



**HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER**



REGIONAL BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN



June, 2005



REGIONAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Prepared by

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center

June, 2005

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Prepared under contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation

by

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
with assistance of a Regional Planning Advisory Committee

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a regional bicycle/pedestrian plan for the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center prepared under contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center is a rural, 17-county region in central and southeast Georgia with no metropolitan areas located within. The only existing state bike route located in the region is a portion of State Bike Route 40 – the TransGeorgia route traversing Georgia from Columbus to Savannah. Bicycle usage data is limited for the region, but available indirect evidence, such as the number of growing bicycle clubs and events, indicates it is growing within the region as in much of the nation.

This regional bike/pedestrian plan examines existing conditions and needs, and provides recommendations for future improvements, including new route recommendations and other efforts to boost education, safety, and usage. Needs identified for the Region include needs for additional facilities, particularly paved shoulders, additional state bike routes, better state signage, and for increased safety and educational activities. There is a special need to interconnect the region's state parks with bicycle facilities, and to interconnect region facilities to other state bike routes. Recommendations for new state bicycle routes include those parallel to U.S. 280, U.S. 341/23, U.S. 80, U.S. 1, U.S. 441, U.S. 221/GA 15, GA 57/192, and GA 112. Compatible local bicycle facilities, events and regional cooperation, marketing, and promotion are encouraged. Bicycling is seen as having potential economic development/tourism benefits for the region. The region could be promoted as a touring destination for beginning and intermediate cyclists because of its low traffic counts, open spaces, pastoral scenery, historic sites, topography, and climate. An existing tour of the Adventure Cycling Association already utilizes a portion of the region.

The regional bike/pedestrian plan was developed by Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center planners through a public process, including a regional Planning Advisory Committee consisting of local government, chamber of commerce, recreation, and tourism

officials, as well as local bicycling interests. It is both a snapshot of existing conditions and a guide to future improvements.



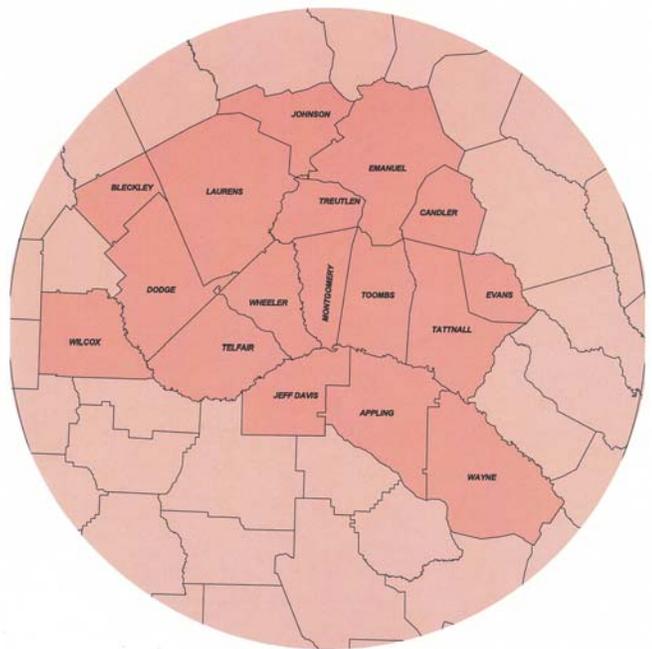
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan is a regional plan for improvements in bicycling and pedestrian activities and facilities within the 17-county Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region. It was prepared by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center under contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation. This regional bike/pedestrian plan is the first known regional or local plan devoted to the improvement of these activities and facilities within the region. It is an analysis of existing conditions and needs and an improvement guide of recommendations, goals, objectives, performance measures, and an implementation strategy. It should be viewed as a guide and beginning for those wishing to improve and promote bicycling and pedestrian activities within the region.

Background

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center is a 17-county, rural region located in central and southeast Georgia. Counties included are Appling, Bleckley, Candler, Dodge, Emanuel, Evans, Jeff Davis, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Tattnall, Telfair, Toombs, Treutlen, Wayne, Wheeler, and Wilcox. The population for the region is about 275,000 persons (2000 Census = 272,894), and there are no metropolitan areas located within the region. Other metropolitan areas of Georgia are at least an hour's drive away. The largest city is Dublin (2000 population of 15,857),



and county population density ranges from 21 to 71 persons per square mile as compared to 141 persons per square mile in Georgia.

