

**ARC BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN TASK FORCE
MEETING SUMMARY
04-21-2010**

Item 1: PLAN 2040 Sustainability Framework, Regan Hammond (ARC)

Regan Hammond provided an update on PLAN 2040 progress. Hammond explained that PLAN 2040 is both a long-range transportation plan update (required by the federal regulations), and an update to the RDP plan (required by the state). The draft PLAN 2040 goals, objectives and measures framework are centered on sustainability, with sustainability defined in terms of environmental, social and economic aspects. The three key goals under the sustainability framework are to ensure that Metro Atlanta serves as a global gateway to the South; to encourage healthy communities; and to expand access to community resources.

Hammond added that through discussion with stakeholders and committees, the PLAN 2040 goals have been translated into 5 objectives, associated performance measures framework and indicators of success. Hammond indicated that a variety of stakeholder groups have vetted the PLAN 2040 framework so far. Based on the framework, ARC staff is now soliciting input to develop policies and project prioritization process. One of the issues that will need to be addressed is how to treat “conflicted corridors” where multiple priorities overlap (such as regional mobility for vehicle trips, freight, transit, and pedestrian and bicycle accommodation.)

Regan highlighted some of the findings from the regional assessment prepared for PLAN 2040, indicating that only 75% of the region have access to other transportation modes, apart from taking a car trip for every trip. Hammond also proceeded to describe the bicycle and pedestrian policies that were incorporated into Envision 6, and laid out some ideas for better bicycle and pedestrian policies moving forward.

Rebecca Serna (ABC) posed a question as to whether the bicycle mobility was considered when calculating the percentage of people with no alternative trip options. For example, Rebecca indicated, from anecdotal evidence some former Clayton County transit riders might live within a bikable distance of their work, even if they don’t currently think of it as a transportation option for a variety of reasons. Regan responded that bicycling was somewhat considered.

David Crites (SRTS Network) posed a question as to whether the PLAN 2040 policies and goals address traffic safety. Regan answered that 2nd objective (foster a healthy, well trained, safe and secure population) and goal number 2 (encouraging healthy communities) encompass traffic safety.

Byron Rushing (GDOT) asked how ARC could influence the end-of-trip bicycle facilities, which were recommended within Envision 6 policies. Regan replied that the DRI review process, Green Communities awards, and education and encouragement are the basic tools that ARC has to work with currently.

Abby Mattera (URS/SRTS outreach coordinator) posed a question as to whether the region was tracking improvements; for example, is ARC aware of which local jurisdictions have been implementing bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Lyubov Zuyeva suggested that current lack of pedestrian and bicycle counts in the region makes it difficult to evaluate the improvements.

The following additional suggestions for PLAN 2040 policies and funding prioritization were made:

- Rebecca Serna (ABC) suggested that mode shift (% of trips by walking and bicycling in the region) could be used as a performance measure, to be tracked over time. The region could set specific goals, and aim to achieve those.
- Crash data (and decrease in pedestrian and bicycle crashes) could be used as a performance measure
- David Crites (SRTS Network) suggested adding SRTS language, and set-aside SRTS educational funding as part of PLAN 2040, to complement the federal SRTS funding allocated through the SRTS program
- Byron Rushing (GDOT) and David Crites (SRTS Network) suggested that ARC incorporates Complete Streets policy into PLAN 2040, or adopt a separate Complete Streets policy.
- Rebecca Serna (ABC) suggested that given the recent increase in hit-and-runs, there needs to increase safe pedestrian crossings in the regions
- David Crites suggested that as part of SRTS measures, the # of schools participating in SRTS, and the # of kids biking and walking to school could be used as performance measures
- Byron Rushing (GDOT) suggested that ARC should track how many local governments adopt Complete Streets policies over time
- Rebecca Serna (ABC) suggested that tracking of bicycle facilities additions should continue
- Byron Rushing (GDOT) indicated that Chamblee Rail Trail project should be used as an example of good regional bicycle and pedestrian practices. The Chamblee Rail Trail is approximately 1 mile long, was planned for through an LCI study, and utilized an abandoned rail ROW to connect the 46-acre Keswick Park to a commercial area in town, crossing under the Peachtree Boulevard and under the Clairmont Road overpass.
- Regan Hammond suggested that one way to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian projects would be to track local commitment vis-à-vis bicycle and pedestrian set-asides from local funding
- Local government practices with regards to maintaining bicycle and pedestrian projects were suggested as another factor to consider in allocating regional funding. To this, Alan North (DeKalb County) responded that the County Roads division maintains sidewalks and trails as well; Jason Gaines (Cobb County) indicated that the Silver Comet Trail is maintained by the County Parks and Recreation.
- Alan North (DeKalb) suggested that there should be a focus on more economical project implementation (i.e. restripe bicycle lanes where opportunity arises and lane width/ROW allows). Byron Rushing commented that such practice leads to disconnected segments, and does not create a system. Alan North agreed that providing connections is important. Alan North also indicated that while DeKalb County recognizes the importance of bicycle and pedestrian accommodation, and has a plan to close the gaps in sidewalk

coverage, the current financial situation is making it difficult to implement the plan. North added that the federal language about livable and sustainable communities will likely take another 3-4 years to trickle down in the form of project funding.

