority.....	1
1.2 History and Composition of the Huntsville Area MPO.....	1
1.2.1 MPO Membership.....	1
1.2.2 MPO Responsibilities per Agreement.....	2
1.3 Advisory Committees.....	2
1.3.1 Technical Coordinating Committee.....	3
1.3.2 Citizens' Advisory Committee.....	3
1.4 Federal and State Public Participation Requirements.....	4
1.4.1 Title 23 USC 134 and 135.....	4
1.4.2 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21).....	4
1.4.3 23 CFR 450.....	5
1.4.4 Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq. 42 USC 2000d.....	5
1.4.4.1 23 USC 324.....	5
1.4.4.2 29 USC 794 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992.....	5
1.4.4.3 Executive Order 12898.....	5
1.4.4.4 Limited English Proficiency Persons and Language Assistance Plan.....	6
1.4.5 Clean Air Act.....	7
1.4.6 Alabama Open Meetings Act.....	7
1.5 Other Partners Involved in Public Participation.....	7
1.5.1 The Alabama Department of Transportation.....	7
1.5.2 Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration..	8
<b>2.0 MPO Planning Requirements</b> .....	8
2.1 Scope of the Planning Process.....	8
2.2 Livability Principles and Indicators.....	9
2.2.1 Livability Principles.....	10
2.2.2 Livability Indicators.....	10
2.3 Plans Approved by the MPO That Require Public Participation.....	10
2.3.1 Unified Planning Work Program.....	10
2.3.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.....	11
2.3.3 Transportation Improvement Program.....	12
2.3.4 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan.....	13

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
2.3.5	Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan..... 14
2.3.6	Public Participation Plan ..... 15
2.3.7	Air Quality Conformity Report..... 15
2.4	The Amendment Process: Long Range, TIP, and Other Operations Plans..... 17
2.4.1	Administrative Modification..... 18
2.4.2	Formal Amendment Process..... 18
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Public Participation Procedures..... 18</b>
3.1	Overview..... 18
3.1.1	Broad Categories of Public Participation..... 19
3.2	Public Participation Techniques..... 20
3.2.1	MPO Website and Social Media..... 20
3.2.2	MPO Databases..... 21
3.2.3	Press Releases..... 21
3.2.4	Legal Ads ..... 21
3.2.5	Cable TV Announcements..... 22
3.2.6	Project-Specific Websites..... 22
3.2.7	Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses..... 22
3.2.8	Availability of Draft Planning Documents and Amendments to the Current Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Public Comments..... 22
3.2.9	Citizens' Advisory Committee..... 23
3.2.10	MPO Meetings..... 23
3.2.11	Public Notices..... 23
3.2.12	Comment Forms..... 24
3.2.13	Flyers..... 24
3.2.14	MPO Logo..... 24
3.3	Public Involvement Policies and Objectives..... 24
3.3.1	Policy 1..... 25
3.3.1.1	Objective 1.1..... 25
3.3.1.2	Objective 1.2..... 25
3.3.1.3	Objective 1.3..... 25
3.3.1.4	Objective 1.4..... 25
3.3.1.5	Objective 1.5..... 25
3.3.1.6	Objective 1.6..... 26
3.3.2	Policy 2..... 26
3.3.2.1	Objective 2.1..... 26
3.3.2.2	Objective 2.2..... 26
3.3.2.3	Objective 2.3..... 26
3.3.2.4	Objective 2.4..... 27
3.3.2.5	Objective 2.5..... 27
3.3.2.6	Objective 2.6..... 27
3.3.3	Policy 3..... 27
3.3.3.1	Objective 3.1..... 27
3.3.3.2	Objective 3.2..... 27
3.3.3.3	Objective 3.3..... 27
3.3.3.4	Objective 3.4..... 28

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
3.3.4 Policy 4.....	28
3.3.4.1 Objective 4.1.....	28
3.3.4.2 Objective 4.2.....	28
3.3.4.3 Objective 4.3.....	29
3.3.4.4 Objective 4.4.....	29
3.3.5 Policy 5.....	29
3.3.5.1 Objective 5.1.....	29
3.3.5.2 Objective 5.2.....	29
3.3.6 Policy 6.....	29
3.3.6.1 Objective 6.1.....	29
3.3.6.2 Objective 6.2.....	30
3.3.6.3 Objective 6.3.....	30
3.3.6.4 Objective 6.4.....	30
3.3.6.5 Objective 6.5.....	30
3.3.7 Policy 7.....	31
3.3.7.1 Objective 7.1.....	31
3.3.7.2 Objective 7.2.....	31
3.3.7.3 Objective 7.3.....	31
3.3.7.4 Objective 7.4.....	31
3.3.8 Policy 8.....	31
3.3.8.1 Objective 8.1.....	31
3.3.8.2 Objective 8.2.....	29
3.3.8.3 Objective 8.3.....	29
3.3.8.4 Objective 8.4.....	29
3.3.9 Policy 9.....	30
3.3.9.1 Objective 9.1.....	30
3.3.9.2 Objective 9.2.....	30
<b>4.0 Revisions and Amendments.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5.0 Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A: Huntsville Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Map.....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
<b>Appendix B: Livability Indicators.....</b>	<b>B-1</b>
<b>Appendix C: Title VI Documentation – Limited English Proficiency Plan.....</b>	<b>C-1</b>
Attachment C-1: Language Identification Flashcard.....	C-10
<b>Appendix D: Public Participation Evaluation Procedures.....</b>	<b>D-1</b>
Attachment D-1: Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals.....	D-5
Attachment D-2: Improvement Strategies.....	D-6
<b>Appendix E: Glossary of Abbreviations.....</b>	<b>E-1</b>
<b>Appendix F: Public Comments Received Regarding the Draft 2013 Public Participation Plan.....</b>	<b>F-1</b>

<u>Section</u>	<u>Pg.</u>
<b>6.0 Index of Maps</b>	
Appendix A: Huntsville Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Map.....	A-1
Appendix B: Livability Indicators.....	B-1
Map B-1: Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area.....	B-2
Map B-2: Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service .....	B-3
Map B-3: Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing.....	B-4
Map B-4: Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation.....	B-5
Map B-5: Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or Less Commute Time.....	B-6
Map B-6: Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or More Commute Time.....	B-7
Map B-7: Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Major Retail Services.....	B-10
Map B-8: Percent of Housing Units Located Within .25 Mile of Recreational Facilities.....	B-11
<b>7.0 Index of Tables and Attachments</b>	
<b>Appendix B</b>	
Table B-1: Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Existing Transportation Systems.....	B-8
Table B-2: Percent of Transportation Projects Where More than One Funding Source is Utilized.....	B-9
<b>Appendix C</b>	
Attachment C-1: Language Identification Flashcard.....	C-10
<b>Appendix D</b>	
Table D-1: Public Involvement Techniques Evaluation.....	D-2
Attachment D-1: Public Involvement Evaluation Form.....	D-5
Attachment D-2: Public Involvement Evaluation Improvement Strategies Form.....	D-6

This page intentionally left blank.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title 23, United States Code (USC) 134 and 135, were amended by *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*, in December of 2015. This legislation continues the legacy of earlier laws and regulations to ensure the continued participation of citizens in the Transportation Planning process. The regulatory provisions under 23 CFR 450 indicate that the most effective public participation process is one in which the public has access to information through various methods, is provided the ability to act on that information before decisions are finalized, and is allowed opportunities to provide such input as to exert their influence over the outcome of project decisions.

In the Huntsville urbanized area, the MPO is formally known as the Huntsville Area Transportation Study or HATS. For the purpose of this plan, the HATS will be referred to as the MPO. The MPO staff has established public participation strategies for the transportation plans developed by the MPO. These strategies vary, and may include distributing press releases, issuing public notices, holding special meetings, and providing additional outreach through the MPO's website: [www.huntsvillempo.org](http://www.huntsvillempo.org). The public participation strategy(ies) used are either documented in the plan or documented separately, as required by the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Division of the Federal Highway Administration.

23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.310 requires that urbanized areas, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau with a population of 50,000 or more, be designated as a Metropolitan Planning Area. Furthermore, urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 individuals shall be designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Subsequent to the U.S. decennial census of 2010, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) designated the Huntsville urbanized area as a TMA. Since its designation, the MPO has met all responsibilities and requirements pertaining to TMAs in accordance with 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. Those requirements pertain to membership of the MPO [23 CFR 450.301(d)], the development of a congestion management process [23 CFR 450.320(a)], project selection for the Transportation Improvement Program [23 CFR 450.330(c)], and joint FHWA/FTA certification of the planning process to ensure that the transportation planning process meets the requirements of federal law [23 CFR 450.334(b)]. At the present time, the MPO is not mandated to meet the requirements of 23 CFR 450.320(d) and 23 CFR 450.320(e) regarding the congestion management process in a nonattainment area for ozone or carbon monoxide, as the TMA does not exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. All of these mandated requirements demand a public involvement component, which this document addresses.

The overall goal of public participation is to ensure that the plans adopted by the MPO appropriately reflect the region's philosophy towards the management and development of transportation assets, and equitably benefit all communities within the planning area. To meet this goal, the objectives of the public participation process are explored in detail within this document. The MPO staff uses periodic assessments to measure the effectiveness of public participation techniques. Results of the assessments are used to improve the public participation processes so that the MPO can meet the goal of ensuring that transportation plans reflect the region's philosophy and benefit all communities in the planning area.

## **PURPOSE**

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to provide guidelines for public participation activities to be conducted by the Huntsville area MPO. This plan complies with the U.S. Department of Transportation rules requiring provisions to ensure early and continuing public participation in the development of transportation plans and programs for the Huntsville Area Transportation Study. This plan also ensures that identified Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations responsible for plans that may be impacted by transportation planning activities are consulted and included in the public participation process, specifically during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan, also known as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Legal Authority**

The Federal Highway Act of 1962 required all urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more to establish a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) planning process in order to be eligible to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation. This process was further addressed in the 1974 Federal Aid Highway Act, which stipulated that all urbanized areas required to have a 3C planning process also create local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO).

### **1.2 History and Composition of the Huntsville Area MPO**

An updated agreement concerning a transportation planning process for the Huntsville Urbanized Area was executed February 10, 2016 by Madison County; the cities of Huntsville, Madison, Triana, and Owens Cross Roads; the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments; and the Alabama Department of Transportation. Representatives from these governmental entities comprise the local MPO. Public Transit interests are represented on the MPO by the Chief Elected Officials that are responsible for transit programs within their respective jurisdictions. MPO meetings are called when necessary to adopt or amend transportation plans. Meetings are generally held on the 1st floor of the City of Huntsville Municipal Building at 4:00 pm, typically on a Wednesday. The MPO does not act arbitrarily, but is governed by specific by-laws. A quorum must be in attendance to vote upon issues that are presented before the group.

#### **1.2.1 MPO Membership**

Membership of the MPO consists of the following members:

- Chairman of the Madison County Commission
- Mayor of Huntsville
- City Council Member of Huntsville
- Mayor of Madison
- Mayor of Owens Cross Roads
- Mayor of Triana
- Region Engineer for the Alabama Department of Transportation
- Executive Director, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (non-voting)
- Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration (non-voting)
- Transportation Planning Engineer for the Alabama Department of Transportation (non-voting)

### **1.2.2 MPO Responsibilities per Agreement**

The agreement concerning a transportation planning process for the Huntsville Urbanized Area defines the responsibilities of the MPO to be as follows:

- Organize and elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and establish its rules of procedure and by-laws
- Appoint members to the Transportation Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees
- Take official action on Transportation Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees' recommendations and other matters pertaining to furthering the planning process
- Set the transportation study area and Federal Aid urban area boundaries. See **Appendix A** for the most up to date map depicting those boundaries.
- Adopt transportation goals and objectives to guide the Huntsville urbanized area metropolitan planning process
- Endorse the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) which documents the transportation related planning activities to be performed with planning assistance provided under FTA and FHWA Planning funds of the current federal transportation legislation
- Review and endorse the (Metropolitan) Transportation Plan to confirm its validity and its consistency with current transportation; and land use conditions as required by the State and Federal regulations
- Adopt a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is updated as required by the State and Federal regulations
- Adopt and submit plans and recommendations to participating agencies and local governments

### **1.3 Advisory Committees**

The MPO receives public input and advisement before voting on transportation plans. The MPO is advised by two committees: The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC). The TCC and CAC meet as called. Meetings are held at the City of Huntsville Municipal Building. Typically, the TCC meets at 3:00 pm, prior to the prescheduled Wednesday 4:00 pm meeting of the MPO. The CAC meets at 5:00 pm on

Monday, the week of a scheduled MPO meeting. CAC meeting days may change due to holidays or other extenuating circumstances. These two committees provide input to transportation planning issues prior to MPO deliberations; however, the MPO is the final body that has legal authority to approve transportation plans and plan amendments.

### **1.3.1 Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)**

The Technical Coordinating Committee is comprised of technical personnel of operating agencies represented on the MPO, and other agencies (including private, when and if applicable) responsible for or affected by implementation of the transportation plans and programs. Members of the committee are appointed by the MPO. Directors and managers of public transit agencies and the administrators of Federal Transit Administration funds within the MPO Study Area are members of the TCC.

According to the by-laws of the TCC, their functions and duties are as follows:

- To analyze and recommend technical methods, procedures and standards to further the transportation planning process.
- To help coordinate work of operating departments and agencies participating in the study.
- To recommend alternate transportation plans and programs to the MPO.

### **1.3.2 Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)**

The 2016 agreement concerning the transportation planning process in the Huntsville Urbanized Area includes provisions for public involvement through a representative Citizens' Advisory Committee. This Committee is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Review and respond to local transportation plans prepared for the area.
- Assess the local area-wide transportation and transportation related needs as perceived by area residents.
- Initiate actions related to providing area residents the opportunity to input individual, group, private, and semi-private ideas, suggestions, needs, and concepts for consideration and recommendation to the Metropolitan Planning Organization and/or the Technical Coordinating Committee.

- Objectively assess the social, economic, and physical impact within the area of all transportation plans submitted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization or Technical Coordinating Committee.
- Assist the transportation planning staff, where possible, in the development of specific program solutions to area-wide needs as identified through community research and public meetings.

The 2016 agreement concerning the transportation planning process in the Huntsville Urbanized Area and the by-laws of the Citizens' Advisory Committee provide for the committee's membership. The CAC is composed of 16 members appointed by the officials of local government who serve on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The membership of the committee is composed of the following:

- Eight (8) representatives from the City of Huntsville
- Two (2) representatives from Madison County
- Two (2) representatives from the City of Madison
- Two (2) representatives from the City of Owens Cross Roads
- Two (2) representatives from the Town of Triana

The CAC meetings provide a public forum for citizens to provide input to the transportation planning process. Public announcements of CAC meetings are provided to newspapers of general circulation, radio, and television stations within the study area, as well as posted on the MPO website, inviting the participation of the general public in the meetings.

## **1.4 Federal and State Public Participation Requirements**

In addition to the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the local MPO involves the general public in transportation planning activities through a variety of strategies and as mandated by law and executive order. Following is a brief summary of the relevant federal laws, regulations, and executive orders that direct State departments of transportation regarding public participation. This text was provided by the Bureau of Transportation Planning at the Alabama Department of Transportation and was tailored by the MPO staff to address MPO functions.

### **1.4.1 Title 23 United State Code (USC) 134 and 135**

23 USC 134 is a codification of the law establishing planning policy, defining MPO organizational structure, and delineating MPO and State responsibilities in the transportation planning process.

### **1.4.2 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST ACT)**

This is the most recent transportation legislation, signed into law by President Obama in December 2015. This law amends, modifies, and adds

to existing 23 USC 134 and 135. The language specific to the participation process is found in 23 USC 134(i)(5): Participation by Interested Parties.

**1.4.3 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450**

23 CFR 450 is FHWA/FTA interpretation of 23 USC 134 and 135, providing specific requirements and actions for MPOs and the State implementing agency, the DOT. The applicable language for both is found, respectively, in 450.210 (“The State’s public involvement process at a minimum shall...”) and 450.316 (“...the MPO shall...”). Furthermore, federal regulation 23 CFR 450.316 requires MPOs to develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process of providing reasonable opportunities for the general public as well as transportation users and providers among various modes, to be involved in the metropolitan planning process. The federal regulation requires that the participation plan be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes.