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region is located in Georgia's large Coastal Plain. It is a significant portion of Georgia's traditional wiregrass region of South Georgia, a landscape still dominated by verdant yellow pine forests and many scenic black water streams and rivers which remain relatively undeveloped natural paradises. Much of Georgia's heritage of early interior development and commerce can be traced to the region's three main rivers, the Altamaha, the Ocmulgee, and the Oconee. The Altamaha River has been designated by the Nature Conservancy as one of the last 75 great places on earth. The terrain and topography is generally flat to rolling, although elevations range from approximately 45 to 500 feet. Region counties enjoy a subtropical climate with an average temperature of around 66 degrees, and a growing season ranging from about 239 to 260 days. The first freeze averages about mid-November with the last occurring around mid-March. The abundant natural resources, impressive history, low populations, warm climate, and flat topography of the region all combine to make the region conducive to and attractive for bicycling and pedestrian activities.



Need

There is no question that the automobile remains the preferred mode of transportation in America, particularly in rural, less population dense areas. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region is no exception, but Census statistics do show that the Region bicycled to work at a rate about the same as the State in 2000, and walked to work at a rate slightly greater than the State. It is also no question that bicycling and walking are growing within the state, nation, and even, region. The research for this plan revealed several bicycle clubs within the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region, and at least six annual cycling events, many established in the last few years.



A 2002 National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviors sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) revealed recent insights into current bicycling and pedestrian behaviors, use, and frequency of activities. About 27.3 percent of the driving age public (those age 16 or older) rode a bicycle at least once during the summer of 2002. More than one-third of those aged 16-44 had ridden, and even almost 1 in 11 of those aged 65 or older had ridden a bicycle during the summer of 2002. This equates to approximately 57 million persons nationally.

Of those reporting bicycling in the survey, they took an average 1.6 trips (defined as going from a starting point to a destination for a specific purpose without any stops along the way) per bicyclist per day bicycled. The average trip length taken on a typical day during the summer was 3.9 miles. More than 61 (61.4) percent of trips were of more than one mile. Trips whose purpose was for exercise or recreation were longer (an average of 5.6 miles) than trips for other purposes (an average of 2.2 miles). The same survey asked respondents to recommend

changes to their communities for bicyclists. Of those recommending changes (46.9 percent of respondents), 73 percent recommended “providing bicycle facilities” as the greatest need.



The same 2002 National Pedestrian and Bicyclist Survey reported that nearly eight of ten (78.7%) persons of driving age walked, ran, or jogged outdoor for five or more minutes at least once during the summer of 2002. The eighty percent walking figure was exceeded by all age groups through age 54, before dropping to 75.6 percent of those 55-64, and 65.6 percent of those aged 65 or more. These figures correspond to a total of 164 million pedestrians nationally aged 16 or older. These pedestrians made an estimated 275 million walking trips during the summer of 2002. These pedestrians made an average of 1.7 trips per each day they walked. The average length of a walking trip taken on a typical summer day was 1.2 miles, although 67.2 percent were 1 mile or less in length. The two top reasons given for the primary purpose of walking trips were exercise or health (27.0 percent) or for recreation (15.3 percent). The majority of walking trips (45.1 percent or 124 million trips) were taken on sidewalks, but almost one-quarter (24.8 percent) were taken on paved roads, not on shoulders (in auto lanes). About a third of survey respondents (including those who did not walk) recommended changes to their communities for pedestrians, with 74.7 percent of those recommending the provision of pedestrian facilities as the primary need.

These statistics confirm with a loud voice the need for bicycle and pedestrian planning. The benefits of bicycling and walking hold positive consequences for both individuals and society. There are benefits to health, transportation, the economy, and the environment. Bicycling and walking can provide these benefits whether conducted as an alternative mode of transportation, or for recreational and exercise purposes. Bicycling and walking can provide the

regular exercise currently recognized as very important to basic human health. Each bicycle or walking trip is one less trip needed to be taken by automobile or other means. This is at least an incremental lessening of roadway congestion, and air pollution as a result. Bicyclinginfo.org reports that one four-mile round trip by bicycle keeps about 15 pounds of pollutants out of the air we breathe. More bicycling and walking and reduced dependency on the auto also translates into individual and societal economic benefits through reduced health care and lower expense and maintenance costs. Some advocates highlight an improved quality of life for communities emphasizing and upgrading bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

We are increasingly aware that more people are bicycling and walking as the significant numbers in the aforementioned 2002 National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclists attest. Many people choose to walk or bike for fitness, economic, or environmental reasons, or simply for recreation or outdoor enjoyment. Some individuals, including those too young or too old to drive, those who cannot afford to own or operate a car with increased fuel and insurance costs, or those who do not desire to own an automobile, may only have walking or bicycling as an option for mobility and transportation. In addition to the benefits of improved health, recreation, and mobility for individuals realized by bicycling and walking, there are community benefits of more livable communities, more neighborhood interaction and cohesion, and increasingly, increased tourism. This growing usage and greater recognition of benefits has led to increased federal transportation funding and support for bicycling and walking. Annual federal transportation funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects, according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Center for Environmental Excellence publication *Taking The High Road*, has risen eight-fold—from almost \$5 million in 1988 to almost \$416 million in 2002. Every state Department of Transportation now has a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator to help implement bicycle and pedestrian solutions, and bicycling and pedestrian accommodations are now a routine part of transportation planning,



design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities, unless exceptional circumstances exist.