- Rebecca Serna suggested that now that sharrows are included in the MUTCD, they can be a good inexpensive solution to provide bicycle links, where a bicycle lanes is not immediately feasible.
- Alan North commented that speed limit should be considered where “share the road” signs are installed, and possibly limited to 35 mph.
- Lyubov Zuyeva commented up that local governments with primarily suburban development often prefer multiuse paths over bicycle lanes. The response from Byron Rushing and Rebecca Serna was that if local governments prefer paths, that should be an option for regional funding, as long as the paths are built to appropriate standards, and connect into a system of bicycle facilities. David Crites commented that multiuse paths take a long time to build
- David Crites suggested that bicycle lanes serve other purposes, apart from bicycle accommodation (traffic calming, pedestrian safety). Abby Mattera brought up a school where a bike lane has been recently striped to serve as traffic calming (Oak Grove Elementary; bike lane along Oak Grove Road between LaVista and Briarcliff Road). Because the bike lane is non-standard (striped in the middle of the roadway), it is not actually designated as a bike lane. Plans are underway to change the striping and put the bicycle lane on the outside, where it typically belongs.
- Rebecca Serna suggested that the City of Atlanta Street Design Guidelines (written as part of Connect Atlanta work) provide good examples of how to choose the appropriate bicycle accommodation option, based on the neighborhood and roadway type
- Amy Goodwin (ARC) commented that GDOT is considering decreasing the standard lane width to 11 feet, which would make it easier to restripe roadways and allow for bike lanes, without obtaining a special permit
- David Crites suggested that restriped bicycle facilities should be kept track of
- Brian Hallowell suggested that policies should include some language to support “providing access to activity centers.” Byron Rushing corroborated, suggesting that facilities should be tied to land use centers like LCIs.
- David Crites suggested that bicycle and pedestrian facilities should help provide better access to schools
- Amy Goodwin commented that the LCI program is being reevaluated as part of PLAN 2040, and that community-based schools should probably be incorporated into the LCI program and LCI studies; future LCI studies could also identify potential new school locations in town centers, and joint-use facilities (parks & recreational) that future schools could share with the neighborhood use.
- Abby Mattera indicated that she would like to see which schools in Metro Atlanta already fall within LCIs. Lyubov answered that this should be a matter of simple GIS analysis, and can be done relatively quickly and easily.
- Rebecca Serna commented that safe routes to transit should be a priority identified within PLAN 2040. Currently, JARC funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in proximity to transit is theoretically available, but obtaining it is problematic because of other conflicting priorities for transit funding.

- David Crites posed a question as to whether the ARC could re-gain influence over CMAQ project selection. Regan Hammond responded that she could not answer that question at this time. Currently, CMAQ funding in Georgia is within GDOT control, and PM2.5 mitigation has been set as the federal priority—and hence Georgia priority. Byron Rushing commented that from GDOT perspective, there is an issue with CMAQ because the local governments often can't provide the match. Regan Hammond added that local match is a common issue for all bicycle and pedestrian projects in the region.
- David Crites suggested that ARC set aside funding for bicycle and pedestrian counts. Rebecca Serna added that Savannah MPO already does bicycle and pedestrian counts. Amy Goodwin voiced a concern that bicycle and pedestrian counts might not help in the short run to allocate more funding to non-motorized transportation, because the numbers would likely be low.

Item 2: Announcements

- The group welcomed Emmanuella Myrthil (new GDOT SRTS Coordinator) and Amy Goodwin, new LCI Coordinator with ARC Land Use Division.
- May is national bicycle month; lots of events are planned, including Bike to Work day on May 21st. If anybody would like to see planned events, or add some of their own, ABC has a bicycle calendar available here: <http://www.atlantabike.org/May>
- The Beltline Bike Tour taking place on Sunday, April 25th
- Atlanta Streets Alive event with street closure and outdoor physical activity will be taking place on May 23rd (Sunday, 1-6pm). Those interested can find more info or sign up to volunteer at www.atlantastreetsalive.com
- Abby Mattera made an announcement about the upcoming bicycle rodeo on Sunday, May 2nd, from 1-4pm, at the Lakeside High School. She indicated that this will be a large rodeo, involving several schools participating in the SRTS. Participants from outside of DeKalb County are welcome. For more details, can contact abby@saferoutesga.org (404-441-5728).

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force E-Newsletter (“Street View”) dated April 21st
- PLAN 2040 Goals, Objectives and Policies (ppt slides)
- Flyer-Lakeside Feeder Schools Bicycle and Pedestrian Rodeo
- Flyer-Atlanta Streets Alive (May 23rd)
- Flyer-Pro Walk/Pro Bike 2010 Conference (Chattanooga)

In Attendance:

Abby Mattera, URS/SRTS
 Byron Rushing, GDOT
 Emmanuella Myrthil, GDOT
 Bryan Hollaway, GDOT
 Alan North, DeKalb County
 David Crites, SRTS Network
 Alicia Hatcher, URS/SRTS

Amy Goodwin, ARC Land Use-LCI Program
Jason Carmichael, ABC
Rebecca Serna, ABC
Talya Trudell, ARC TPD
Andy Pittman, URS/SRTS
Jason Gaines, Cobb County
Regan Hammond, ARC TPD
David Haynes, ARC TPD
Lyubov Zuyeva, ARC TPD