**1.4.4 Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq. 42 USC 2000d**

This legislation prohibits exclusion from participation in any federal program on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This is the seminal or shaping expression of the law. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance, and local MPOs must follow those provisions.

**1.4.4.1 23 USC 324** – This is the law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This requirement is found in 23 CFR 450.336(a)(1).

**1.4.4.2 29 USC 794 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1992** - These are laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a disability, and in terms of access to the transportation planning process.

**1.4.4.3 Executive Order 12898** – Executive Orders by the President as the head of the Executive Branch typically carry the weight of the law. This is not actually true unless the order has been given discretionary power through an Act of Congress, or a later act gives Congressional weight to the order. Significant orders by Presidents in the past affect the ability of segments of the population to gain access, and in this case, the planning process. Order 12898, often simply called “Environmental Justice,” requires federal agencies to identify “disproportionally high and adverse human and health environmental effects of its programs on minority populations and low-income populations...” and prohibits actions that



would adversely affect a disproportionately high number among these populations. Section 5-5 addresses the public involvement part of the order.

**1.4.4.4 Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) and Language Assistance Plan** – As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and FTA Circular FTA C4702.1B, October 2012, the MPO has completed a Four Factor Analysis of the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Area to determine requirements for compliance with the Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) provisions. Based on the analysis, the MPO has identified a population within the MPA that may require MPO assistance in participating in the planning process. A Language Assistance Plan to address Limited English Proficiency has been developed as follows:

- A total of 1.23% of the population of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Study Area are not proficient speakers of English, therefore the MPO is required to develop a Language Assistance Plan. Spanish is the largest representative language spoken by .69% of those residing in the MPO Study Area.
- The MPO can provide language assistance services by having available persons that are fluent in Spanish. Assistance with other languages may be available upon request and as resources allow.
- Notice of the availability of language assistance to LEP persons is provided through the MPO staff and the Public Participation Plan.
- The MPO monitors, evaluates, and updates the LEP every three years through update of the PPP and staff reports.
- Training of the MPO staff to provide language assistance is done under guidance of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

The MPO periodically reviews the above steps to ensure that inadvertent discrimination on the basis of national origin is not occurring. In addition to the above actions, the MPO will provide the following:

- Notice of MPO meetings and hearings in the secondary language as requested.
- Translation services for meetings or hearings on request.
- Translation services, verbal only, of planning documents, subject to 2 week notice.

- Title VI Complaint Form(s) in the secondary language as requested.

The LEP is published as part of this document in **Appendix C**.

#### **1.4.5 Clean Air Act**

A series of acts aimed at reducing smog and air pollution, the most recent of which is the Clean Air Act Extension of 1970, with amendments in 1977 and 1990. The 1990 amendment established the State Implementation Plan (SIP), under which states are obligated to notify the public of plans for pollutant control and allow opportunities for input into the process.

#### **1.4.6 Alabama Open Meetings Act**

All meetings associated with the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO are open to the public in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act, Act No. 2005-40, recently updated by Act No. 2015-340 and Act No. 2015-475, which set forth the general rule of law for open meetings. The Act requires that all governmental agencies, boards, committees, and institutions be in compliance.

It is based upon these requirements that the Huntsville Area MPO maintains a public participation program.

### **1.5 Other Partners Involved in Public Participation**

Other entities are involved in the public participation process of U.S. DOT activities. The MPO supports their public involvement initiatives and compliance as well.

#### **1.5.1 The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)**

The ALDOT has four offices that work closely with the MPO. The ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs located at the central office in Montgomery, provides general oversight of the MPO program. Within the Bureau, the Metropolitan Planning Section prepares the MPO agreements, reviews MPO documents, processes MPO invoices, and ensures that the MPO addresses all of the federal transportation planning requirements. The Metropolitan Planning Section coordinates with the Bureau of Office Engineers on the State TIP (STIP). The Metropolitan Planning Section is also responsible for developing the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan. The process to develop these documents requires the coordination of public involvement activities with the MPOs in the state. The ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs has a non-voting member on the MPO and a member on the Technical Coordinating Committee.

The other ALDOT offices that work with the MPO are the ALDOT North Region Office located in Huntsville, the ALDOT Guntersville Area Office located in Guntersville, and the ALDOT Tuscumbia Area Office, located in Tuscumbia. These offices are involved in all aspects of road construction, from engineering design review to right-of-way acquisition and construction. These offices share responsibilities for the geographical area inside of the MPO Study Area boundaries. Both divisions have voting members on the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee. Additionally, both divisions often respond to requests from the public for information concerning particular projects. They further hold public meetings for individual federally funded highway projects. The MPO staff supports those public involvement activities by posting such events on the MPO website and forwarding ALDOT public meeting notices to MPO, TCC, and CAC memberships.

### **1.5.2 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

The FHWA and FTA hold public involvement activities in conjunction with the required Transportation Management Area Certification Review. The MPO assists the FHWA and FTA in this effort. The FHWA and FTA also review all draft and final documents under the purview of the MPO to assure compliance. The Environmental Protection Agency will review the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, TIP, and the Air Quality Conformity Report for MPOs designated as non-conforming under the Clean Air Act. At the present time, the Huntsville area has not been designated as non-conforming. If the Huntsville area MPO is so designated, there will possibly be a separate document required for Public Involvement for Air Quality Conformity. The FHWA has a non-voting member on the MPO. Both the FHWA and the FTA have members on the Technical Coordinating Committee of the MPO. FHWA has a division office in Montgomery, Alabama. FTA has a division office located in Atlanta, Georgia.

## **2.0 MPO PLANNING REQUIREMENTS**

The MPO is required by legislation to adhere to certain planning requirements which must be included in the development of specific planning documents. The plans, which are the outcome of the planning requirements, involve public participation.

### **2.1 Scope of the Planning Process**

In accordance with 23 U.S.C 134(h), there are ten (10) factors that must be considered as part of the planning process for all metropolitan areas. These factors are consulted throughout the development of projects and strategies that are

included in the Huntsville area's transportation plans. The ten factors of the metropolitan planning process that are to be considered in the metropolitan planning process shall:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
- Enhance travel and tourism.

## **2.2 Livability Principles and Indicators**

Federal legislation requires that MPOs periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process. [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x)]. By taking such action, the MPO staff can determine what methods are best, what methods can be discontinued due to ineffectiveness, and what strategies should be adjusted.

Increasingly, federal and state agencies are using Performance Measures as a way of ensuring greater accountability for the expenditure of public funds in an ever growing number of programs and activities across a variety of disciplines. Within the transportation sector and the planning processes associated with transportation infrastructure development, the Alabama Department of Transportation has adopted the Livability Principles and Indicators as a sustainability measurement against future actions.

The Livability Principles and Indicators are described in the narrative of various MPO adopted plans. The principals identified cannot be changed; however, Alabama MPOs are charged with determining which indicators best reflects their local conditions and needs, and can easily be monitored and presented in tabular, graphic, or mapping format. All planning tasks must be measured against these Livability Principles.

### **2.2.1 Livability Principles**

- 1) Provide more transportation choices
- 2) Promote equitable, affordable housing
- 3) Enhance economic competitiveness
- 4) Support existing communities
- 5) Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- 6) Value communities and neighborhoods

### **2.2.2 Livability Indicators**

As a measure of sustainability of these principals, the MPO will provide the following Livability Indicators:

- 1) Percent of housing located within .50 mile of transit service
- 2) Percent of employment located within .50 mile of transit service
- 3) Percent of household income spent on housing
- 4) Percent of household income spent on transportation
- 5) Percent of workforce with 29 minute or less commute time
- 6) Percent of workforce with 30 minute or more commute time
- 7) Percent of transportation investment dedicated to enhancing accessibility of existing transportation systems
- 8) Percent of transportation projects where more than one funding source is utilized
- 9) Percent of housing units within .25 mile of major retail service center
- 10) Percent of housing units within .25 mile of recreational facilities

These indicators and their applicability to the above principles may be found in **Appendix B** of this document.

## **2.3 Plans Approved by the MPO that Require Public Participation**

### **2.3.1 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The Unified Planning Work Program describes in detail the transportation planning work to be done by the MPO staff and Huntsville Public Transit each fiscal year. The UPWP attaches a budget to specific work tasks necessary to accomplish and maintain the transportation planning process within the MPO study area. The main objective of the UPWP is the development of an integrated planning program that considers the planning activities of each modal group and coordinates these activities to produce a comprehensive transportation plan serving all segments of the population. The public has an opportunity to provide input in the development of the UPWP and make comments concerning the document during the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings and the MPO meetings. Meeting notices are provided at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting to news media, committee members, and interested groups and

individuals. The draft and final UPWP, amendments to the document, as well as the meeting notices, are posted on the MPO website. The draft UPWP is also available for review at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. MPO member jurisdictions will be provided with a flyer advertising the opportunity for public input in each jurisdiction's City Hall. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. The documents will also be available on the MPO's website. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The public review and request for comments for the draft and final UPWP, and amendments to the document, will be at least 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

### **2.3.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is also known as the Long Range Transportation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify current transportation needs, forecast future transportation needs, and establish strategies and projects that address those needs. Federal regulations regarding the development of the metropolitan plan (23 CFR Part 450.324) require that the strategies and projects should "lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand." To further meet this end, the MPO has incorporated its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Congestion Management Process into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

The creation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a lengthy process that requires public involvement at various stages of its development. During the time of the plan's development, the MPO staff may hold several MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the plan. Additionally, the MPO staff may hold special public meetings at various locations in the MPO study area to receive public input. These meetings will be advertised as well. The draft and final metropolitan transportation plan, as well as any amendments, and the meeting notices are posted on the MPO website. For those without web access, copies of the draft and final metropolitan transportation plan as well as any amendments to the plan will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office and Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. MPO member jurisdictions will be provided with a flyer advertising the opportunity for public input in each jurisdiction's City Hall. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every

effort to accommodate their request. The documents will also be available on the MPO's website. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The public review and request for comments for the draft, final, or amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

### **2.3.3 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The Transportation Improvement Program is a document that lists transportation projects that are anticipated to be funded in various phases during a 4 year period. The projects listed in the TIP are selected from the approved Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, with the exception of certain level of effort (projects of lesser significance) projects and yearly transit program grant allocations. The TIP is considered the short-range plan of the MPO. The TIP breaks down transportation projects into phases such as preliminary engineering, right of way, utility relocation, and construction; and assigns a beginning year for each phase. The TIP essentially is the schedule of various phases of transportation projects for implementation. The public is given several opportunities to provide input on the draft TIP before its adoption by the MPO. Additionally, after adoption of the draft and final TIP documents, the plan may be amended to add and/or move certain projects. Prior to any of these events, the documents and/or its amendments will be available for public review and comment. Draft TIPs and amendments to the documents are discussed and voted on at MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the document. Copies of the draft Transportation Improvement Program will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. MPO member jurisdictions will be provided with a flyer advertising the opportunity for public input in each jurisdiction's City Hall. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. The documents will also be available on the MPO's website. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

The TIP can be amended at any time during the year. The procedures for amendment are the same as those for adoption. A routine amendment may originate several ways:



- ALDOT Transportation Planning contacts us and requests that a project cost, description, and/or program year be amended or a new project be added at the next MPO meeting.
- A local project sponsor contacts us requesting modifications to project cost, description, and/or program year be amended or a new project be added at the next MPO meeting. This is done after consultation with ALDOT.

These routine amendments to the document will be available on the MPO's website and advertised through available means as part of the MPO meeting announcements.

The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. The public review and request for comments for draft, final, and amendments to the TIP is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

#### **2.3.4 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan**

The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) on the behalf of the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO, assists the State of Alabama in the development and updating of the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, to include the MPO Study Area. The purpose of this plan is to identify how to enhance access to transit services to persons with disabilities, the aged population, and individuals with low incomes through the coordination of existing and future transit services that are funded with FTA Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities), and any remaining funds from the expired Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute or JARC), and Section 5317 (New Freedom) program. TARCOG maintains a stakeholders list that is comprised of local and regional transit providers and advocates of public transit from the general public. This list is continually evolving as TARCOG staff becomes aware of interest in this program and the planning process. From time to time, the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan requires amendments, or granted projects or program allocations are voted on for addition to the Transportation Improvement Program. When this needs to occur, these actions are presented to the MPO committees. Prior to any of these actions, the document and/or amendments to the TIP will be available for public review and comment. Amendments to the document and proposed TIP amendments pertaining to the program's grant programs are discussed and voted on at MPO committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the document. Amendments to the document will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. If

citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. The public review for the draft and final Human Service Coordinated Transportation Plan is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting. Proposed TIP amendments pertaining to the Human Service Coordinated Transportation Plan's grant programs will be handled as a routine TIP amendment and advertised accordingly.

### **2.3.5 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan**

By FHWA directive, bicycle and pedestrian components have been required in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program for some time. Inclusion in Alabama MPO planning documents began in 2010. ALDOT joined other State DOTs and approved and implemented a Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan during the same year. In 2016, ALDOT began the process of updating the Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

As a result of this action, ALDOT instructed all MPOs in 2010 to prepare a Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan or have one under development no later than Spring of 2011. The MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan is a component of the Year 2040 Transportation Plan. The plan addresses all of the federal directives and includes the financing of bicycle/pedestrian projects. It also illustrates how planned bike routes, bike lanes, greenways, and shared use paths correlate with planned roadway improvements within the MPO Study Area. Additionally, the MPO staff will continue with its educational and informational programs on bicycle and pedestrian safety. All of these projects will require some aspect of public involvement.

During the comprehensive Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan's future updates and amendments, the MPO will hold a public review and take comments pertaining to the plan. This will be done through the MPO committees. All meetings of the MPO committees are advertised via media release, legal ad, and/or other methods at least 2 weeks in advance of the MPO meeting. Non-committee members in attendance may participate in discussions pertaining to the plan. Copies of the draft and final comprehensive Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, as well as any plan amendments, will be available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division office and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. The plans will also be made available on the MPO's website. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The public review and request for comments for the plan and any plan amendments is 2 weeks prior to a scheduled MPO meeting.

### **2.3.6 Public Participation Plan**

A documented public participation plan is required under 23 CFR 450.316(a) et al. Typically a plan will be developed to span the period of time between Congressional legislative actions on new transportation bills. The Huntsville MPO Public Participation Plan includes a proactive public involvement process that supports and encourages early and continuous opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the metropolitan transportation planning decision making process. As a living document, this plan is periodically reviewed for potential modifications and revisions. In accordance with federal requirements, the Public Participation Plan will be available for public review and comment for 45 days prior to its adoption. Notice of plan availability will be made through all available and reasonable means.

### **2.3.7 Air Quality Conformity Report**

If Madison County becomes designated as a non-attainment area for ozone, carbon monoxide, and other pollutants, based upon monitoring data and information provided by the FHWA, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the MPO will be required to take necessary steps in documenting a process for attaining Air Quality Conformity.

Under the provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (42 USC 7401 et seq.), the Huntsville Area Transportation Study - MPO would be responsible for making the Conformity Determination. This determination must be made through consultation with the EPA, FHWA, FTA, and State and local air quality agencies. The transportation conformity rule (40 CFR Part 93) requires that conformity analyses be based upon the latest motor vehicle emissions model approved by EPA. Section 176(c)(1) of the Clean Air Act states that ". . . the determination of conformity shall be based on the most recent estimates of emissions, and such estimates shall be determined from the most recent population, employment, travel, and congestion estimates. . . ."

A non-attainment designation requires additional planning activities to occur, such as amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program as well as preparing a separate Air Quality Conformity Report. The Air Quality Conformity Report provides pollution estimates using specific software based upon pollutant budgets from ADEM's Statewide Implementation Plan.