Georgia is no exception. In 1997, the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) prepared its first State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This plan designated 14 on-road State Bicycle Routes, and had as its goal to increase bicycle-friendly infrastructure, including bike lanes, wide curb lanes, and paved shoulders, and bicycle facility mileage each year. The Georgia DOT now desires to increase the planning and input for bicycle and pedestrian needs to the regional and local level. This regional plan is part of the ongoing effort to increase grass-roots involvement in bicycle and pedestrian planning. The resulting expectation is local expression of regional needs and recommendations for improvement and implementation which can then be incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and into a new coordinated statewide plan and roadmap for facility and programmatic improvement.

Process

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was prepared by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center and its professional planning staff. This staff was assisted by a Regional Planning Advisory Committee appointed by the RDC Board of Directors. This advisory group included stakeholders from the local governments, chambers of commerce, recreation agencies, tourism boards, and bicycling interests within the region. Every county was represented by at least one appointed member. The general public was invited to participate through general interest news releases provided to local newspapers, RDC newsletter articles, and through two public meetings advertised in local newspapers serving all 17 counties. One public meeting was held to identify issues of concern and regional needs. Another meeting will be held to review and receive input on the draft plan. The draft plan will also be published on the RDC website and sent to local and statewide bicycling interests to facilitate further critique and input before finalization. The Planning Advisory Committee will also be a key component of consultation before finalization.

The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan continues with a detailed existing conditions analysis and needs assessment, before proceeding to recommendations, goals and objectives, and an implementation strategy.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As noted in the Introduction, the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center is a large, rural region of central and southeast Georgia with impressive history and great natural and scenic beauty. The Region encompasses approximately 6,900 square miles of total land and water area, almost twelve (12) percent of Georgia's total. It consists of seventeen (17) counties and sixty-three (63) municipal governments, both over ten (10) percent of Georgia's total. Table 1 shows the population, land area, and population density of the Region by county and in comparison to Georgia. The Region has very low population density, relatively low traffic volumes, a warm climate, and generally flat to gently rolling topography – all conducive to biking and pedestrian activities. This section examines the existing conditions and needs of the Region for bicycling and pedestrian activities.

Bicycling Usage



Bicycling usage in the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region is difficult to quantify. One measure is U.S. Census journey to work data, but this actually only measures the usage of bicycles as a primary means of transportation. The 2002 National Pedestrian and Bicyclist Survey (discussed in the Introduction) noted that most bicycle trips were for recreation or exercise. Commuting to school/work represented only about 5 percent of bicycle trips.

Table 2 details the 2000 Census data for means of transportation to work within the Region by County and in comparison to Georgia. This data shows that persons bicycled to work within the region at the same rate (0.1 percent) as the rest of Georgia. But there is not uniformity across the Region. There was a total of less than 100 persons bicycling to work regionwide, and 8 of 17 counties had no one bicycling to work. A further potential indicator of bicycling usage

TABLE 1
POPULATION, LAND AREA, AND POPULATION DENSITY, 2000

County	Population	Total Land Area (Square Miles)	Population Density Per Square Mile
Appling	17,419	512.1	34.3
Bleckley	11,666	219.1	53.7
Candler	9,577	248.8	38.8
Dodge	19,171	503.2	38.3
Emanuel	21,837	690.3	31.8
Evans	10,495	186.9	56.8
Jeff Davis	12,684	335.4	38.0
Johnson	8,560	306.5	28.1
Laurens	44,874	818.5	55.2
Montgomery	8,270	247.3	33.7
Tattnell	22,305	488.2	46.1
Telfair	11,794	444.1	26.7
Toombs	26,067	368.6	71.1
Treutlen	6,854	202.2	34.2
Wayne	26,565	648.8	41.2
Wheeler	6,179	300.1	20.8
Wilcox	8,577	383.3	22.6
Region	272,894	6,903.4	39.8
Georgia	8,186,453	59,424.8	141.4

Source: The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, *The Georgia County Guide*, 2003.

