

**ARC BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN TASK FORCE
MEETING SUMMARY
06-16-2010**

Item 1: Georgia Cross-State Bicycle Routes and the US Bicycle Route System, Byron Rushing, (GDOT)

Byron Rushing, GDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, talked about the current status of Cross-Georgia Bicycle Routes and the U.S. Bicycle Route system. First, Byron briefly explained how bicycle touring involves overnight stays in hotels or by camping, requires multiple days, and generally brings economic benefits to areas frequented by touring cyclists. Bicycle routes can attract touring cyclists, and by extension, benefit the communities through which they pass.

Rushing pointed out that as part of a 1995 plan, Georgia DOT has spelled out the following two bicycle goals, among other bicycle and pedestrian goals:

- Develop a transportation network of primary bicycle routes throughout the state to provide connectivity for intrastate and interstate bicycle travel;
- Promote establishment of U.S. numbered bicycle routes in Georgia as part of a national network of bicycle routes.

In 1995, the first 14 Georgia Bicycle Routes were designated, which include 2,942.9 total miles, of which approximately 70% are on GDOT state routes, and 30% are off-system (i.e. on county and local roads.) Since 1995, a number of selected roads have changed in character, and Rushing indicated that it's probably time to go back and take a look at those roads, and possibly adjust the roads to those more preferable for cycling. For example, GA 441 over Tallulah Gorge is a median-divided 4-lane highway, and is signed as a bicycle route, although the character might be not very friendly to cyclists. Several of Cross-Georgia Bicycle Routes go through metro Atlanta.

On the national front, there is currently work to develop a national numbered bicycle route system. Two U.S. bicycle routes were established in 1982: U.S. Bike Route 1 in Virginia and North Carolina and U.S. Bike Route 76 in Virginia, Kentucky, and Illinois. After these two routes were designated, no additional routes were nominated. Currently, AASHTO is accepting nominations from the state DOTs for new bicycle route designations (twice a year), and the Adventure Cycling Association (out of Missoula, MT) is providing staff and technical support to interested state DOTs. A national bicycle route must meet certain AASHTO criteria, such as connecting multiple states.

Rushing indicated that he has been coordinating with Florida on establishing national routes through the Southeast, and that North Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee are also very active in establishing national bicycle routes. He added that additional data collection and analysis would need to take place at the RC (Regional Commissions) level to see which of the current Georgia routes need to be adjusted, and which ones might qualify for the status of national bicycle routes.

Sally Flocks raised a concern that too much GDOT staff time might be allocated to the bicycle routes, when a lot of pressing pedestrian safety issues exist. Rushing responded that the roadway

data analysis for bicycle route suitability would be primarily done at the RC level, and that his responsibility is to organize responses from the RCs.

Patrece Keeter (DeKalb County) posed a question as to whether the local governments could receive any funding to upgrade the bicycling conditions along the roads designated as bicycle routes. Rushing answered that there is a potential for such funding allocated in the future Federal Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

Additional information can be found here:

- GDOT Bike/Ped webpage <http://www.dot.ga.gov/travelingingeorgia/bikepedestrian/>
- AASHTO Special Committee on US Route Numbering <http://cms.transportation.org/?siteid=68>

Item 2: PLAN 2040 Performance Framework, Regan Hammond (ARC)

Regan Hammond continued the conversation about PLAN 2040 process, started during the April 2010 Bike Ped Task Force meeting. Today's conversation focused on project prioritization through the PLAN 2040 Performance Framework. Hammond specified that the chosen Performance Framework will allow evaluation of scenarios, and of individual projects. PLAN 2040 Emphasis areas, based on PLAN 2040 goals, will be used throughout prioritization. Hammond emphasized that the project selection process for PLAN 2040 would be broken up into four Key Decision Points (KDPs).