In accordance with the Clean Air Act and related federal regulations, both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the TIP must be found to be in conformity with all applicable State Implementation Plans (SIPs) and with

the mobile source emissions budgets as established by the SIPs, before the TIP may be approved by the MPO and the Federal Highway Administration. The *projected* emissions for the long range transportation plan and the TIP must not exceed the emissions limits or budgets established by the SIP. If these limits are exceeded, the plans will be deemed as non-conforming. Conformity Determination demonstrates that transportation projects and programs contained in the TIP and the long range transportation plan will not have a negative impact on air quality in the region. Conformity Determinations must be made at least every four years, or when transportation plans or TIPs are updated.

Certain projects identified in the TIP are exempt from the conformity rule. These projects are safety projects, mass transit projects, bike/pedestrian projects, and projects that do not involve construction of roadways such as planning and technical studies, etc.

A second requirement of a Conformity Determination is an assessment of the progress in implementing Transportation Control Measures, or TCMs, identified in the SIPs. These measures intend to reduce emissions or concentrations of pollutants from transportation sources by reducing vehicle use or otherwise reducing vehicle emissions. As part of the Conformity Determination, the MPO has to certify that TCMs in the categories included in the SIPs which are eligible for federal funding are progressing on-time towards implementation and that no federal funds are being diverted which might delay their swift implementation.

For new nonattainment areas, the Clean Air Act and the conformity rule provide a one-year grace period after the EPA's nonattainment designation, to make a Conformity Determination. After one year, the conforming long range transportation plan and TIP must be in place, and the area becomes subject to conformity frequency requirements. (In other words, the long range transportation plan and the TIP projects must be amended.) If a Conformity Determination is not made according to the required frequency, a conformity lapse occurs. In the case of a conformity lapse, the use of federal transportation funds is restricted to certain kinds of projects. These include "exempt projects" like safety projects and certain public transportation projects, Transportation Control Measures from an approved SIP, and project phases that were authorized by the FHWA and/or FTA prior to the lapse. The FHWA and FTA do not reduce the amount of funding a State receives if there is a lapse; however, the use of federal funds is restricted during the lapse.

The documentation for the Conformity Determination is supported by a public participation process, which is later published as a separate document along with all amended documents mentioned in this section. The document, which may be titled "Public Involvement for Air Quality

Conformity (date)” would provide information on all MPO public involvement efforts, such as public meetings, hearings, and other outreach, as well as the MPO’s responses to all public inquiry during the Air Quality Conformity process.

At the present time, the Huntsville Area Transportation Study (MPO) is designated as an attainment area for air quality, and a Conformity Determination is currently not required for the long range transportation plan and TIP within the Huntsville study area boundaries. However, indications point that the area is headed toward nonattainment in the future and the area may be subject to these additional requirements. If Madison County becomes designated as a non-attainment area, all public involvement requirements will be followed.

## **2.4 The Amendment Process: Long Range, TIP, and Other Operations Plans**

Amendments to formal planning documents containing project listings and funding will be carried out pursuant to sections of Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450, applicable to road and highway projects under various Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding programs and those transportation projects and funding actions under Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs.

While governing regulations are specific to the Long Range Transportation Plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Plan), the short range component of the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP); the process is extended in Alabama to those plans with projects and funding presented in tabular or listed format, to include the Congestion Management Plan (CMP), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the amended project listings of the Long Range and TIP documents under the Air Quality Conformity Process.

An amendment to the Long Range Plan, TIP, and STIP documents may take one of two forms: 1. Administrative Modification, or 2. Formal Amendment Process. These amendments are explained in detail in through the Memorandum of Understanding: Alabama Department of Transportation Statewide Procedures for FY 2016-2019 TIP/STIP Revisions, signed by the Director of the Alabama Department of Transportation, Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, and the Regional Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration. A summary of the process is explained below.

#### **2.4.1 Administrative Modification**

An **Administrative Modification** is a minor change to project costs, minor change to funding sources of previously funded projects, or minor changes to project/phase initiation dates. Such minor changes or adjustments do not require public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or, in areas of air quality non-conformity, confirmation of conformity determination (23 CFR 450.104). Amendments of this nature are generally conducted through coordination of ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs staff and MPO staff to minimize plan modification and documentation activities and costs.

#### **2.4.2 Formal Amendment Process**

The **Formal Amendment Process** is required when there is a major change to a project, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or scope. Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (for metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs involving “non-exempt” projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas) (23 CFR 450.104).

Amendments to Congestion Management Plans (TMAs only) and Bicycle Pedestrian Plans (now a formal plan in Alabama) are subject to the same processes as above. However, ALDOT will generally work with MPOs to make adjustments to these documents on a more informal basis in order to accommodate public involvement meetings and advisory committee scheduling.

### **3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1 Overview**

The local MPO is required by federal legislation to develop and adopt a Long Range Transportation Plan or metropolitan transportation plan, a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Unified Planning Work Program, a Congestion Management Plan, and a Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan. It shall be the policy of the MPO to conduct public involvement activities before these major plans are to be submitted for formal adoption to the MPO.

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to provide various techniques which may be implemented when conducting public involvement activities. The PPP also details the specific goals and policies of the MPO for public participation in the planning process.

### **3.1.1 Broad Categories of Public Participation**

Public involvement or participation activities coordinated by the local MPO can be placed within the following five broad categories:

- In accordance with MPO by-laws, regular and special business meetings of the MPO and its advisory committees are conducted in an open public forum with prior notification.
- The development of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or metropolitan transportation plan, Congestion Management Plan, Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, and other major transportation policies, plans, or programs identified by the MPO, include opportunities for public comment prior to adoption by the MPO; as described in Section 2.3.
- Individual transportation improvement projects have their own public involvement methods in place. An example would be conducting engineering design public hearings for road widening projects, and taking public comments during and preceding the public hearing. When applicable, the MPO shares such public hearing notices on the MPO website; via email to the MPO, TCC, and CAC memberships; and/or in the MPO printed quarterly newsletter or online monthly blog.
- Periodic updates of local MPO activities are available to the public in various ways, including the official MPO website; the Transportation Review monthly blog; the Transportation Quarterly printed newsletter, distributed throughout the MPO study area; and through available staff who may assist inquiring citizens in person, by phone, letter, or e-mail.
- In order to eliminate or minimize conflicts with other agencies' plans that may impact transportation, consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local, and private agencies and organizations is included in the participation process; more specifically during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

These five components serve as a general overview of public involvement within the MPO's jurisdiction. While the public participation process for transportation plans and programs shall continue to focus upon the activities of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the MPO staff will also continue to take advantage of processes already in place to disseminate public information and encourage public participation.



## 3.2 Public Participation Techniques

Public participation in planning activities is an on-going process for the MPO. Several techniques are employed on a routine basis to ensure that public involvement is successful. The public involvement and participation techniques listed in this section can be used for special events and for routine activities such as the TIP process and updating the metropolitan transportation plan. The list provided as follows presents a toolbox of techniques that may be utilized. The MPO may select a number of public involvement activities to be exercised during the inception and life of a project or program; however, there may be instances where some techniques may not be appropriate for all circumstances or instances where some techniques are required by federal legislation. The MPO staff must, at their discretion, select the most appropriate public involvement activities for each circumstance. All methods discussed below are currently used by the MPO, and include a description of the technique as well as the activities and outcomes promoted by each method.

### 3.2.1 MPO Website and Social Media:

The MPO website was developed in 2001 and revised in 2013. The website includes information about the MPO, membership of the committees, meeting times, and meeting agendas. The MPO website informs the public of the status of current and planned transportation projects, and promotes the MPOs' planning studies and other transportation publications. The website includes a listing of authorized projects for the previous and current fiscal year, and the status of transportation projects for the current fiscal year. The status of transportation projects is presented in two formats. An interactive color-coded map contains detailed information about each individual project's costs, phases, and timeline. A downloadable timeline graphic contains fewer details than the map, but is a quick visual summary of current project status. Both the interactive map and the timeline graphic are updated on a bi-monthly basis. The site also includes transportation planning publications that can be downloaded such as the TIP, UPWP, Long Range Transportation Plan (metropolitan transportation plan), as well as bike and pedestrian plans. The MPO website also contains pdf. copies of the printed MPO newsletter, *Transportation Quarterly*, and the MPO's *TQ* monthly blog. The MPO website is routinely maintained and updated by the MPO staff. The homepage of the website is used to promote MPO meetings and special public involvement meetings and public hearings. The site can also be used by the public to download specific published transportation plans and publications. The City of Huntsville's website contains a community bulletin board on its main page, and it has been utilized to announce public hearings and public involvement meetings. The City of Huntsville's BIG Picture planning effort also announces MPO public events, when applicable, on the BIG Picture Facebook page. Additionally, some MPO staff members publicize

MPO events or documents through social media accounts such as Facebook and Twitter. Access to other social media platforms will be made available on the MPO website as they are developed. Persons can access the MPO website by visiting <http://www.huntsvillempo.org>.

### **3.2.2 MPO Databases:**

The MPO staff maintains several databases of contacts which include MPO committee memberships; news media; local elected officials; appropriate Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations; businesses; and civic organizations that desire to be informed of transportation issues. The databases include the names of individuals and e-mail addresses, and in some instances mailing addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers. The databases are used for MPO meeting notices, and other public participation processes as necessary. Citizens may, upon request be added to the appropriate database to receive MPO meeting notices or any other pertinent information. The databases are used to inform citizens of other public involvement activities per their request. The news media are e-mailed meeting notices of the MPO and are made aware of other public involvement activities. Federal land management agencies, as well as State and local agencies and organizations responsible for economic growth and development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movement, land use management, natural resources, conservation, historic preservation, and human service transportation providers (including those nonprofits that receive federal assistance from sources other than the Department of Transportation for nonemergency transportation services), will be consulted during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. This will occur so that conflicts with other agencies' plans will be eliminated or minimized. Additionally, the database will be used to identify which entities should be involved in the environmental impact and mitigation portion of the metropolitan transportation plan.

### **3.2.3 Press Releases:**

Press releases are sent to local broadcast and print media, including minority publications, to announce MPO meetings and public involvement meetings. Press releases will be sent to announce meetings, public involvement meetings, and other MPO activities. Concurrent with the distribution of press releases, announcements are posted on the MPO website homepage.

### **3.2.4 Legal Ads:**

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, all draft, final, or amended plans and documents may be advertised via legal ad for public review and comment in a newspaper that has a wide circulation in the community. These ads are placed to announce MPO activities at the discretion of the MPO staff. The legal ad will describe the proposed action, when and

where public meetings will be held, and where more information can be reviewed or obtained. The purpose of this is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest time before the MPO takes action.

**3.2.5 Cable TV Announcements:**

The City of Huntsville operates a government news channel, called HSV TV. HSV TV airs on channel 16 for Comcast subscribers and on channel 42 for WOW subscribers. Information regarding regular MPO and Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings and other pertinent public information concerning MPO activities is provided to the City of Huntsville Mayor's office to be included in scrolling announcements displayed on the channel. This method is used for regular meeting announcements and other pertinent public involvement activities administered by the MPO staff.

**3.2.6 Project-Specific Websites:**

Project-specific websites may be used for individual projects or plans that are significant in scope. The site may be used when the project information is too extensive to be included on the MPOs' web page. The specific site can include meeting announcements, comment forms, project updates, and project team contact information. This is to be used for major planning studies and major MPO projects such as the metropolitan transportation plan or any other pertinent major planning activity. Links to such project-specific sites will be available on the MPO website, as applicable.

**3.2.7 Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses:**

The MPO staff conducts open and informal meetings for the public to ask questions and provide comments concerning certain major transportation plans, such as the metropolitan transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MPO staff members can interact with the public on a one-on-one basis at these meetings. Additionally, the Alabama Department of Transportation conducts "open house" type meetings and public hearings concerning the design of certain transportation projects and the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). These project hearings are held by the State DOT for public information and feedback. The MPO staff attends these meetings as well, to support and supplement the State's public involvement process.

**3.2.8 Availability of Draft Planning Documents and Amendments to the Current Metropolitan Transportation Plan for Public Comment:**

The MPO staff will make available copies of draft planning documents and amendments to the current metropolitan transportation plan for public comment. These documents will be made available at the City of Huntsville Planning Division offices, the Huntsville-Madison County

Public Library Main Branch and through the MPO website. MPO member jurisdictions will be provided with a flyer advertising the opportunity for public input in each jurisdiction's City Hall. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. The documents will also be available on the MPO's website. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The MPO staff will make available draft planning documents and amendments to the current metropolitan transportation plan for public comment for a minimum of 14 days. In instances where the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differ significantly from the version originally submitted for public review, another opportunity will be made available for public comment.

**3.2.9 Citizens' Advisory Committee:**

Members of the Citizens' Advisory Committee are appointed by the elected officials that serve on the MPO Executive Committee. The objectives of this committee are listed on page 4. They provide valuable input to the planning process. This committee meets a minimum of four times a year and as often as required, to be presented and vote on the MPO staff's prepared transportation plans and amendments to other transportation planning documents. Public announcements of these meetings are made, inviting the participation of the general public in the meetings. A record of public comments on plans or plan amendments is kept in the minutes of CAC meetings and all such comments, as well as the responses and/or resolutions of such comments are presented to the MPO Executive Committee.

**3.2.10 MPO Meetings:**

All MPO meetings are open to the public, and all material to be brought before the MPO is available for public review through traditional sources identified in this document or upon request. Fees may be charged for copies. While the MPO holds public meetings, they may hold public forums during regular MPO meetings to review of draft and final planning documents and may attend, sponsor meetings, or hold ad hoc meetings as outreach for specific proposed projects or programs. The facilitator of any public involvement meeting has the right to set a time limit for comments to ensure fair representation.

**3.2.11 Public Notices**

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, all draft, final, or amended plans and documents may be advertised via public notice for public review and comment. This may be done in a newspaper of general circulation, and can be published in addition to or instead of a legal advertisement. The notice will describe the proposed action, when and where public meetings will be held, and where more information can be reviewed or obtained. The

purpose of this is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest time before the MPO takes action. Public notices shall be posted no less than 2 weeks prior to the date the MPO is scheduled to take action on the proposal. The public notice will be made available at locations where and when draft and final plans are left for review, and posted at the City of Huntsville Municipal Building's meeting notice bulletin board. MPO staff will provide outreach to other jurisdictions regarding public meetings or contact other MPO member jurisdictions and request that they assist the MPO staff in posting Public Notices of upcoming meetings. Concurrent with the distribution of public notices, announcements are posted on the MPO website homepage.

**3.2.12 Comment Forms:**

Comment forms are a preferred way for the MPO to receive input pertaining to prepared transportation plans. Specialized forms will be created for each plan or issue requiring input. Comment forms will be made available to citizens at public involvement meetings and will accompany plans left at public facilities for review. Comment forms may be mailed in or handed in at the public involvement meetings. Additionally, comments may be received via the MPO's website and/or emails, phone calls or in-person conversations with MPO staff.

**3.2.13 Flyers:**

Flyers may be used as one method to announce public involvement meetings and public hearings. Specifically, the flyers note the date, times, and location of the scheduled meetings.

**3.2.14 MPO Logo:**

A logo representing the MPO is used to identify products and publications of the MPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the MPO by providing a means of recognizing MPO products. This is the MPO logo:



**3.3 Public Involvement Policies and Objectives**

The overall goal of the local MPO is to provide the public with detailed information on transportation planning programs and project development in a convenient and timely manner. The MPO also has a commitment to consult with and coordinate with other pertinent agencies and organizations responsible for other types of planning activities that may be impacted by the adoption of the metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP. These goals are realized through

engaging the techniques previously identified, and incorporating them into the following specific MPO policies and objectives:

**3.3.1 Policy 1: The MPO will actively engage the public and appropriate agencies and organizations in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in this Public Participation Plan, and in accordance with state procedures, the 2016 State MPO agreement, and federal law.**

**3.3.1.1 Objective 1.1:** The MPO will maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including at a minimum the following persons:

- Local elected officials
- Appropriate local government staff
- Local transportation agencies and other pertinent agencies/organizations responsible for planning activities that may be impacted by the adoption of transportation plans (such as transit, the Huntsville International Airport, etc.)
- Local broadcast and print media, including minority outlets
- Individuals interested in transportation planning activities, per their request

**3.3.1.2 Objective 1.2:** The MPO will email meeting announcements to the MPO contact list for upcoming activities. The MPO will mail meeting announcements, when feasible

**3.3.1.3 Objective 1.3:** The MPO will distribute press releases to all media outlets and announce meetings on the local government cable television channel. HSV TV airs on channel 16 for Comcast subscribers and on channel 42 for WOW subscribers.