**TABLE 2
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK, 2000**

County	Workers, 16 and Over	Car, Truck, or Van		Public Transportation		Bicycle		Walked		Other		Worked at Home	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Appling	7,583	7,235	95.4	24	0.3	21	0.3	105	1.4	83	1.1	115	1.5
Bleckley	4,699	4,399	93.6	11	0.2	12	0.3	96	2.0	40	0.9	141	3.0
Candler	3,595	3,353	93.3	12	0.3	0	0.0	63	1.8	65	1.8	102	2.8
Dodge	7,457	7,098	95.2	17	0.2	0	0.0	70	0.9	149	2.0	123	1.6
Emanuel	8,739	7,984	91.4	36	0.4	12	0.1	254	2.9	245	2.8	208	2.4
Evans	4,161	3,616	86.9	17	0.4	6	0.1	244	5.9	217	5.2	61	1.5
Jeff Davis	5,132	4,898	95.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	22	0.4	101	2.0	111	2.2
Johnson	2,969	2,806	94.5	15	0.5	0	0.0	50	1.7	38	1.3	60	2.0
Laurens	18,986	18,241	96.1	84	0.4	14	0.1	198	1.0	182	1.0	267	1.4
Montgomery	3,483	3,217	92.4	1	0.0	0	0.0	163	4.7	42	1.2	60	1.7
Tattnell	7,880	7,119	90.3	33	0.4	19	0.2	173	2.2	326	4.1	210	2.7
Telfair	4,091	3,915	95.7	8	0.2	0	0.0	34	0.8	72	1.8	62	1.5
Toombs	10,823	10,298	95.1	72	0.7	0	0.0	229	2.1	102	0.9	122	1.1
Treutlen	2,222	2,113	95.1	4	0.2	0	0.0	59	2.7	18	0.8	28	1.3
Wayne	10,125	9,578	94.6	46	0.5	9	0.1	165	1.6	89	0.9	238	2.4
Wheeler	2,049	1,906	93.0	0	0.0	3	0.1	46	2.2	36	1.8	58	2.8
Wilcox	2,911	2,717	93.3	12	0.4	1	0.0	48	1.6	44	1.5	89	3.1
Region	106,905	100,493	94.0	392	0.4	97	0.1	2,019	1.9	1,849	1.7	2,055	1.9
Georgia	3,832,803		92.0		2.3		0.1		1.7		1.0		2.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary File 4, 2000.

within the Region is the population density. As shown in Table 1, the Region's population density of about 40 persons per square mile is 72 percent less than that of Georgia (141.4). The most population dense county, Toombs, has only about half the population density as Georgia. Data shown on the bicyclefriendlycommunity.org website notes that areas with population densities less than 250 people per square mile use bicycling/walking as a mode of transportation the least amount (3.3 percent of trips). It is noted, however, that the lack of alternative options to the automobile may contribute to the low usage rate in these areas.

Despite the unknown, but apparent lower bicycle usage in the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region, there is also data that would suggest much potential usage if facilities were more available. The 2002 National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviors discussed in the Introduction noted that 27.3 percent of persons aged 16 or older nationally bicycled during the summer of 2002. This does not take into account those younger than 16 who, from empirical observation, would seem to often ride bicycles in small towns and rural areas.

Table 3 shows reported travel times to work in the 2000 Census data for the Region and Georgia. Almost one in five workers not working at home within the Region had travel times to work of less than 10 minutes in 2000. This is nearly double the percentage of the rest of Georgia (11.5). This was true of every Region county, with the exception of Johnson, and to a lesser extent, Laurens. This seems to indicate that many of the Region's workers live within biking distance of their jobs, and would indicate further potential bicycle usage in the Region, especially given the 2002 National Survey's finding that "providing bicycle facilities" was the greatest need reported by bicyclists. Further confirmation of this potential can be seen in the statistic reported on the bicyclinginfo.org website that about 40 percent of all transportation trips taken by Americans are less than 2 miles in length which represents only a 10 minute bike ride (data from 1995 National Personal Transportation Survey). However, the Census data does not provide the actual mileage to work, and further research would be needed to define this apparent potential.

