

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Laura L. Gipson  
256-258-1977  
[lgipson@hsvairport.org](mailto:lgipson@hsvairport.org)

## Huntsville International Airport Celebrates Grand Opening of Public Waiting

*Regional chamber business after-hours event serves as venue for ribbon cutting*

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Jan. 14, 2010** – Huntsville International Airport today hosted a regional chamber business after-hours event to celebrate the grand opening of its new public waiting area. The event, which was presented by the chambers of commerce of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) community, served as the official ribbon cutting for the new facility. The expansion of public waiting is part of an overall 5-year, \$65 million capital improvement project that began in 2005. Construction of the public waiting area by Gadsden-based Hudak & Dawson Construction Co., Inc. totaled more than \$13.5 million and took two years to complete.

According to Bill Johnston, Jr., Chairman, Board of Directors, Huntsville International Airport, “For the first time at Huntsville International Airport, inbound and outbound passengers are routed through two separate wings. The wing to the west is home to security checkpoint with the east wing serving as public waiting. This was an integral part in the expansion of our facility to continue to meet the needs of the growing community.”

The construction of the two wings along with the connectorway between the two totals more than 20,000 square feet – quadrupling the size of the former bridge that connected the terminal to the concourse. Numerous amenities are included in the new construction, including Paradies’ new gift shop, *Explore Huntsville*; new terminal restrooms, including a family restroom; new high-definition, plasma screen displays; and a 7-foot by 3-foot curved Clarity Matrix Video Wall System (jumbotron) – the first of its kind at an airport nationwide. In addition, the entire north wall of the new public waiting features a collage of historic photographs highlighting the past 200 years of Huntsville’s history. The wall, entitled “*200 Years of Discovery*,” depicts the earliest days of Huntsville’s first settler, John Hunt, and Big Spring through the future of space exploration with the development of Ares I.

“The historical wall adds a beautiful touch to the new space at Huntsville International Airport, and provides a perfect canvas to showcase our community’s

history in a venue that serves as the first impression of Huntsville for thousands of passengers each year,” said Mayor Tommy Battle, City of Huntsville. “The ongoing expansion and renovation of the airport represents the continued growth of the Tennessee Valley, and I am excited to open this first-class facility to the community.”

Mike Gillespie, Chairman, Madison County Commission, added, “It has been a pleasure to watch the transformation of the airport over the last five years since the capital improvement project was initiated. The openness of the new public waiting area and the modern design set the stage for meeting the transportation needs of our community well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

###