**3.3.1.4 Objective 1.4:** The MPO will provide a way for public comments originating in the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to be publicly addressed by the MPO Board. This will be done by posting the committee meeting minutes to the MPO website, providing responses to all issues and comments raised at any point during the process, and providing for opportunities of discussion, comment and responses on the MPO website prior to and following meetings.

**3.3.1.5 Objective 1.5:** The MPO will conduct meetings in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. The public involvement process, as required by federal legislation,

must include a methodology of informing the local population of people with disabilities that would like to participate in the planning process. Public officials must be notified no later than seven (7) days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting so that officials may make special arrangements, if necessary, in order to facilitate their participation in the proceedings.

**3.3.1.6** Objective 1.6: The MPO will contact appropriate agencies and organizations for consultation prior to adoption of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. Refer to Policies 5 and 6 for additional information.

**3.3.2 Policy 2: The MPO will keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities.**

**3.3.2.1** Objective 2.1: The MPO will make all draft and final adopted publications and other appropriate documents readily available to the public via the MPO website, the MPO staff office (City of Huntsville Planning Division), and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library Main Branch. MPO member jurisdictions will be provided with a flyer advertising the opportunity for public input in each jurisdiction's City Hall. If citizens request to review a hard copy of the plan, the MPO staff will make every effort to accommodate their request. Links to the documents for review on the MPO website will be shared via social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

**3.3.2.2** Objective 2.2: The MPO staff will be available to provide both general and project-specific information at the MPO staff offices during normal business hours and after hours at the request of groups, with reasonable notice.

**3.3.2.3** Objective 2.3: The MPO will maintain an internet website. The website will be updated as required to provide the most up-to-date information available.

The website, at a minimum, will contain the following information:

- Current MPO and advisory committee membership
- Meeting calendars and agendas
- List of current and past authorized projects
- Status of current transportation projects in an interactive map and a timeline graphic, updated bi-monthly
- Links to transportation plans and other MPO publications

- Links to Twitter, Facebook, and other social media accounts managed by the MPO staff for public involvement purposes

Other transportation agencies, transportation related businesses, local governments, and interested groups will be encouraged to provide a link to the MPO website on their organization's website.

**3.3.2.4** Objective 2.4: The MPO will provide broader access to public information through social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. as these methods are developed by the MPO staff.

**3.3.2.5** Objective 2.5: The MPO will print a quarterly newsletter, *Transportation Quarterly*, and distribute this newsletter throughout the MPO study area to libraries, YMCAs, senior centers, government offices, colleges, universities, and other public places where widespread segments of the MPO jurisdictions' populations may have access to it. The MPO will also post a monthly *TQ Blog* on the MPO website.

**3.3.2.6** Objective 2.6: The MPO will, upon request and as feasible, provide information for inclusion in publications of various special interest groups that publish newsletters including, but not limited to homeowners and neighborhood associations, church groups, civic groups, and other community organizations.

**3.3.3 Policy 3: The MPO will utilize visualization techniques to effectively communicate the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.**

**3.3.3.1** Objective 3.1: Documents made available for public review and comment will include appropriate maps, photographs, and/or graphics to better communicate transportation planning goals and objectives.

**3.3.3.2** Objective 3.2: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics depicting specific transportation projects and plans are mostly available at the MPO Office or the Engineering office of the project's jurisdiction and will be used to discuss proposed transportation plans, projects, and initiatives to the visiting public.

**3.3.3.3** Objective 3.3: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics related to transportation plans may be posted to the MPO's website, as appropriate and necessary. The interactive project status map and downloadable timeline graphic will be updated bi-monthly on the MPO's website.



**3.3.3.4** Objective 3.4: Maps, photographs, and/or graphics related to the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP will be displayed and described during public meetings where the plans are being discussed, as appropriate.

**3.3.4** **Policy 4:** **The MPO will encourage the involvement of all citizens within its jurisdiction, especially including those identified by FHWA as "traditionally underserved", in the transportation process [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii)]. The MPO will furthermore work towards ensuring the full and fair participation in the transportation decision making process by all potentially affected communities.**

**3.3.4.1** Objective 4.1: The MPO will, whenever feasible, hold its public involvement meetings, at a location or locations convenient to potentially affected citizens, especially the traditionally underserved population. As mentioned previously, the MPO staff will make available copies of draft planning documents for public comment. Additionally, the MPO will ensure that broadcast and print media outlets that serve primarily minority populations are included in media releases concerning upcoming meetings and the distribution of plans for public comment. The staff may also use flyers as a method of public outreach to contact those traditionally underserved to advertise meetings and request comments pertaining to planning documents. Comments will be considered from all citizens, especially the traditionally underserved, in the planning process.

**3.3.4.2** Objective 4.2: The MPO will use data obtained from the latest U.S. Census to determine areas with a concentration of minority or low-income populations. This data will be displayed in map format. The concentration of minority populations is determined by calculating the percentage of the population at the census tract level that exceeds the countywide average for the non-white population. The concentration of low-income populations is determined by calculating the percentage of the population that is at or below the poverty level at the census tract level that exceeds the countywide average for being at the poverty level.

**3.3.4.3** Objective 4.3: The MPO will continue to promote diversity in the membership of its Citizen Advisory Committee. This will be done by encouraging the elected officials that make appointments to the committee, to select members that are of minority status and/or reside in areas that ensure geographic equitability among the membership.

**3.3.4.4** Objective 4.4: The MPO, in accordance with its Limited English Proficiency Plan, will strive to accommodate and assist those individuals needing assistance to understand transportation plans, documents, and planning initiatives, so they may provide input into the transportation planning process. The MPO's Limited English Proficiency Plan is available as **Appendix C**.

**3.3.5 Policy 5: In developing the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP, the MPO will consult with other agencies, officials, and organizations responsible for other planning activities within the metropolitan planning area that are affected by transportation, or coordinate its planning process to the maximum extent practicable with such planning activities.**

**3.3.5.1** Objective 5.1: The MPO will develop the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, to include those agencies or organizations receiving federal funds for mass transportation services or other non-emergency transportation services, federal land highways, and federal public lands in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316(b).

**3.3.5.2** Objective 5.2: The MPO will maintain a database of Federal, State, local, and non-profit agencies and organizations as indicated in Section 3.2.2 of this document. The database will include agency or organization roles, responsibilities, and the key decision points for consulting with the agencies during metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP development or update. These entities will be contacted so that plans, maps, and inventories, etc. developed by these agencies may be compared with the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP to ensure compatibility. Documentation of this process will be maintained to demonstrate who was contacted and how contact was made, responses received, results of comparison plans and programs, and how the information was used and its affect upon the metropolitan transportation plan or TIP development or update. This documentation will be incorporated in the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP documents.

**3.3.6 Policy 6: In developing or updating the metropolitan transportation plan, the MPO will consult with appropriate agencies and organizations to identify potential environmental impacts and will consider how such impacts might be mitigated.**

**3.3.6.1** Objective 6.1: The MPO will maintain a database of appropriate Federal, State and local agencies responsible for land use

management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation in accordance with 23 CFR 450.324(g). These agencies and organizations can assist in the identification of potential environmentally sensitive areas, environmental impacts, and mitigation strategies resulting from the development or update of the metropolitan transportation plan.

- 3.3.6.2** Objective 6.2: The MPO will consult with these agencies and organizations to determine environmentally sensitive areas in relation to transportation plans. The consultation will involve as appropriate, the comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps if available, and the comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources if available. Categories to be assessed may include historic sites and properties, protected lands, parks and landfills, topography, flood plains, wetlands, and other potentially environmentally sensitive areas.
- 3.3.6.3** Objective 6.3: The MPO will further assess the impacts upon the area if the plan is implemented, will work with identified agencies and organizations to define potential areawide mitigation measures that may be needed, determine if the identified mitigation could be achieved, and adjust the transportation plan if necessary to minimize or eliminate the environmental concern.
- 3.3.6.4** Objective 6.4: Documentation will be made of this process to demonstrate what agency or organization was contacted, the location of capacity or regionally significant projects within the metropolitan area boundary, a description or category of the environmental inventory (i.e., historic properties, wetlands, etc...), and the assessment of any likely impacts resulting from proposed improvements and potential mitigation measures. This documentation will be incorporated into the metropolitan transportation plan.
- 3.3.6.5** Objective 6.5: The MPO staff will assess each project identified for improvement in the metropolitan transportation plan and determine if improvements will be in the existing right of way, add capacity, or modify traffic patterns. If no significant impacts are determined, documentation should indicate such. If impacts are realized, then a discussion of potential environmental mitigation (addressing the human and natural environment) will be incorporated into the plan. The discussion will be developed in consultation with federal, state, and tribal land management,

wildlife, and regulatory agencies as appropriate, per 23 CFR 450.316 (b), 23 CFR 450.316(c), and 23 CFR 450.316(d).

**3.3.7 Policy 7: The MPO will actively participate in public involvement activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction and will actively participate in the public involvement efforts of other transportation-related government agencies and organizations.**

**3.3.7.1** Objective 7.1: The MPO staff will assist, upon request, the Alabama Department of Transportation, local governments, and transportation agencies in the development and implementation of their public involvement techniques for planning and other studies.

**3.3.7.2** Objective 7.2: The MPO staff will assist the Alabama Department of Transportation by attending State sponsored public involvement meetings within the MPO jurisdiction. Additionally, the MPO staff can assist citizens on a limited basis that call or visit the office with questions concerning specific transportation projects.

**3.3.7.3** Objective 7.3: The MPO staff will assist the Alabama Department of Transportation in the coordination of the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes when requested.

**3.3.7.4** Objective 7.4: The MPO staff will participate in and strive to coordinate its public involvement efforts with other transportation-related government agencies and organizations, especially the Huntsville Department of Parking and Public Transit.

**3.3.8 Policy 8: The MPO staff will provide feedback on public comments as required by federal legislation. Additionally, plans that have already been through the public involvement process; yet undergo major modifications, will go through the public involvement process again.**

**3.3.8.1** Objective 8.1: When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made a part of the final plan and TIP [23 CFR 450.316(a)(2)].

**3.3.8.2** Objective 8.2: If any draft plans, documents, or proposals are substantially modified after being advertised for public comment, either due to comments or otherwise, the public notice cycle will be repeated and the new proposal will be made available for public comment.

**3.3.8.3** Objective 8.3: If the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not have reasonably foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(viii)].

**3.3.8.4** Objective 8.4: Any amendments to plans and documents that are proposed and approved by the MPO Policy Board should formally go through the public involvement process again, if such modification to the plan or document is significant and raises new material issues which interested parties could not have foreseen from the public involvement efforts. This requires the public notice cycle to be repeated and the amended proposal be made available for public comment.

**3.3.9 Policy 9: The MPO will work towards continually improving its public involvement practices.**

**3.3.9.1** Objective 9.1: The MPO will continuously evaluate its public participation and involvement techniques, according to the procedures outlined in **Appendix D - Public Participation Evaluation Procedures.**

**3.3.9.2** Objective 9.2: This PPP will be reviewed and adopted, with modifications if necessary, at least every three years or as requested by the Federal Highway Administration and/or the Alabama Department of Transportation.

#### **4.0 REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS**

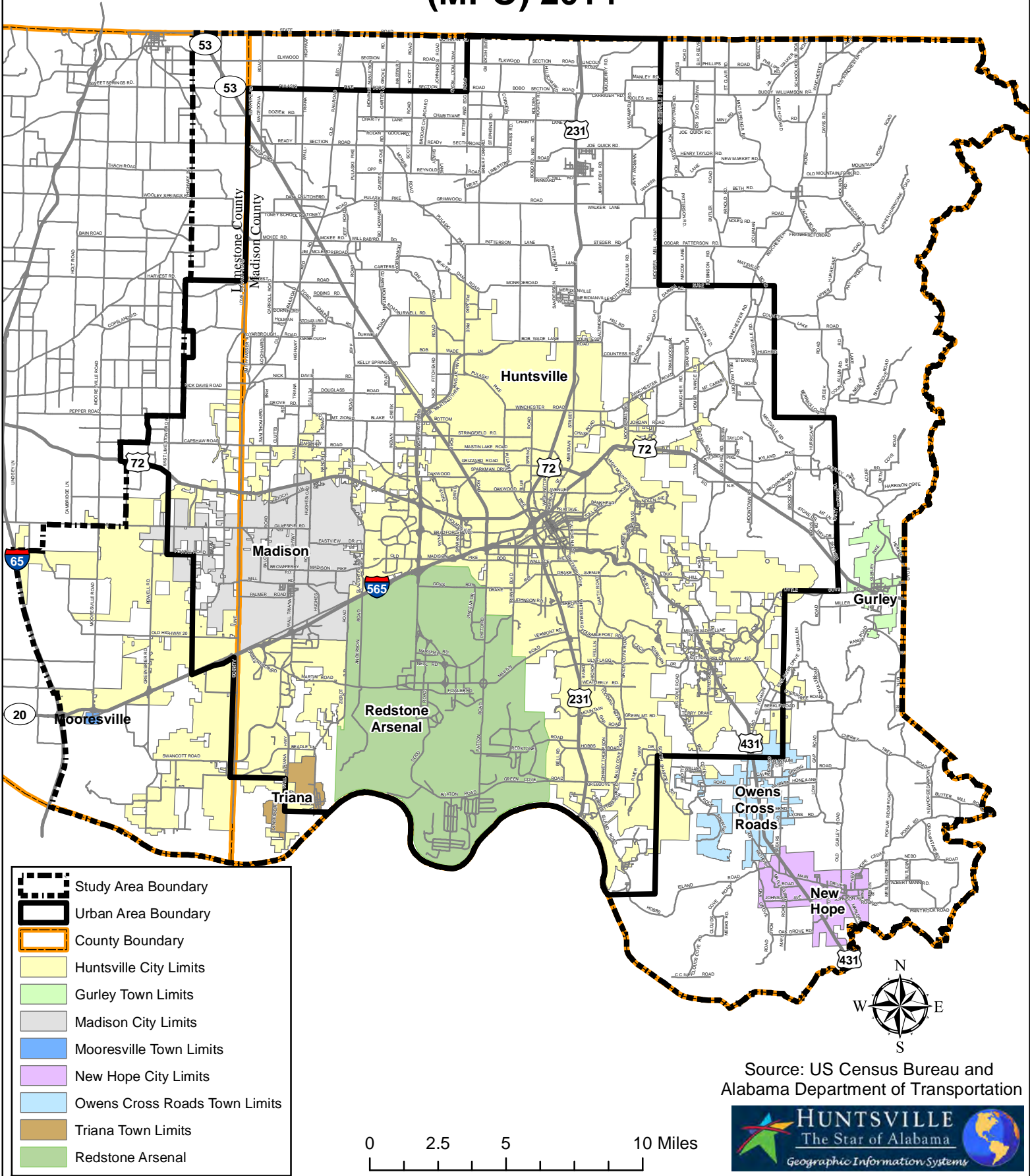
This Public Participation Plan reflects the current procedures of the Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. This plan will be reviewed every three years and revisions will be made if necessary. The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed by the MPO in terms of its effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all. Plan revisions will be based upon evaluation of the techniques implemented for public involvement. Additionally, plan revisions will be done in conjunction with Congressional legislative actions on new transportation bills.

The MPO shall publish these procedures and provide 45 days for written public comment before adoption by the MPO. This action will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation, including the locations where plans will be made available for review and comment. The same procedure shall be followed when the MPO makes revisions to this Public Involvement Plan.