**TABLE 3
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK, 2000**

County	Workers Not Working at Home	Less than 10 Minutes		10-14 Minutes		15 Minutes or More		Mean Travel Time (Minutes)
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	
Appling	7,468	1,480	19.8	1,389	18.6	4,599	61.6	24.1
Bleckley	4,558	1,017	22.3	820	18.0	2,721	59.7	26.1
Candler	3,493	842	24.1	631	18.1	2,020	57.8	24.4
Dodge	7,334	1,441	19.6	1,149	15.7	4,744	64.7	26.1
Emanuel	8,531	1,740	20.4	1,546	18.1	5,245	61.5	23.1
Evans	4,100	988	24.1	1,085	26.5	2,027	49.4	21.7
Jeff Davis	5,021	1,166	23.2	1,034	20.6	2,821	56.2	21.7
Johnson	2,909	353	12.1	327	11.2	2,229	76.6	29.7
Laurens	18,719	2,749	14.7	3,520	18.8	12,450	66.5	23.6
Montgomery	3,423	619	18.1	510	14.9	2,294	67.0	27.0
Tattnall	7,670	1,380	18.0	1,500	19.6	4,790	62.5	27.5
Telfair	4,029	935	23.2	822	20.4	2,272	56.4	24.2
Toombs	10,701	2,202	20.6	2,473	23.1	6,026	56.3	21.9
Treutlen	2,194	433	19.7	176	8.0	1,585	72.2	27.8
Wayne	9,887	1,823	18.4	2,252	22.8	5,812	58.8	26.2
Wheeler	1,991	345	17.3	296	14.9	1,350	67.8	29.9
Wilcox	2,822	549	19.5	318	11.3	1,955	69.3	26.0
Region	104,850	20,062	19.1	19,848	18.9	64,940	61.9	24.7
Georgia	3,723,817		11.5		13.7		74.8	27.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary File 4, 2000.



Existing Bicycle Facilities

To understand and address the needs of bicyclists, one needs to understand the classification of bicyclists and bicycle facilities. The most commonly used classification is that used by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The following definitions are taken from the West Virginia Department of Transportation's website as slightly updated modifications of the AASHTO classification.

Type A – Advanced Bicyclists: This group consists of experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions, and compose the majority of current users of collector and arterial highway systems. Group A travel is best facilitated by:

- direct access to destinations, usually via the highway system;
- the opportunity to operate at maximum speed, with minimum delay; and
- sufficient operating space on the roadway or shoulder to reduce the need for the bicyclist or motor vehicle operator to change position when passing.

Type A riders typically operate at a speed ranging from 12 to 25 mph, and may not need special facilities. They often ride for both transportation and recreation purposes, but comprise less than five (5) percent of all bicyclists.

Type B – Basic Bicyclists: This group consists of new or casual adult or teenage riders who are less confident and/or less competent (than Type A riders) to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicyclists. Type B riders prefer comfortable access to destinations, by a direct route or bicycle facility, which they perceive as safe. Typical rates of speed for adult Type

B riders range from 8 to 15 mph. Although older riders will ride on moderately heavily traveled streets without bike facilities when necessary, they prefer special facilities. This group accounts for more than 95 percent of adult riders.

Type C – Child Bicyclists: This group consists of pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored by their parents. Type C riders prefer the following:

- access to key destinations surrounding residential areas, including schools, recreation and shopping facilities, or other residential areas;
- highways with low motor vehicle speeds and volumes; and
- well defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles, such as separate bicycle paths.

The following descriptions of facility types are based upon the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *1991 Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*.



Bike Lane – A designated division of a roadway for the preferential or sole use of bicyclists designated through the use of pavement markings, striping and special signing. For bicyclists to feel comfortable, a bicycle lane should be at least 5 feet wide for a rural type roadway and at least 4 feet wide for a roadway with curb and gutter. A bicycle lane should be clearly marked with a 4” to 8” wide stripe delineating the lane and appropriate signage. Bike lanes are especially appropriate for areas that experience average daily traffic of more than 10,000 vehicles and where vehicles travel at more than 30 mph.

Separate Bicycle Path – A bikeway physically separated from motorized vehicles by an open space barrier. These facilities can be constructed adjacent to a street or highway with adequate safeguards that motorized vehicles will not attempt to enter the path. To be successful, bicycle paths should be designed to avoid conflict points with streets and other obstacles through the provision of bridges or underpasses. Careful attention should also be taken regarding overall security when paths are located in less developed areas. If there is enough right-of-way, bicycle

paths should be at least 10 feet wide, and optimally up to 12 feet in width if a great deal of pedestrian use is expected. If separate bicycle paths are located adjacent to the roadway and allow other non-motorized traffic, then these multi-use paths (or shared use paths or multi-use trails) are known as *Sidepaths*.

Wide Curb Lane – In relatively urbanized areas where no bicycle lanes exist, bicycles and motor vehicles can operate with fewer potential conflicts if a wider outside lane is provided. Wide curb lanes improve capacity by allowing motor vehicles to remain in their lane when overtaking bicyclists. To be successfully implemented, it is recommended that the typical 12' travel lane be widened to 14 to 15 feet to accommodate bicyclists and motor vehicles in the same lane. For existing four-lane roadways, a wider outside lane can be created by restriping, reducing interior lane widths to 10 or 11 feet. This has the potential to create a traffic calming effect while at the same time serving the needs of bicyclists. A wide curb lane may be appropriate for areas that experience average daily traffic volumes of 10,000 or more and vehicle speeds greater than 40 mph, but are safer when a bike lane is striped. A wide curb lane unstriped can encourage two motor vehicles sharing or passing in the same lane – creating a greater danger to bicyclists.

