

August 27, 2022



The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, West Building, 9th Floor  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

**Re: Holmes Avenue Complete Streets Corridor Project – Huntsville, AL**

As the Huntsville Bicycle Advisory and Safety Committee (BASC), we are writing to express our strong support for the City of Huntsville (COH) application to the USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program for the Holmes Avenue Complete Streets Corridor Project. The project's purpose is to improve safety and provide multimodal connectivity within the 3.25-mile right-of-way of Holmes Avenue between Downtown and UAH/Cummings Research Park. The project will employ a "Complete Streets" design model, incorporating protected bike lanes, ADA-compliant sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian safety lighting and signalization, and enhanced transit access for alternative mode users. The project area is located within a "Historically Disadvantaged Area" of the city where access to healthcare and other essential services is vital for the vulnerable populations living there. Holmes Avenue has also been the primary cycling East-West corridor in Huntsville, yet there is little to no protections in place. In 1998, local cyclists implored the COH to add bike lanes to the Holmes Ave Road widening/improvement project because many biked Holmes Ave to the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) or Research Park. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful then. As the city has grown in population, so has our local crash rates, especially for bicyclists and pedestrians with vehicles trying to share roads designed only for cars. Transforming this corridor into a Complete Street will provide much-needed safety and protection to all road users. BASC is committed to Vision Zero, and we believe in strong partnerships to ensure the safety of all users on our local roadways.

BASC is a group of citizens and representatives from several COH departments: Traffic Engineering, Planning, Huntsville Police (HPD) and a city council member. BASC provides knowledge about cycling to enable planning, encourage cycling, and develop safe transportation facilities in the Huntsville area. Since 2008, BASC represents the local bike club, bike shops, and citizens at large. BASC instituted See & Be Seen, a proactive online website including a reporting tool where cyclists can share road incidents with motorists where they feel unsafe. HPD uses this data to warn vehicular drivers who have been reported to have endangered cyclists. BASC endeavors to inform municipal decision-making on road improvements and determine areas that need Complete Streets safety intervention. BASC works with COH Planning and the Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to review and revise a Bikeway Plan and the Long-Range Transportation Plan. We also worked with the COH to help develop our city-wide Complete Streets Policy and will be a critical partner in measuring and reporting project performance of implemented multimodal Complete Streets projects.

We know from experience and data reporting in many municipal settings that separating designated travel lanes for walking, biking, and driving, using the Complete Streets model, will protect pedestrians and cyclists from automobile and truck traffic, while encouraging people to utilize these modes of travel.

Huntsville is a fast-growing community and bicycling and walking is also increasing. Huntsville can claim two Bicycle Friendly Businesses, designated by the League of American Bicyclists (LAB). Thousands of cyclists are represented by many cycling-centric groups in town, including the Spring City Cycling Club (founded in 1892!), Huntsville Urban Bike Share (HUBS) Coop, Huntsville Area Mountain Riders (HAMR), Rocket City Cycle Belles (RCCB), Team Rocket Tri-Club, Bikes & Brews, and 8 National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) middle and high school mountain bike teams, as well as BASC. This means there is a growing number of cyclists and families on our roadways, and it is our responsibility as a community to keep them safe. It is for these reasons BASC strongly supports the implementation of Complete Streets throughout our city and urges the Department of Transportation to consider the City of Huntsville's application for the Holmes Avenue Complete Streets Corridor Project.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical project for our community, as our lives depend on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vivian Nguyen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vivian" being more prominent than the last name "Nguyen".

Vivian Nguyen, Larry Mason, Ben Payment

Jamie Miernik, Secretary

Bruce Weddendorf, Co-chair

Citizen Members - Huntsville Bicycle Advisory and Safety Committee (BASC)

James Moore, Co-chair

City of Huntsville Planning Dept