This Public Participation Plan, dated December 7, 2016 supersedes the **Public Involvement Procedures for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Urbanized Area**, previously approved by the MPO, dated January 15, 2014. The adoption of this plan is made possible through the adoption of Resolution 19-16, approved by the MPO on December 7, 2016.

**Appendix A**  
**Huntsville Area Transportation Study**  
**Metropolitan Planning Organization Map**

# Appendix A Huntsville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2014





**Appendix B**  
**Livability Indicators**

## **Livability Indicators**

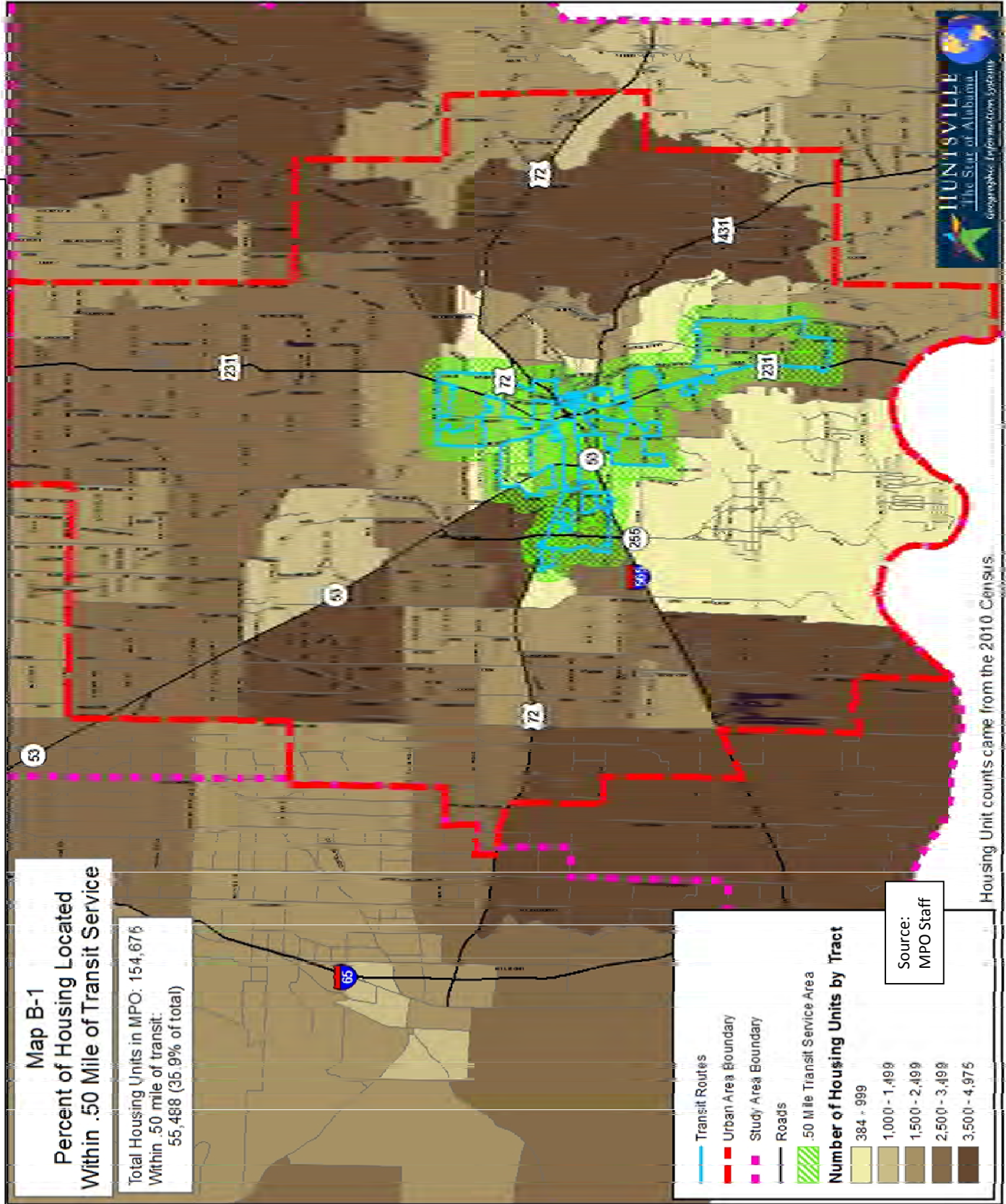
**Section 2.2** of this document provides the details of Livability Principles and Indicators required to make better informed planning decisions. The measurement of the sustainability of these Livability Principles are indicated with the maps and charts that follow. These measurements were collected through the US Census Bureau and other sources. The future provision of this data is dependent upon these agencies and organizations.

Following are the Livability Principles and the Livability Indicators that measure each:

1. Provide more transportation choices
  - Map B-1 Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area
  - Map B-2 Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service
  
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing
  - Map B-3 Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing
  - Map B-4 Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation
  
3. Enhance economic competitiveness
  - Map B-5 Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or Less Commute Time
  - Map B-6 Percent of Workforce With 30 Minute or More Commute Time
  
4. Support existing communities
  - Table B-1 Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Existing Transportation Systems
  
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment
  - Table B-2 Percent of Transportation Projects Where More Than One Funding Source is Utilized
  
6. Value Communities and neighborhoods
  - Map B-1 Percent of Housing Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service Area
  - Map B-2 Percent of Employment Located Within .50 Mile of Transit Service
  - Map B-7 Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Major Retail Services
  - Map B-8 Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Recreational Facilities

Map B-1 Percent of Housing Located Within 1/2 Mile of Transit Service

1. Provide More Transportation Choices  
 Develop safe, reliable, and reliable economic transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse emissions, and promote public health.

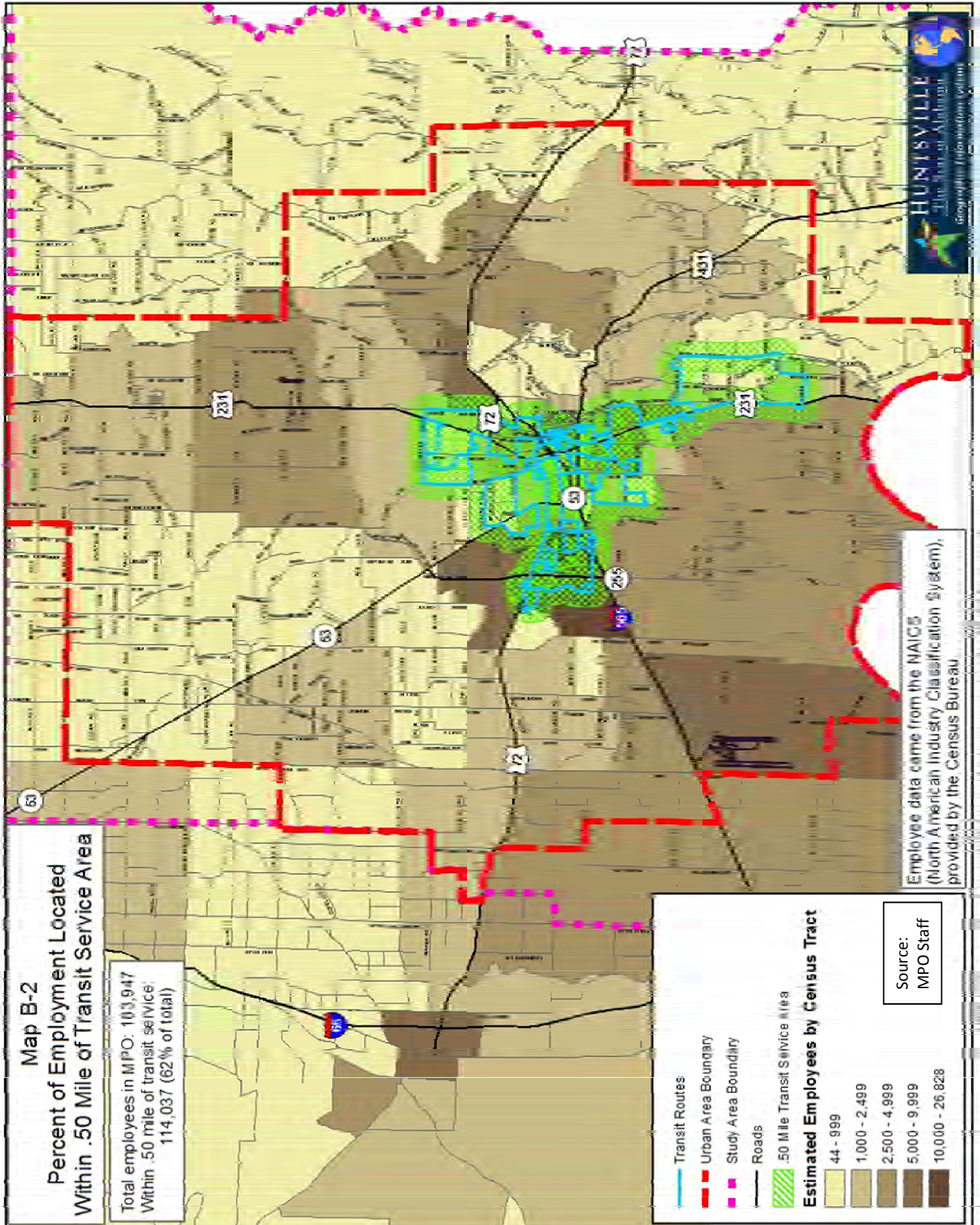




Map B-2: Percent of Employment Located Within ½ Mile of Transit Service Area

Indicators

- Percent of transit ridership in Planning Area= 62%
- Percentage of workers using other means of transportation to work (transit, walk, bicycle, etc.)

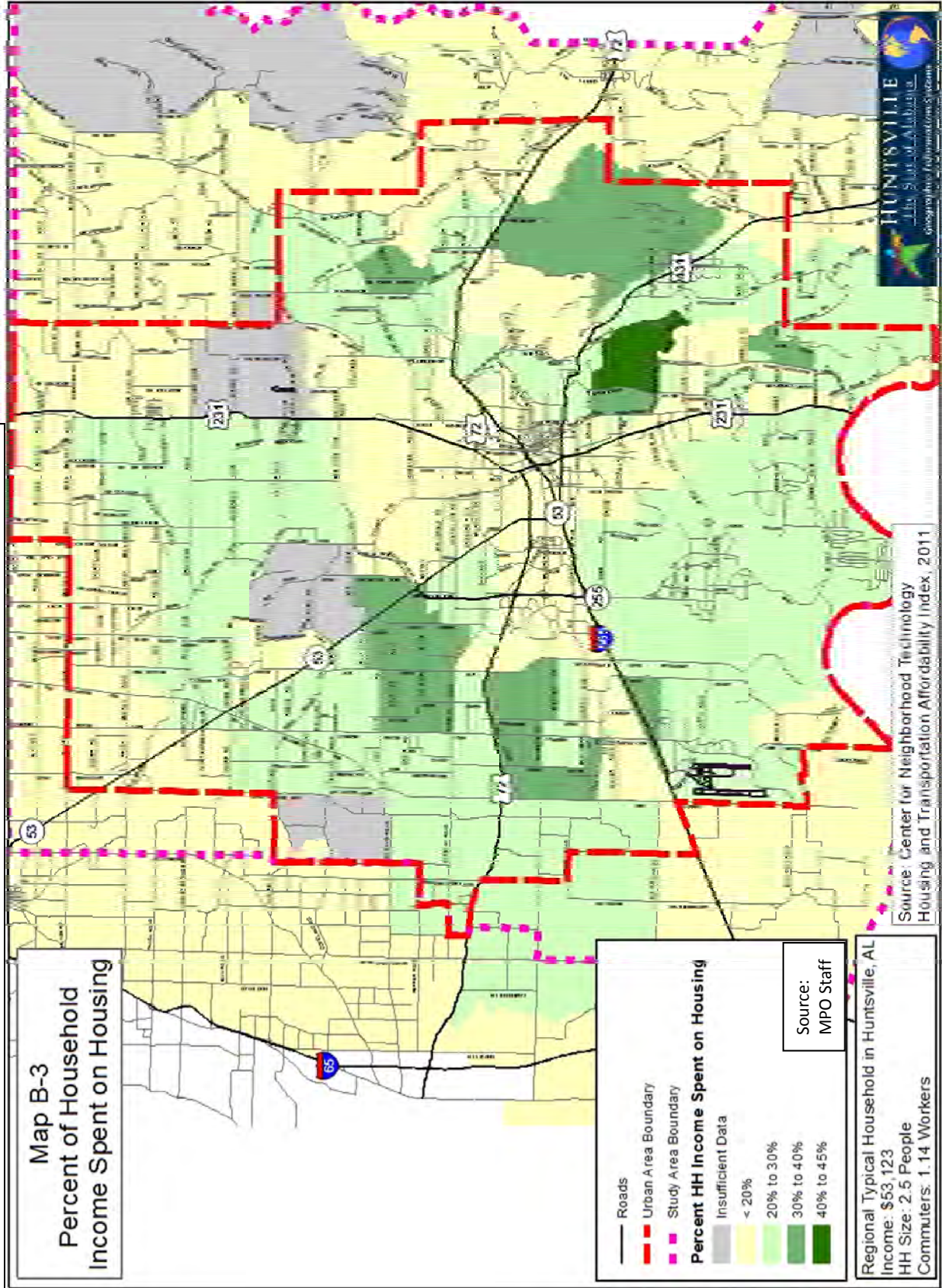




Map B-3: Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing

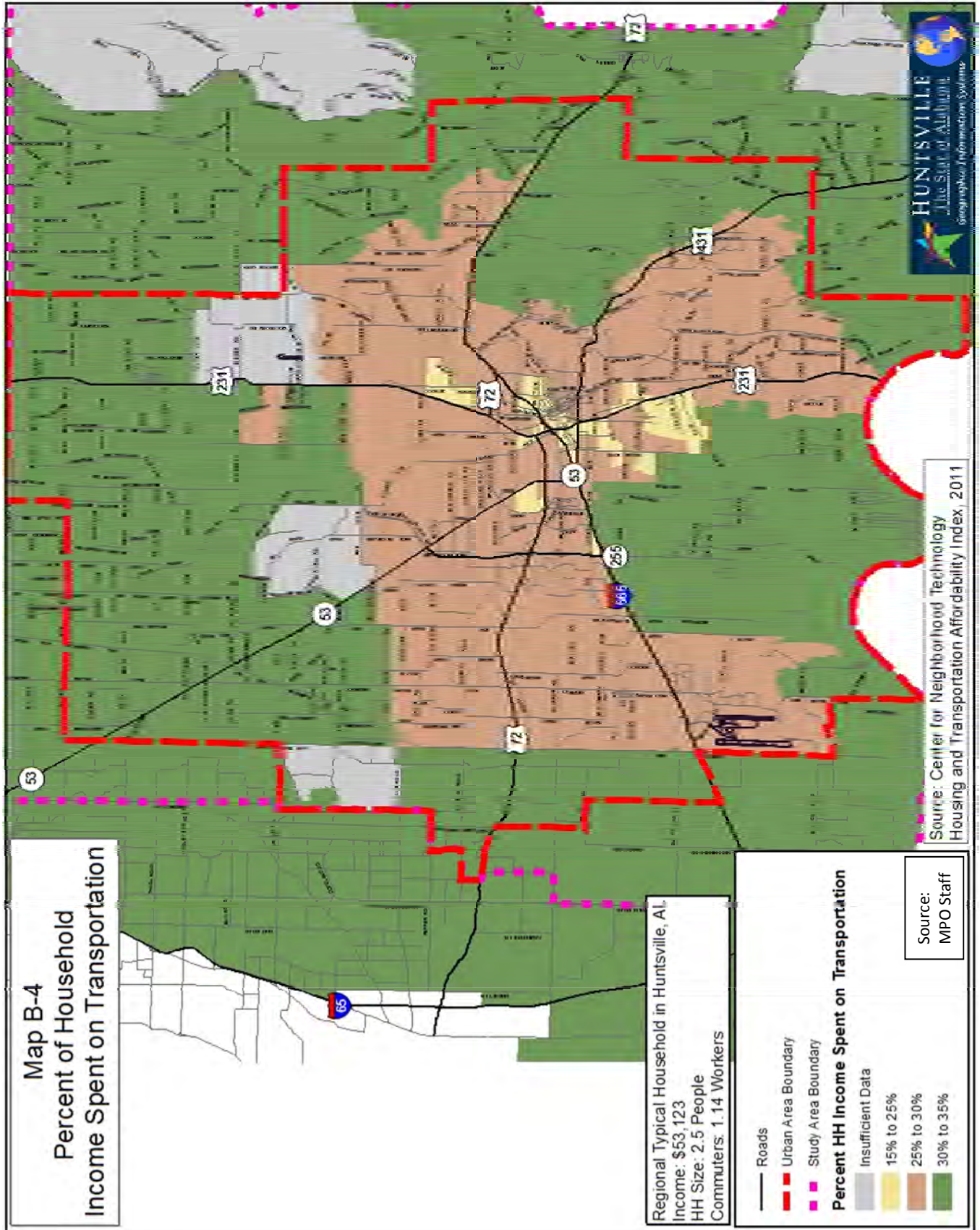
**2. Promote Equitable and Affordable Housing**