Shoulder – Along rural highways, shoulders serve the dual purpose of providing a safe area for bicyclists while lessening the chance that motorists have to enter the opposite lane to avoid bicyclists. A shoulder width of at least 4 feet is recommended for highways where speeds generally exceed 35 mph. Wider shoulders are recommended for highways that experience greater speeds or have a high percentage of trucks or large vehicles. Shoulders are not usually marked for use by bicyclists.





Shared Lane (or Shared Roadway) – These bikeways provide no designated separate area for bicycle traffic and require bicyclists to travel within a standard width travel lane, which can often cause a motorist to change lanes or enter an opposing lane when overtaking a bicyclist. Routes should be clearly marked with posted signs or symbols. “Share the Road” signs help to promote

motorist awareness of bicyclists in shared lanes. It is recommended that the “Share the Road” signs be installed sparingly because motorists will tend to disregard them if they are overused. Shared lanes of at least 12’ in width are appropriate for all riders in areas with low speeds and volumes.

Bicycle Route – A portion of a system of bikeways designated under the authority of the appropriate jurisdiction. Bicycle routes can be designed to provide a continuous route between designated facilities or can identify a long bicycle touring route, and will be based upon whether bicycling is safe and convenient along a particular street. Special attention should be taken to detour bicyclists away from streets not capable of supporting safe bicycle travel. Directional signing is recommended.

Multi-use Paths – Multi-use paths are facilities that are designed for the use of both bicyclists and others such as pedestrians, rollerbladers, horseback riders, and runners. Steps should be taken to separate different types of users due to safety concerns, but if it is necessary to provide for a variety of users along the same path, the design of the facility should include the provision of signing, additional width, and striping to lessen conflicts. To facilitate the separation of users, these facilities can be designed with several different surface types including asphalt, gravel, and clay.

Greenway Trails – Greenway trails are multi-use paths within a natural corridor protected for non-motorized transportation, recreation and conservation purposes. Greenways will often provide connections between parks and historic/cultural sites. Opportunities for greenways include utility easements, existing and abandoned railroad rights-of-way, and environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, flood plains and wildlife habitats.

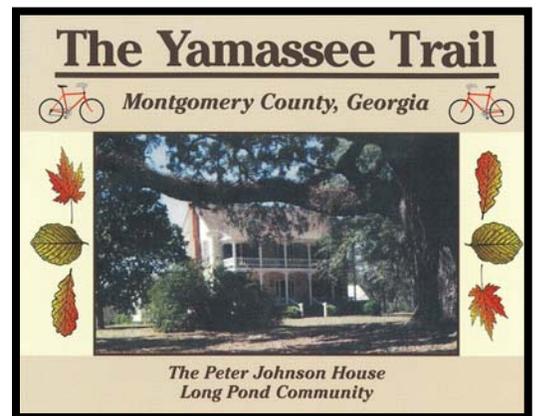
There are few existing bicycle facilities known within the Region. These include one state bike route, limited bike lanes, some paved shoulders, and a local bike route which is a shared roadway facility.

State Bike Route. Georgia State Bike Route 40 was designated in the 1997 Georgia Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as one of 14 numbered routes totaling 2,943 miles. State Bike Route 40 is called the Trans-Georgia Route and traverses the state in an east-west direction between Savannah and Columbus. It is the only one of the 14 designated state bike routes located within the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region. In western Laurens County at its border with Wilkinson County, State Bike Route 40 begins on U.S. Highway 80 and continues to the City of Dublin. In Dublin, State Bike Route 40 transitions to State Highway Route 29 and follows it to the City of Soperton. In Soperton, State Bike Route 40 changes to follow State Highway Route 46 and continues on this route to the City of Metter, and on through to the Candler County/Bulloch County line. State Bike Route 40 is within the Region for a distance of about 85 miles. This includes mileage through Laurens (34.9 miles), Treutlen (19.7), Emanuel (12.5), and Candler (17.8) counties. Some bicyclists have noted that the U.S. 80 portion in Laurens County, in particular, is not conducive to safe bicycling. Facilities and signing along the route are limited. Even though Georgia State Bike Route 40 is a designated state bicycle route, it does not necessarily have paved shoulders or other facilities, and may lack bike route signage on most sections.