In KDP 1, the available funding would be divided into the following 3 major categories:

- System preservation (roadway and transit)
- System expansion
 - Management & Operations (such as signal timing, HERO program, Access Management, intersection improvements, etc.)
 - Transit expansion
 - Roadway expansion
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian expansion
- ARC Programs and "Other" (TDM, LCI program, Comprehensive Transportation Plans funding, others)

Sally Flocks posed a question as to whether new projects will be added to the potential pool as part of PLAN 2040, given that in the past, long-range bicycle and pedestrian projects were not specified in Envision 6, but rather kept as a lump sum designation. Hammond responded that yes, new projects identified in CTPs and other local plans would be eligible for consideration as part of PLAN 2040; in addition, older projects are getting re-evaluated and could get kicked out to allow room for new projects to come in. Hammond emphasized that bicycle and pedestrian projects would not be evaluated against other types of projects (M&O, or roadway capacity); on the other hand, M&O or roadway capacity projects could include bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

In KDP 2, policy filters will be applied to each expansion category, so that projects can be pre-screened. For bicycle and pedestrian projects, screening process will be tied to 2007 Bicycle and

Pedestrian Plan, UGPM (Unified Growth Policy Map) land use designation, and RSTS. Projects that already have completed PE and that are 100% locally-funded would be exempt from this screening, and would continue to move forward.

The following additional factors will be considered either for pre-filtering bike ped projects, or in their prioritization:

- UGPM “Regional Places” & LCI areas
- Schools
- Transit
- Parks and greenspace
- Environmental Justice TAZs
- Congested corridors
- Areas with high latent bicycle and pedestrian demand

Sally Flocks posed a question as to whether safety improvement projects could receive a lump sum allocation. Regan Hammond responded that yes, such a lump sum could potentially be set up under “other” category. Flocks suggested that the cost-benefit trade-offs might need to be considered at KDP 1, for example, what would be the benefits of allocating \$50 million to safety projects.

In KDP 3, performance measures would be used to rank the projects. Bicycle and Pedestrian performance measures have not been specified yet. Only readily-available data can be used for performance measures, to fit within the PLAN 2040 timeframe.

In KDP 4, the ranked list of bicycle and pedestrian projects will be considered, subject to how well those projects work together, connect and overlap; screening for conflicts or complimentary projects would take place; additional Air Quality conformity analysis would take place, and the final list of projects would be identified.

Hammond indicated that ARC staff is aware that the Envision 6 and 2007 Bike Ped Plan did not address all the large policy issues, and that the discussion today could help ARC staff in narrowing down the screening policies and prioritization criteria for bike ped projects.

In the discussion that followed, the following suggestions were made by the Bike Ped Task Force:

- Safety has not been sufficiently addressed in the past; needs to receive a stronger emphasis (comment from Sally Flocks)
- Access to transit is very important (buses should be considered too, not just MARTA train stations)
- Lifelong Communities should be incorporated into bike ped prioritization (ARC TPD staff to follow-up with ARC Aging Division for recommendations on what facilities/areas to consider in bike ped prioritization)
- Number of street lanes should be a potential policy filter (comment from Sally Flocks)
- Consider existing excess street capacity for potential re-allocation to other uses (comment from Rebecca Serna)