Expand location and energy efficient housing choices for people of all ages, income, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost housing and transportation





Map B-4: Percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation

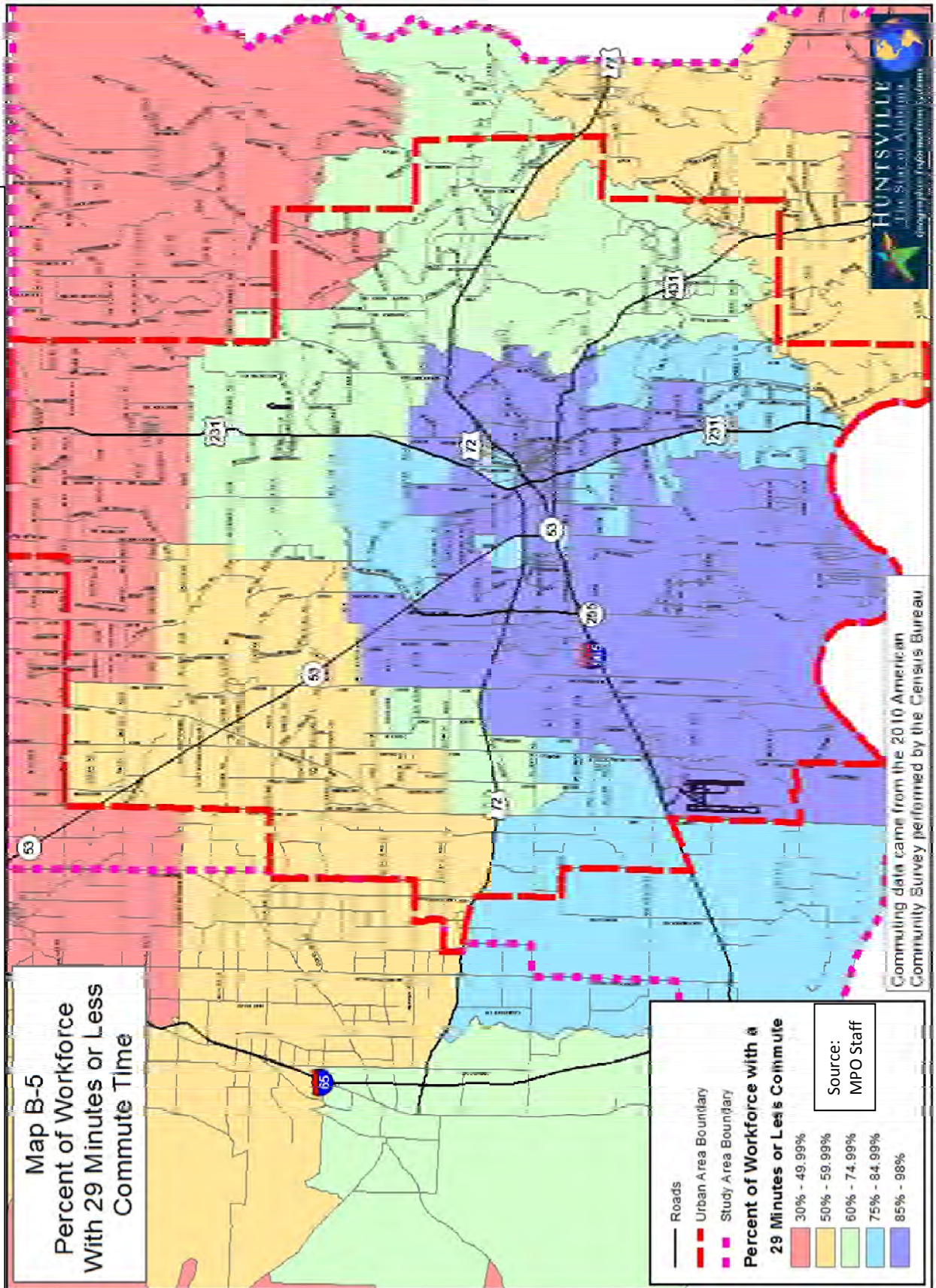




Map B-5: Percent of Workforce With 29 Minute or Less Commute Time

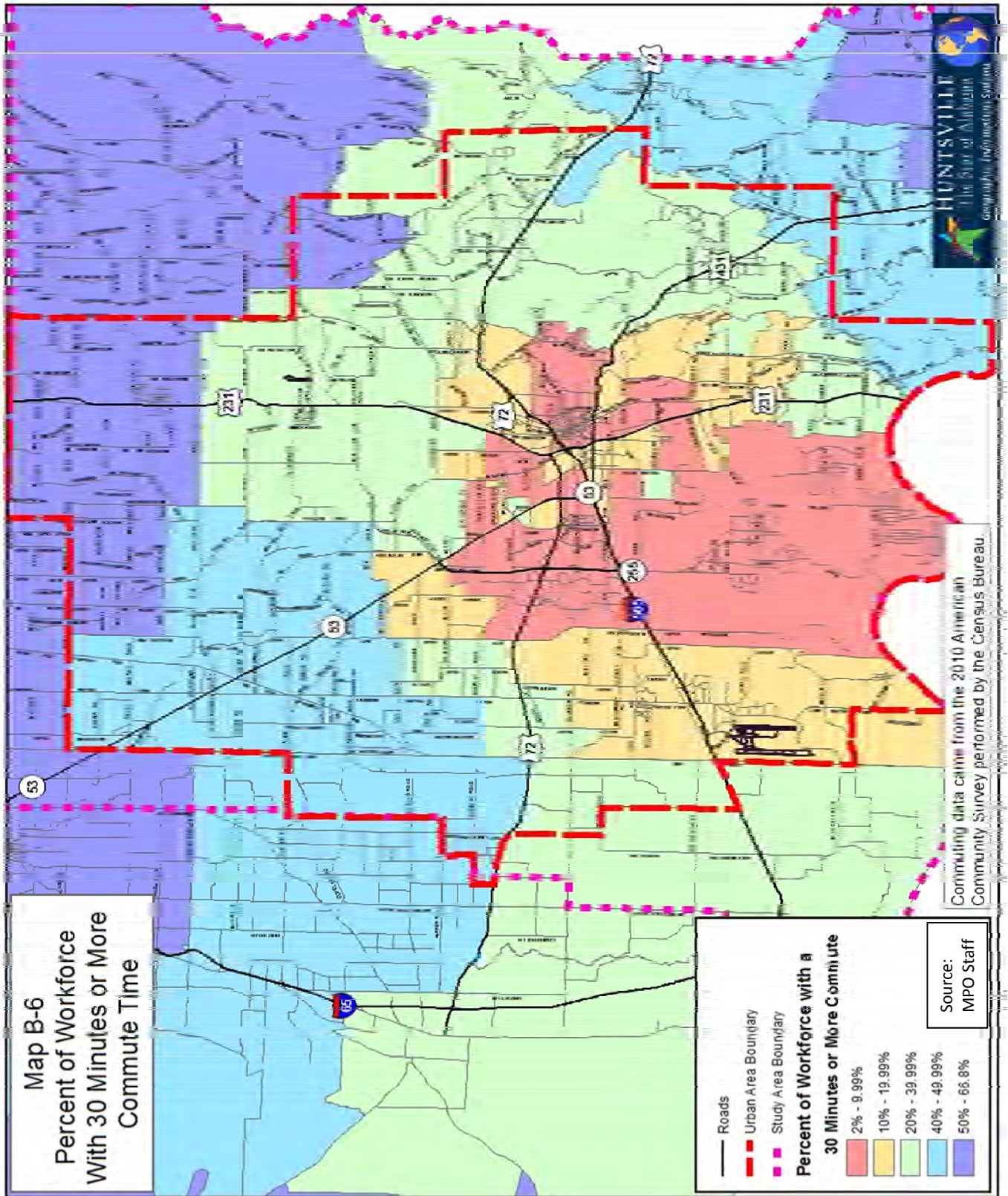
**3. Enhance Economic Competitiveness**

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets



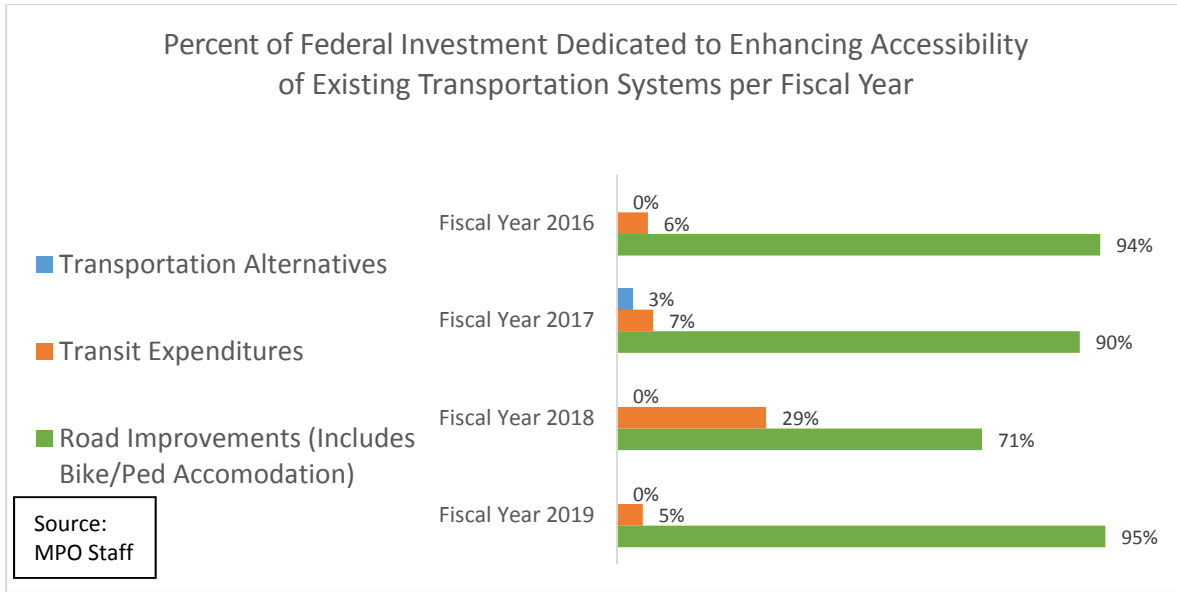


Map B-6: Percent of Workforce With 30 Minute or More Commute Time

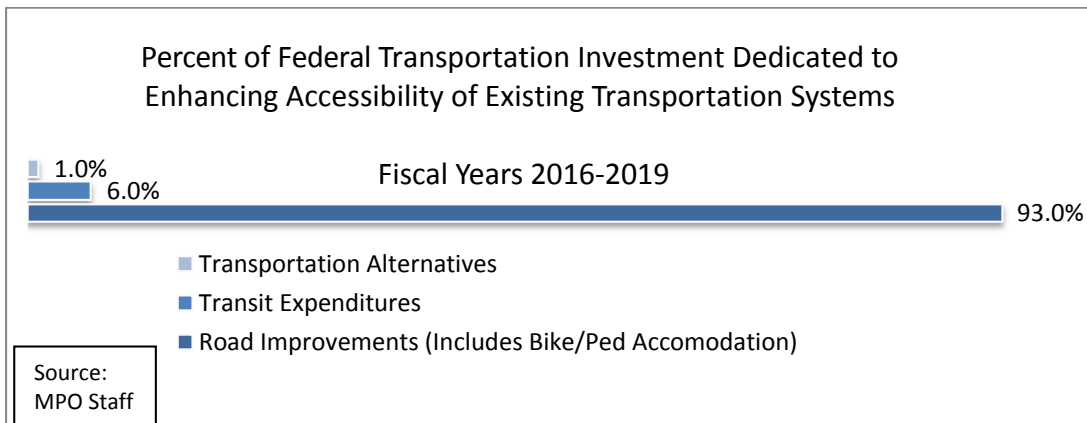




**Table B-1: Percent of Transportation Investment Dedicated to Enhancing Accessibility of Transportation Systems**



Transit Expenditures are primarily based upon a formula grant. Transportation Alternatives Program funding is determined by competitive grant and allocation amounts provided to State. All road improvements provide for bike/ped accommodation.



Transit Expenditures are primarily based upon a formula grant. Transportation Alternative Program funding is determined by competitive grant and allocation amounts provided to State. All road improvements provide for bike/ped accommodation.

**Table B-2: Percent of Transportation Improvement Projects  
Where More Than One Funding Source is Utilized**

Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

Transportation Improvement Projects are funded through multiple funding sources, identified through various funding codes. The information presented below is based upon the adopted FY 2016-2019 TIP. The tables below show that transportation funds are leveraged, split, and utilized among various funding categories to ensure that project delivery is efficient and streamlined. Additionally, programs listed apply only to corridor improvements. More information concerning funding categories can be found at:

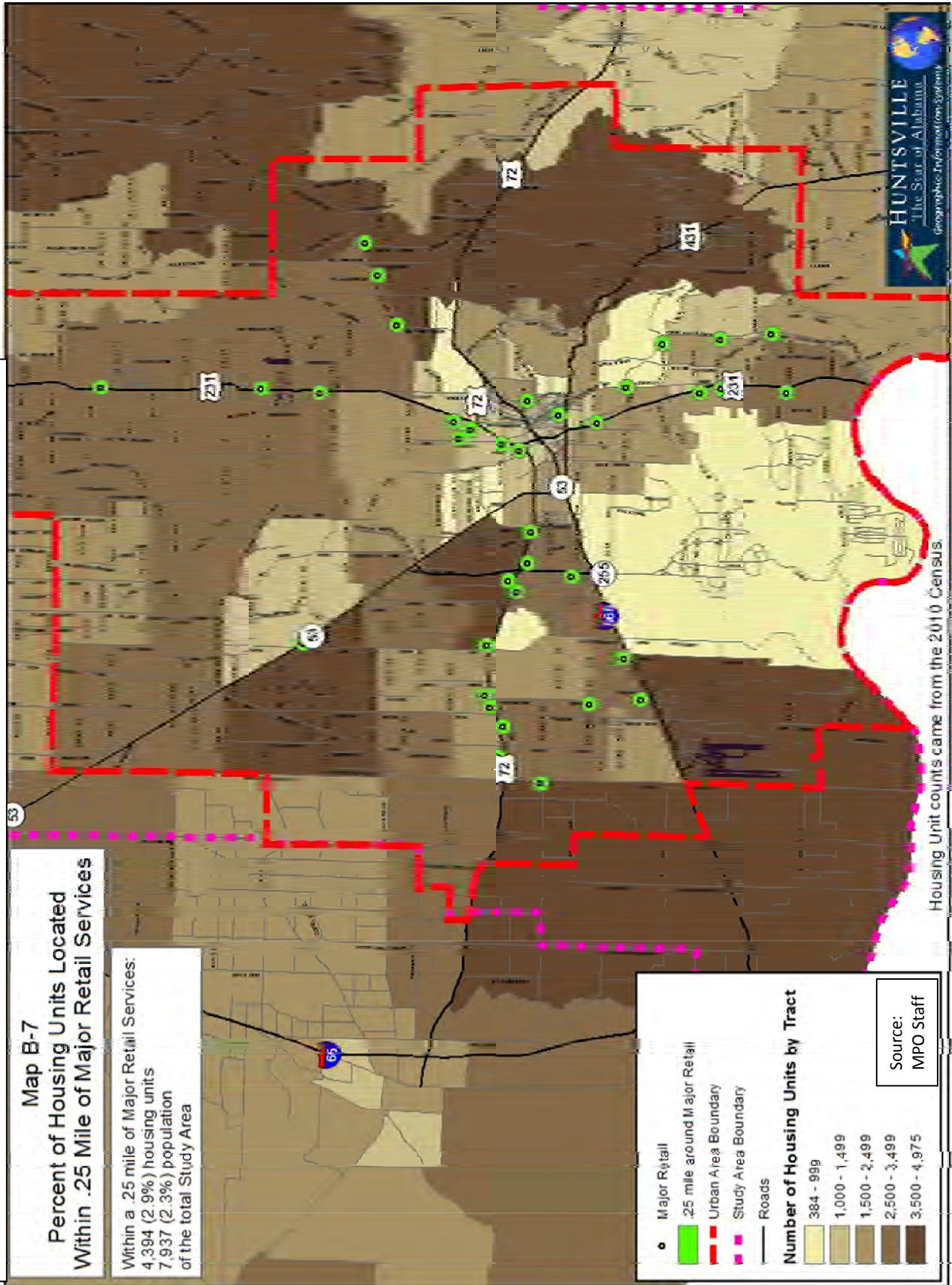
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/guide/guide\\_current.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federalaid/guide/guide_current.cfm)