Bike Lanes. The only identified bike lanes in the Region are a striped roadway section of U.S. 84/U.S. 301 in the City of Jesup from Pine Street (U.S. 341) north to the Altamaha River, a distance of about four miles, and some short interconnected lanes in Metter. The City of Metter, unofficially designated by BRAG as the “Bicycle Capital of Georgia,” does have limited interconnected bike lanes designated in the northern part of the City. These are striped portions of shared roadway and are signed. These include along Lee Street from Georgia Highway Route 23 on the west across Georgia Highway 121 to MLK, Jr. Drive on the east (5 blocks), and along Georgia Highway Route 121 North from Lee Street to Elthridge Street (about 4 blocks). There is also a striped roadway bike lane along E. Lillian Street (one block north of Lee Street) from Trapnell Street east to Haymans Street near the Metter Elementary School (about 4 long blocks).

Paved Shoulders. As part of the recent widening of U.S. 341 (the Golden Isles Parkway), which is on the Governor's Road Improvement Program, in Wayne County from Gardi to the Glynn County line, a paved shoulder has been included both ways. This is a distance of about 15 miles. Similar paved shoulders are expected to be included on the U.S. 341 widening from Odum to Baxley now under construction, an additional 20 miles. Additional paved shoulder bike lanes within the Region are located from the Eastman City Limits along State Highway Route 46 to the Eastman/Dodge County Airport and the Georgia Aviation College (again both ways), a distance of about three (3) miles. Given the rural area of the Region, its many scenic and environmentally important areas, and the local desire of the Region to capitalize on nature-based tourism, paved shoulders are likely the best and most easily achieved choice for the majority of future Regional bike facilities.

Local Bike Route/Shared Roadway. The only designated local bike trail in the Region is the Yemassee Trail in Montgomery County. This 27-mile route is a shared roadway route through historic Montgomery County. The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce has developed a brochure on the Trail, and is marketing it to potential visitors.



The Adventure Cycling Association, which is promoting bicycling as an alternative tourism method, has developed self-guided tours, including maps, across the United States. One of these current tours, the Atlantic Coast Route, does traverse a portion of the Region. This Atlantic Coast Route utilizes shared roadways. The route, traversing the East Coast of the U.S. from Bar Harbor, Maine to Fort Myers Beach, Florida for a total of 2,535 miles, crosses through Tattnall and Wayne counties within the Region. The Atlantic Coast Route is the only route of the Adventure Cycling Association currently going through Georgia.