- Consider connectivity, and how a new bike/ped project would affect the overall bike ped connectivity in the area—for example, analyze the impact of a MARTA bridge under design; greater impact on overall area connectivity should receive priority/bonus points
- Consider prioritizing bike/ped projects in areas losing transit service, such as Clayton County, some MARTA routes (suggestion from Rebecca Serna)
- Bike Ped Prioritization buffers were discussed, with the following suggestions:
 - SRTS: currently 1 mile for peds, 2 miles for bikes (Byron; Sally)—should continue for schools, MARTA train stations, parks, other facilities
 - Pedestrian buffer might be better if tied to the street network rather than as-the-crow-flies distance (Sally Flocks)
 - ARC might need to do a survey of local school busing policies—for example, DeKalb is only busing children who live more than 1.5 miles away; bike/ped funding policy should coincide with busing policies (Patrece Keeter)
 - MARTA bus stops should be eligible: ¾ mile buffer for ped. improvements; 1.5 mile buffer for bike improvements (Sally Flocks, Rebecca Serna)
 - Need to resolve using as-the-crow-flies vs. roadway network question for buffer determination. The Bike Ped Task Force did not have a consensus, as there are benefits in using both. Possible suggestion: as-the-crow-flies for bikes (2 miles) and roadway network for peds (1 mile), although this might be confusing.
- Performance Measures: what could be substituted for Bike Ped LOS and Bike Ped Counts?
 - Ridership on bus routes
 - Paratransit ridership
 - Prevalence of affordable housing in a specific corridor
 - High schools and universities (student population)
 - Cost effectiveness should be a performance measure
 - i.e. discourage decorative pavers in the functional areas of sidewalks and crosswalks (crosswalks, especially, become invisible without zebra stripes; decorative pavers are hard to maintain). However, Patrece Keeter noted that decorative pavers are appropriate for sidewalk buffers, where they serve a decorative function and easier to maintain than landscaping
 - encourage on-road bike facilities vs. multiuse paths
 - Rebecca Serna suggested doing a mini-study to analyze current ridership on paths vs. on-street in several locations—for example, Edgewood vs. Freedom Parkway Trail and similar suburban (City of Roswell) location. Then it would be possible to compare ridership payoff vs. cost of construction per mile.
 - Byron Rushing suggested that Alta Planning/ITE Non-Motorized Transportation Documentation Project can be used to estimate differences in ridership between paths and on-road facilities.

In further discussion, Sally Flocks noted that Texas DOT has adopted the CNU/ITE Manual on Context-Sensitive Solutions for Walkable Urban Thoroughfares for statewide use (more info [here](#)), and the Atlanta Region should consider doing it as well. Michael Cullen (Georgia Tech) added that qualitative analysis of projects is important, not just quantitative measures. Hammond agreed that a qualitative review is needed, and will take place.

Item 3: Announcements and Discussion

- Lyubov Zuyeva made several announcements from the e-newsletter, including Fifty Forward Healthy Communities forum to take place on Thursday, June 24th, and Complete Streets Workshop coming up on September 28th, to take place in Decatur
- In a recently released report from FHWA, there has been a marked increase in the numbers of people walking and bicycling between 1994-2009. The overall number of bicycle and pedestrian trips more than doubled, and the mode share of bike and ped trips increased by 25%.
- Rebecca Serna announced that the Flux event (similar to LeFlash event in fall 2009) will take place on October 1st, at which point a mini-demonstration of Complete Streets will be available in Castleberry Hill (i.e. temporary bike lanes, street furniture, etc.)
- Byron Rushing announced that in the national news, there has been a lot of conversation about the town of Black Hawk, Colorado, banning bicyclists (bicyclists are allowed to walk their bike through town, or local residents can get a written permission to ride short distances for specific purpose.) This could set a dangerous precedent.

Handouts:

- Agenda
- PLAN 2040 Framework (ppt slides)
- Flyer-Pro Walk/Pro Bike 2010 Conference (Chattanooga)

In Attendance:

Ann-Marie Day, FHWA
Kelley Whitson, FHWA
Lisa Safstrom, GDOT
Byron Rushing, GDOT
Michael Cullen, Georgia Tech
Jenna Lee, Central Atlanta Progress
Jennifer Harper, URS
Sean Pharr, URS
James Fowler, Kimley-Horn
Anthony Dukes, Spalding County
Jason Gaines, Cobb County DOT
Rashad Wise, Dekalb County Transportation
Richard Meehan, City of Dunwoody
Patrece Keeter, DeKalb County
Abby Mattera, URS/ SRTS
Sally Flocks, PEDS
Drue Hocker, ABC
Rebecca Serna, ABC
Gordon Draves, Sierra Club
Talya Trudell, ARC TPD
Regan Hammond, ARC TPD
Lyubov Zuyeva, ARC TPD