<b>Program Identification Code</b>	<b>Funding Category Description</b>	<b>Total Funds Programmed</b>	<b>% of All Funds Programmed</b>
STPHV-STPAA or STPAA-STPHV	Combination of Surface Transportation Any Area and Surface Transportation Urbanized Area funds (This match is paid by locals)	\$711,656	.1%
STPHV	Surface Transportation Urbanized Area - Huntsville (Federal/local match)	\$19,483,995	6%
STPHV-ACAA	Combination of ATRIP and Surface Transportation Huntsville Urban Area funds (local match)	\$9,300,000	3%
STPAA	Surface Transportation Program Any Area	\$1,364,363	.3%
STPAA-NR	Combination of Surface Transportation Any Area and National Highway System funds	\$478,067	.1%
ACAAXxxxx-ATRP	Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program	\$88,909,600	27%
ACBRZxxxx-ARTP	Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program dedicated to Bridges	\$929,000	.2%
NH, NHF, or NR	National Highway System	\$209,518,550	60%
NH-HSIP	Combination of National Highway System and Highway Safety Improvement Program Funds	\$2,573,480	.7%
IM-STPSA	Combination of Interstate Maintenance and STEA Any Hazards funds	\$1,370,459	.3%
TAPHV	Transportation Alternatives > 200K Huntsville MAP-21	\$1,135,741	.2%
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Projects	\$373,700	.1%
FAUP	Federal Aid Unique Programs	\$5,200,000	2%

**Map B-7: Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Major Retail Services**

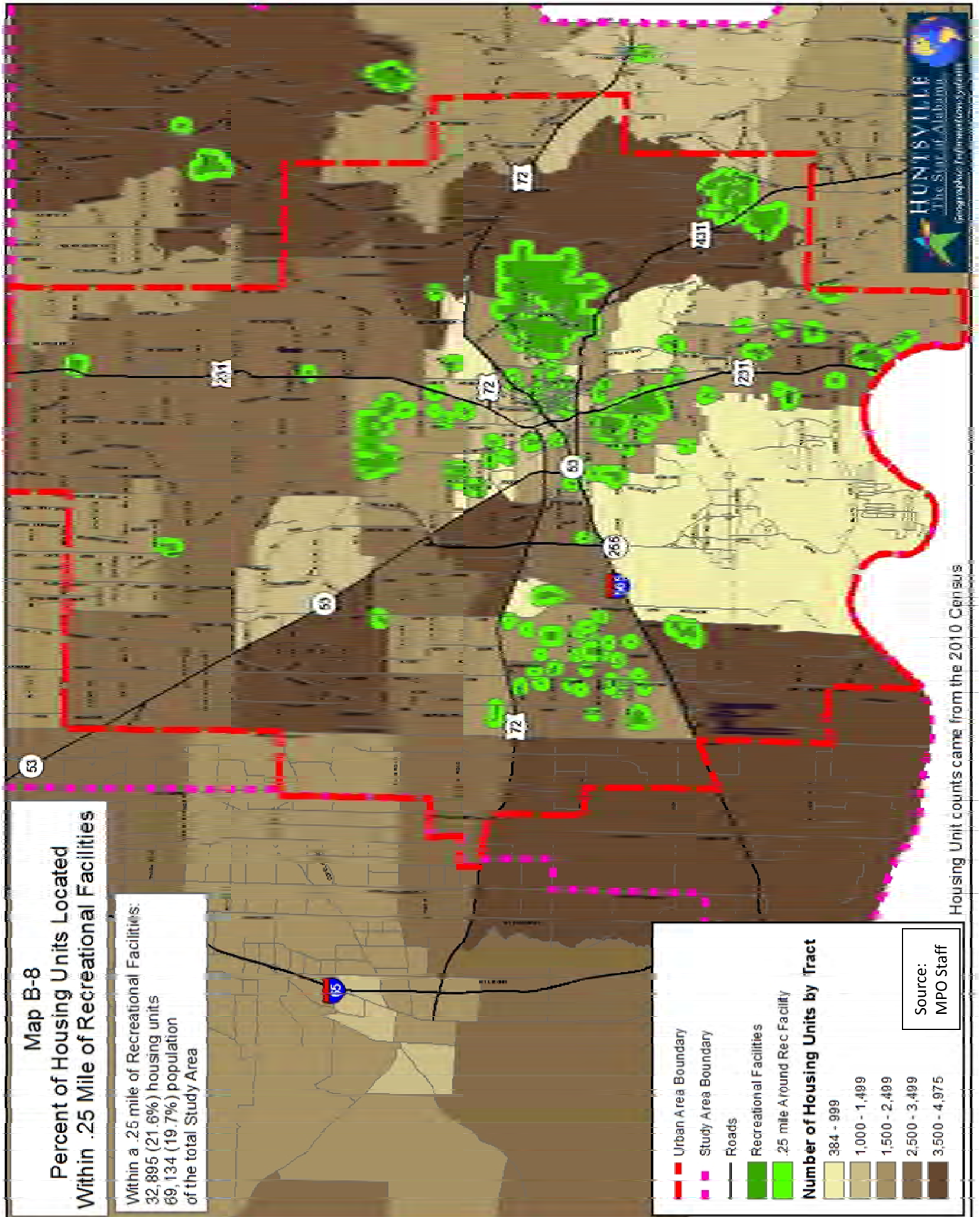
**6 Value Communities and Neighborhoods**

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods - rural, urban, or suburban





Map B-8: Percent of Housing Units Located .25 Mile From Recreational Facilities



## **Appendix C**

# **TITLE VI DOCUMENTATION LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PLAN**

**PREPARED BY  
HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**January 15, 2014  
Revision Draft: December 7, 2016**

# HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY [LEP] PLAN

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This *Limited English Proficiency Plan* has been prepared to document the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (HATS-MPO’s) procedures for integrating persons with limited English proficiency into the transportation planning process. The MPO, as the official decision-making body of the transportation planning process, determines how federal highway and transit funds are spent in the MPO Study Area. The HATS-MPO as a body does not receive any direct or designated transit funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The City of Huntsville Department of Parking and Public Transit, a direct recipient of FTA funds and as a participant of the MPO, has in place a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Plan that has been approved by the Federal Transit Administration. Madison County’s transportation service, TRAM, is a sub-recipient of FTA funds through the Alabama Department of Transportation and is a participant of the HATS-MPO. Madison County’s program has in place a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Plan and works with the Alabama Department of Transportation as the direct recipient to ensure that all requirements are met. This specific document expands upon the City of Huntsville’s and Madison County’s plan and covers the entire MPO Study Area. The plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq, and its implementing regulations, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Executive Order 13166, titled *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person’s inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each federal agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds, including metropolitan planning organizations. The MPO receives federal assistance through the U.S. Department of Transportation [U.S. DOT].

#### 1.1 Public Involvement

The Huntsville Area Transportation Study – MPO first adopted this LEP as part of its Public Participation Plan on January 15, 2014. The first revision of the plan took place in December 7, 2016. Prior to its adoption, the availability of the plan was advertised through press releases to local news media and agencies and organizations that work with minorities, low income persons, those with disabilities, and elderly individuals. The draft plan was published on the MPO’s web site and was also made available at the MPO office and the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library main branch.

The MPO accepted comments regarding the plan from September 22, 2016 to November 7, 2016. The public was given the opportunity to provide comments either in person, at the MPO Committee meetings, or via postal mail, e-mail, fax, and/or phone.

## **1.2 Plan Summary**

The HATS-MPO has developed this *Limited English Proficiency Plan* to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency [LEP] who wish to access services provided. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available. In order to prepare this plan, the MPO staff coordinated the U.S. DOT four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population.
- The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program, activities, or services.
- The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to the LEP population.
- The resources available to the MPO and the costs to provide LEP assistance.

## **2.0 MEANINGFUL ACCESS: FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS**

The Department of Justice indicated that the required four-factor analysis is intended to balance meaningful access for the LEP population against imposing undue burdens upon small local governments. A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is presented below.

### **2.1 The number or proportion of LEP persons serviced or encountered in the eligible service population.**

The MPO staff reviewed the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey and determined that 23,394 persons (5 years old and over) in the MPO Study Area [7% of the population] speak a language other than English at home. Of those persons in the MPO Study Area, 4,114 persons [1.23%] have limited English proficiency; that is, they speak English "not well" or "not at all". In the MPO Study Area, of those persons with limited English proficiency, 2,922 speak Spanish, 764 speak Asian and Pacific Island language, 346 speak other Indo-

European languages other than Spanish, and 82 speak other languages.

**2.2 The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with the program, activities, or services.**

Over the nearly 40 years of the HATS-MPO's existence, the MPO staff has not had any contact with anyone who did not speak English very well. During that same period, no individual or group has requested the MPO to provide an interpreter or to translate a document. Future interaction with individuals possessing limited English proficiency is expected to be infrequent and unpredictable.

**2.3 The nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the program to the LEP population.**

There is not a large geographic concentration of any type of LEP individuals in the HATS-MPO Study Area. An overwhelming 93% of the population speaks only English. As a result, there are few social, service, professional and leadership organizations within the MPO Study Area that focus on outreach to LEP individuals. Since the HATS-MPO plans how federal transportation funds are used within its Study Area, the MPO's work impacts every resident. However, the MPO does not provide direct, immediate, vital, or emergency services such as medical treatment, meals, or shelter. Involvement in the HATS-MPO's transportation planning process is voluntary.

**2.4 The resources available to the MPO and the costs to provide LEP assistance.**

The HATS-MPO has reviewed the available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. Additionally, the HATS-MPO has determined which of its documents would be most valuable for translation if such services are needed. Currently, the HATS-MPO has about 4.5 full-time equivalent persons on staff. Approximately 4.2% of the MPO's annual work program budget is available for Title VI/LEP activities. The cost to provide interpretation and translation service vary greatly depending upon the frequency and volume of work as well as the methods used. Despite its financial limitations, the HATS-MPO is committed to maintaining an open and inclusive planning process that allows LEP individuals to participate. The MPO, working within its budget, will implement the most cost-effective methods for interpretation and translation work based upon requests and anticipated demand for such services. To further meet this end, the MPO staff will work with other organizations that may be able to assist for outreach and translation efforts. The HATS-MPO has developed an inventory of available organizations that could be partnered with for outreach and translation efforts. The Alabama Hispanic Association based in Huntsville can be tapped for assistance when necessary. This organization is composed of dedicated volunteers assisting in the needs of the Hispanic Community in North Alabama. There is also a Japan-American Society of Alabama (JASA) based in Birmingham, AL. In



addition, two (2) local universities have foreign or international student programs. These programs are designed to accommodate the needs of the students whose first language is not English. The City of Huntsville Office of Multicultural Affairs may be beneficial towards LEP assistance. The Office of Multicultural Affairs maintains and supports the City of Huntsville's Hispanic and Latino Advisory Council (HLAC), another resource for translation services. Additionally, the Madison County Commission and City of Huntsville support Global Ties, Alabama, formerly the International Services Council of Alabama, another potential resource for translation services.

### **3.0 LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AND IDENTIFICATION OF LIMITED ENGLISH EFFICIENCY (LEP) PEOPLE**

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to HATS-MPO programs and activities. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language. The HATS-MPO staff will determine when interpretation and/or translation are needed and are reasonable.

#### **3.1 Identification of LEP Persons**

Within the HATS-MPO Study Area, approximately 1.23% of the population do not speak English at home. Spanish is by far the largest language group, representing 0.87% of the population. The other language groups following (Indo-European and Asian-Pacific and other) make up about 0.36% of the population. The HATS-MPO staff may identify a LEP person who needs language assistance by the following methods:

- Examine records to see if requests for language assistance have been received in the past, either at meetings or over the phone, to determine whether language assistance might be needed at future events.
- Have the Census Bureau *Language Identification Flashcard* (Attachment C-1) available at MPO sponsored meetings and events. Individuals self-identifying as persons not proficient in English may not be able to be accommodated with translation assistance at the event, but it will assist the sponsoring agency in identifying language assistance needs for future events. Identified LEP persons will have the option to being added to the MPO's public notice/news release mailing list.
- Have the *Language Identification Flashcard* available at the front desk at the HATS-MPO office to accommodate walk-in requests.

- Post notice of LEP Plan and the availability of *Language Identification Flashcard*.
- Encounters with LEP persons will be tracked in a spreadsheet that will be updated after each MPO meeting or sponsored event. The spreadsheet will list the type of service provided and any other relevant information. The spreadsheet can be made available upon request.

### 3.2 Language Assistance Measures

Although there is a very low percentage of LEP individuals in the HATS-MPO Study Area (persons who speak English “not well” or “not at all”), the HATS-MPO will strive to offer the following measures:

- The MPO staff will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP individuals who have difficulty communicating in English.
- The HATS-MPO will provide interpreters and translation services as their budget allows. The HATS-MPO will use free websites and programs whenever possible to translate correspondence and documents. In-person or telephone interpreters will be utilized as needed. If volunteer interpreters are not available, the HATS-MPO may pay for such services as their budget permits.
- There are several resources available to the HATS-MPO to accommodate LEP persons.
  - The Alabama Hispanic Association (AHA) made up of volunteers to assist the needs of the Hispanic community in the North Alabama area can be accessed for interpretive assistance.
  - The City of Huntsville Office of Multicultural Affairs can also be utilized when needed.
  - Foreign or International Student Program Administrators at Alabama A&M University or University of Alabama, Huntsville (UAH), and Oakwood University.
  - Language assistance services available on websites. The HATS-MPO staff will use free translation websites and programs to respond to written communication from LEP persons. If the translation websites fail, the MPO staff will confer with local or telephone interpreters to ensure proper communication.

- If a client asks for language assistance and HATS-MPO determines that the client is an LEP person and that language assistance is necessary to provide meaningful access, reasonable efforts will be made to provide free language assistance. If reasonably possible, the HATS-MPO will provide the language assistance in the LEP client's preferred language. The HATS-MPO has the discretion to determine whether language assistance is needed, and if so, the type of language assistance necessary to provide meaningful access.
- The HATS-MPO's website has a Google Translate plug-in that is installed at the bottom of every page. The plug-in supports nearly every language spoken in the MPO Study Area.
- When an interpreter is needed, in person or on the telephone, staff will attempt to determine what language is required and then access language assistance at one or more of the available resources identified under Section 2.4.
- After an interpretation or translation service is provided, the HATS-MPO staff will ask the LEP individual if they understood what was communicated and if they require additional or an alternative language service. If additional service is required, the HATS-MPO will change interpretation or translation providers.

#### **4.0 STAFF TRAINING**

The HATS-MPO staff will review the LEP Plan in tandem with the Public Participation Plan to ensure they understand their responsibilities. During the annual review, the staff will verify the continued availability of interpretation and translation resources.

#### **5.0 TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS**

Document translation is required only if a secondary population segment is at or exceeds 5.0% of the total population. Based upon the MPO Study Area's failure to reach this threshold, there is not a requirement to publish any documents and/or plans in a secondary language. The HATS-MPO weighed the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups and considered the expense of translating the documents, the barriers to meaningful translation or interpretation of information, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents, the existence of multiple dialects within a single language group, the apparent literacy rate in a LEP group, and other relevant factors. At this time it is not a requirement, and it is an unnecessary burden to have any documents translated. If documents are translated in the future, the ALDOT Transportation Planning Bureau will require advance notification before any PL/5303 funds are expended for this purpose.

Due to the very small local LEP population, the HATS-MPO does not have a formal outreach procedure in place. Translation resources have been identified and are limited in this region. However, in the rare instance when and if the need arises for LEP outreach, the HATS-MPO *may consider* the following options:

- When staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include a large concentration of LEP individuals, then documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas may be translated in an alternative language based on the known LEP population.
- HATS-MPO maps, documents, plans, or other publications may be made available in an alternative language when and if a specific and concentrated LEP population is identified and requests made.

## **6.0 FORMAL INTERPRETERS**

When necessary to provide meaningful access for LEP clients, the HATS-MPO will provide qualified interpreters, including any bilingual staff of the City of Huntsville, if available. At important stages that require one-on-one contact, written translation and verbal interpretation services will be provided consistent with the four-factor analysis used earlier.

The HATS-MPO may require a formal interpreter to certify the following:

- The interpreter understood the matter communicated and rendered a competent interpretation.
- The interpreter will maintain private information. Non-public data will not be disclosed without written authorization from the client.
- Bilingual City of Huntsville employees, when available, can provide limited assistance to the HATS-MPO staff and LEP clients as part of their regular job duties.

## **7.0 INFORMAL INTERPRETERS**

Informal interpreters may include the family members, friends, legal guardians, service representatives or advocates of the LEP person. HATS-MPO staff will determine whether it is appropriate to rely on informal interpreters, depending upon the circumstances and subject matter of the communication. However, in many circumstances, informal interpreters, especially children, are not competent to provide quality and accurate interpretations. There may be issues of confidentiality, competency, or conflict of interest.

An LEP person may use an informal interpreter of his or her own choosing and at their expense, either in place of or as a supplement to the free language assistance offered by the HATS-MPO. If possible, the HATS-MPO should accommodate an LEP client's request to use an informal interpreter in place of a formal interpreter.

If an LEP individual prefers an informal interpreter, after the HATS-MPO has offered free interpreter services, the informal interpreter may interpret. In these cases, the LEP person and informal interpreter should sign a waiver of free interpreter services.

If an LEP individual wants to use his or her own informal interpreter, the HATS-MPO reserves the right to also have a formal interpreter present.

## **8.0 OUTSIDE RESOURCES**

Outside resources may include community volunteers. Outside resources may be used for interpreting services at public or informal meetings or events if a timely request has been made.

## **9.0 MONITORING AND UPDATING THE LEP PLAN**

The HATS-MPO staff will update the LEP as required by the U.S. DOT. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the 2010 or later U.S. Census (American Community Survey) is available, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the HATS-MPO Study Area. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP person contacts encountered annually.
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed.
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need.
- Determine whether the HATS-MPO's financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed.
- Determine whether the HATS-MPO staff fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the HATS-MPO's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

## **10.0 DISSEMINATION OF THE LEP PLAN**

A link to the HATS-MPO LEP Plan will be included on its website,

[www.huntsvillempo.org](http://www.huntsvillempo.org). Any person or agency with internet access will be able to access and download the plan from the HATS-MPO website. Alternatively, any person or agency may request a copy of the plan via telephone, fax, mail, or in person, and shall be provided a copy of the plan at no cost. LEP individuals may request copies of the plan in translation which the HATS-MPO staff will provide, if feasible. Questions or comments regarding the LEP Plan may be submitted to the Huntsville Area Transportation Study – Metropolitan Planning Organization, P.O. Box 308, Huntsville, AL 35804, phone (256) 427-5100.

United States  
**Census  
2000**

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Bureau of the Census



**LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION FLASHCARD**

<input type="checkbox"/> <p>املاً هذا المربع اذا كنت تقرأ أو تتحدث العربية.</p>	Arabic
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Խորհրդով ենք նշում կատարեք այս քառակուսով, եթե խոսում կամ կարդում եք հայերեն:</p>	Armenian
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>যদি আপনি বাংলা পড়েন বা বলেন তা হলে এই বাক্সে দাগ দিন।</p>	Bengali
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>សូមញាកត្តុង្គប្រអប់នេះ បើអ្នកមាន ច្រើនយាយភាសា ខ្មែរ ។</p>	Cambodian
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Matka i kahhon komu un taitai pat un sang i Chamorro.</p>	Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>如果您具有中文閱讀和會話能力，請在本空格內標上X記號。</p>	Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Make kazyé sa a si ou li oswa ou pale kreyòl ayisyen.</p>	Creole
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Označite ovaj kvadratić ako čitate ili govorite hrvatski jezik.</p>	Croatian (Serbo-Croatian)
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Zaškrtněte tuto kolonku, pokud čtete a hovoříte česky.</p>	Czech
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Kruis dit vakje aan als u Nederlands kunt lezen of spreken.</p>	Dutch
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Mark this box if you read or speak English.</p>	English
<input type="checkbox"/> <p>اگر خواندن و نوشتن فارسی بدرهستین، این مربع را علامت بگذارید.</p>	Farsi

<input type="checkbox"/>	Cocher ici si vous lisez ou parlez le français.	French
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kreuzen Sie dieses Kästchen an, wenn Sie Deutsch lesen oder sprechen.	German
<input type="checkbox"/>	Σημειώστε αυτό το πλαίσιο αν διαβάζετε ή μιλάτε Ελληνικά.	Greek
<input type="checkbox"/>	अगर आप हिन्दी बोलते या पढ़ सकते हैं तो इस गोले पर चिह्न लगाएँ।	Hindi
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kos lub voj no yog koj paub twm thiab hais lus Hmoob.	Hmong
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jelölje meg ezt a kockát, ha megérti vagy beszél a magyar nyelvet.	Hungarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markaam daytoy nga kahon no makabasa wenno makasaoka iti Ilocano.	Ilocano
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marchi questa casella se legge o parla italiano.	Italian
<input type="checkbox"/>	日本語を読んだり、話せる場合はここに印を付けてください。	Japanese
<input type="checkbox"/>	한국어를 읽거나 말할 수 있으면 이 칸에 표시하십시오.	Korean
<input type="checkbox"/>	ໃຫ້ໝາຍໃສ່ຊ່ອງນີ້ ຖ້າທ່ານອ່ານຫຼືປາກພາສາລາວ.	Laotian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Zaznacz tę kratkę jeżeli czyta Pan/Pani lub mówi po polsku.	Polish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assinale este quadrado se voce lê ou fala Português.	Portuguese



<input type="checkbox"/>	Însemnați această casuță dacă citiți sau vorbiți Românește.	Romanian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Пометьте этот квадратик, если вы читаете или говорите по-русски.	Russian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ma'a pe fa'a iloga le pusa lea pe afai e te faitau pe tusitusi i le gagana Samoa.	Samoaan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Обележите овај квадратик уколико читате или говорите српски језик.	Serbian (Serbo-Croatian)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Označte tento štvorček, ak viete čítať alebo hovoriť po slovensky.	Slovak
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marque esta casilla si lee o habla español.	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markahan ang kahon na ito kung ikaw ay nagsasalita o nagbabasa ng Tagalog.	Tagalog
<input type="checkbox"/>	ให้กาเครื่องหมายลงในช่องดำผ่านอ่านหรือพูดภาษาไทย.	Thai
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faka'ilonga'i 'ae puha ko'eni kapau 'oku te lau pe lea 'ae lea fakatonga.	Tongan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Відмітьте цю клітинку, якщо ви читаете або говорите українською мовою.	Ukrainian
<input type="checkbox"/>	اگر آپ اردو پڑھتے یا بولتے ہیں تو اس خانہ میں نشان لگائیں.	Urdu
<input type="checkbox"/>	Xin đánh dấu vào ô này nếu quý biết đọc và nói được Việt Ngữ.	Vietnamese
<input type="checkbox"/>	צייכנט דעם קעסטל אויב איר שרייבט אדער ליינט אידיש.	Yiddish

**APPENDIX D**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

## **APPENDIX D PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

Federal regulation 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x) requires that the MPO evaluate the effectiveness of its public involvement program on a periodic basis. In evaluating its processes, the MPO may determine to no longer utilize techniques that are deemed ineffective, or to initiate the use of other innovative techniques that provide better response and more positive feedback. The purpose of this appendix is to establish guidelines for the evaluation of public involvement techniques identified in the **Public Participation Plan for Transportation Planning in the Huntsville Urbanized Area**.

This appendix will outline the steps to be taken to evaluate the identified public involvement techniques and will identify measures to quantify success rates and outline strategies to improve the MPOs' public involvement process.

### **Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement tools identified in this document, methods need to be established to measure or gauge performance. The methods used for evaluating the performance of the public involvement techniques in this plan consist of surveys, quantitative analysis, and qualitative analysis. A definition of each of these methods is provided below. Additionally, **Table 1** lists each public involvement technique, along with performance goals and the methods for reaching those goals.

#### **Surveys**

Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, by mail, or by e-mail. The selection of the best type and extent of survey for evaluation purposes is dependent upon the actual public involvement technique being evaluated. For example, persons may be asked if the meeting notices shown on the local government cable channel is an effective notification tool.

#### **Quantitative Analysis**

Quantitative analysis can be achieved through the use of statistics. For instance, the number of persons attending a public involvement meeting can be compared to the number of persons notified of the meeting.

#### **Qualitative Analysis**

Qualitative analysis is more objective. It deals primarily with MPO staff review of certain techniques, with improvements listed and/or changes proposed. Qualitative analysis can be used to evaluate web sites as well as the content of newsletters.

**TABLE 1**  
**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES EVALUATION**

<b>Public Involvement Tool</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>Actions to be Taken to Meet Goal</b>
Public Participation Plan	No measure used. The PPP should reflect the policies and preferences of the MPO.	None.	The PPP will be updated every three years, and will include the improvement strategies determined through public involvement evaluations.
MPO Website	Number of hits to site.	Minimum of 25 hits a quarter, with a goal of increasing hits by 3% per quarter.	Use other public involvement tools to promote the use of the website.
MPO Database	Number of returned mail items.	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing.	Immediately correct database when mail is returned.
MPO Newsletter	Phone calls, letters, e-mails, number of returned newsletters.	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing.	Continue providing information that gets favorable attention; correct or improve items that receive negative feedback.
Press Releases	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public.	None.	Keep media continually informed of meetings and opportunities for public input.
Legal Ads	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public.	None.	Provide plan review notices and meeting announcements to newspaper in timely manner, so the public can be effectively notified and the news media can highlight upcoming meetings and issues.
Cable TV Announcements	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from public.	Minimum of 5% of public involvement meeting attendees/survey respondents in coverage areas indicate that they saw the meeting notice.	Provide plan review notices and meeting announcements to Mayor's office in timely manner, so announcements can be broadcast more frequently.
Project Specific Websites	Phone calls, letters, e-mails from public, number of site hits.	Minimum of 25 hits a month when used, with a goal of increasing hits by 3% over life of page.	Use other public involvement tools to promote the use of the website.

**TABLE 1**  
**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES EVALUATION**  
*(Continued)*

<b>Public Involvement Tool</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>Actions to be Taken to Meet Goal</b>
Project/Transportation Plan Open Houses	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from media or public, attendance. (ALDOT sponsored meetings will not be evaluated by MPO staff.)	Minimum of 15 persons in attendance per meeting. (This goal may not be met, as the public tends not to attend involvement meetings en masse, even though meetings are widely advertised.)	Multiple meetings will be scheduled at times and locations convenient to public. Will use other public involvement tools to promote meeting locations, dates, and times.
Availability of Draft Planning Documents for Public Comment	Phone calls, letters, e-mails, comment sheets.	Number of persons returning comments concerning the plans.	Staff should monitor number of blank comment sheets left with plans at public facilities. Draft planning documents should be left at multiple central locations throughout the MPO study area.
Citizen Advisory Committee	Phone calls, letters, or e-mails from invitees.	N/A. These members are appointed by elected officials in the study area.	The MPO should encourage members to attend meetings. Elected officials should be encouraged to appoint citizens that promote racial, geographic, and economic diversity.
Comment Forms	Phone calls, letters, e-mails, number of responses.	60% of meeting attendees returned a form, or 20% of completed comment sheets were returned with plan left at public facilities.	Stress importance to citizens of receiving public comments. Use other public involvement tools to advertise locations of comment forms and desire to receive input.
Flyers	Calls, letters, e-mails, number of persons reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees indicate that they saw the meeting advertised via flyer.	Place public notices prominently on bulletin boards or other central locations offered by public facilities.

**Improvement Strategies**

The Huntsville Area MPO strives to improve public participation through increasing public awareness and by improving upon the public involvement techniques highlighted in this

document. The decisions made by the MPO affect the residents of the community, and the public must be aware that their involvement is critical to the transportation planning process.

It is important that public involvement be evaluated, and its effectiveness measured. Utilizing the performance measures detailed in **Table 1** to evaluate each technique, and periodically testing its effectiveness is critical if public involvement is to be successful.

Within one month of completing a major public involvement process, the evaluation of techniques utilized in the process should be conducted. For on-going activities, such as internet websites and MPO newsletters, the evaluation should be performed semi-annually. **Attachment 1** provides a form to record the type of evaluation conducted. **Attachment 2** is provided as a template or guide for the evaluation process, and is used to record improvement strategies. Each time an evaluation is conducted, specific improvement strategies should be identified for implementation the next time the technique is employed. If an improvement is needed for a routine public involvement activity, such as the website or MPO newsletter, deadlines for implementing the improvement should be set.



**ATTACHMENT 2  
HUNTSVILLE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY OF THE  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVALUATION  
IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FORM**

Technique being Evaluated:
Date Evaluation Completed:
Recommended Improvement Strategies:
Date(s) of Implementation:



## APPENDIX E

### GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations may appear in this document and are commonly used by the MPO when communicating transportation plans and initiatives to the public.

3-C – Cooperative, Continuous, Comprehensive  
ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act  
ADEM – Alabama Department of Environmental Management  
ADT – Average Daily Traffic  
ALDOT - Alabama Department of Transportation  
CAC - Citizens Advisory Committee  
CMP - Congestion Management Process  
CN – Construction  
DBE – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise  
EIS - Environmental Impact Statement  
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency  
FAST- Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (2015)  
FHWA - Federal Highway Administration  
FONSI - Finding of No Significant Impact  
FTA - Federal Transit Administration  
GIS - Geographical Information Systems  
HATS - Huntsville Area Transportation Study  
ISTEA - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)  
ITS - Intelligent Transportation Systems  
LRTP - Long Range Transportation Plan  
MPA – Metropolitan Planning Area  
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization  
PE - Preliminary Engineering  
PIP/PPP - Public Involvement Plan/Public Participation Plan or Process  
PS&E - Plans, Specifications, and Estimates  
RW - Right of Way  
STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program  
TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program  
TAZ – Traffic Analysis Zone  
TCC - Technical Coordinating Committee  
TIP - Transportation Improvement Program  
TMA – Transportation Management Area  
TSM – Transportation System Management  
UPWP - Unified Planning Work Program  
VMT – Vehicle Miles Traveled

This page intentionally left blank.