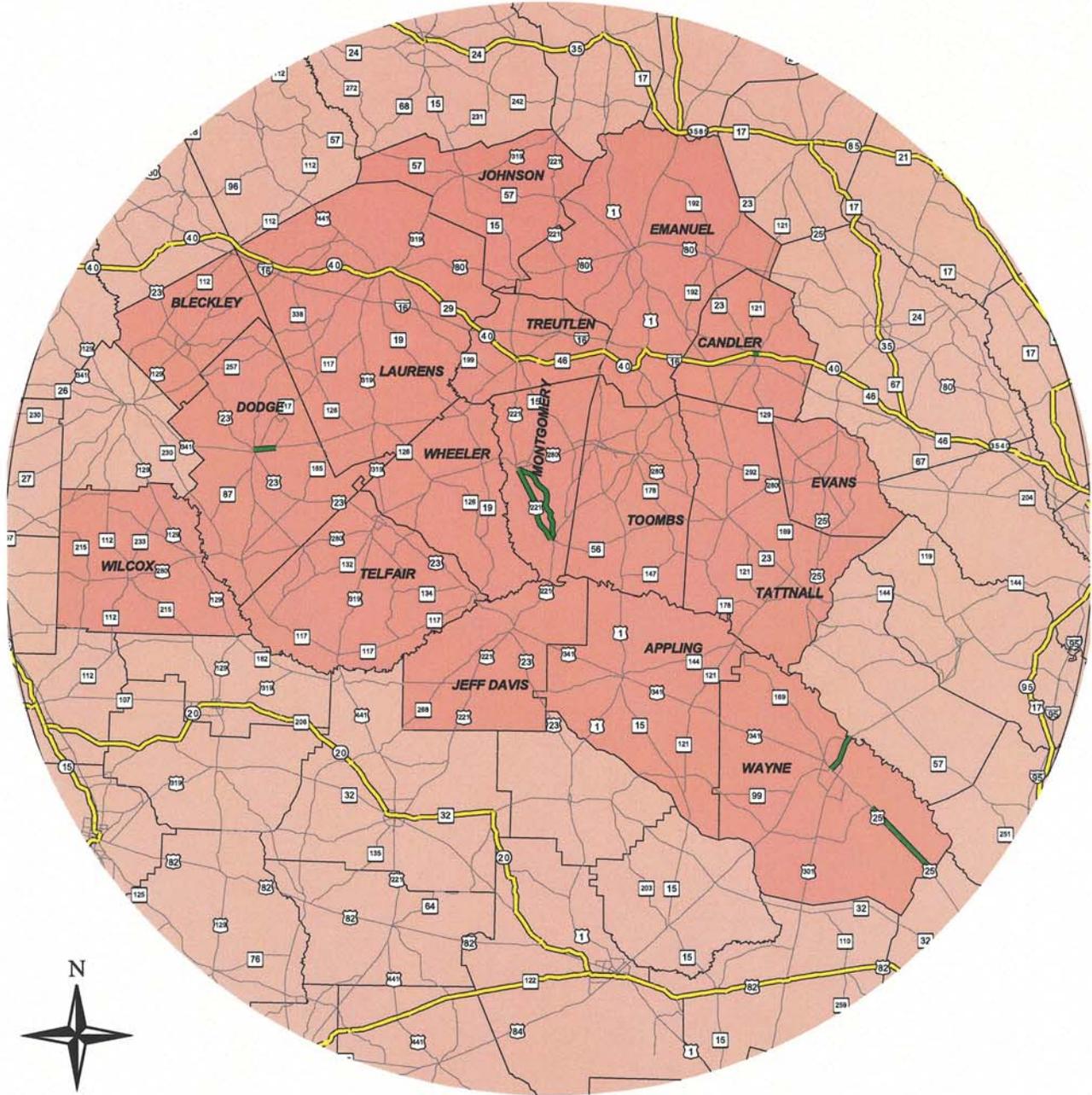
Multi-Use Trails. There are limited multi-use trails within the Region, mostly associated with the three state parks, Gordonia-Alatamaha (Reidsville), Little Ocmulgee (McRae), and George L. Smith (Twin City). All of these parks have trails, but these trails are more suited for pedestrian use. There are no current Rail Trails in the Region, but there has been local interest in one from Cochran to Hawkinsville, the Ogeechee Trail, although current plans are focusing on

using the Ogeechee Railbed within the City of Cochran; and some interest in one from Hazlehurst to Vidalia, or at least from Hazlehurst to the Altamaha River. There is considerable private landowner objection to such a trail in/near Vidalia. Such rail trail opposition has also been expressed elsewhere in the Region and shows a need for education and outreach about the benefits of trails. A new group, Cochran Greenways Partnership, developed plans for a City of Cochran bikeway/pedestrian network. Principal objectives of this plan are to provide multi-use trail corridors within the City Limits of Cochran and to utilize the Ogeechee Railbed. Both of these possible rail trails could easily tie in to proposed regional bike routes. Another potential rail trail would be along the DOT owned railroad from Americus to Vidalia (generally following U.S. 280), but there is more interest in maintaining its use for railroad freight use. The City of Jesup has plans to develop a 2.5 mile greenway along the McMillan Creek corridor, including multi-use trails appropriate for bicycling.



MAP 1

Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC Existing Bicycle Routes



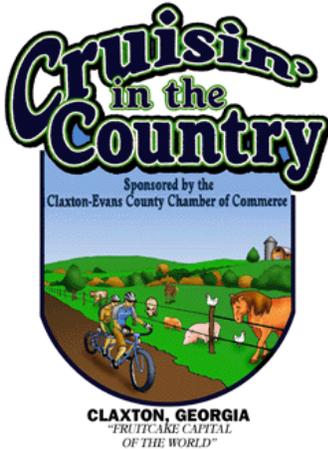
- Existing Bicycle Routes
- Existing Bike Lanes
- Currently Designated State Bicycle Routes
- State Roads
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC Region
- Georgia Counties

"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Users are cautioned to consider the nature of this data before using them for decisions that concern public safety or the conduct of business that involves substantial monetary or operational consequences. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

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 Source: Y:\Bike_Trails\biketrails5_05.apr
 Date: June 3, 2005

Existing Bicycle Events

There are a number of bicycling events held within the Region, and the number has grown over the last few years. These events are held primarily for economic development/tourism reasons.



Cruisin' in the Country Century. The Cruisin' in the Country Century is a bike event that is held each year in Evans County, Georgia. This event is currently in its tenth year of existence and currently is one of the largest events for cyclists in the Southeast, with numbers exceeding 1,200 riders. The ride goes through Evans, Tattnall, Candler and Bulloch counties (not in the HOGA region). There are several types of rides available in this event for riders, including rides of 18, 30, 65, and 100 miles.

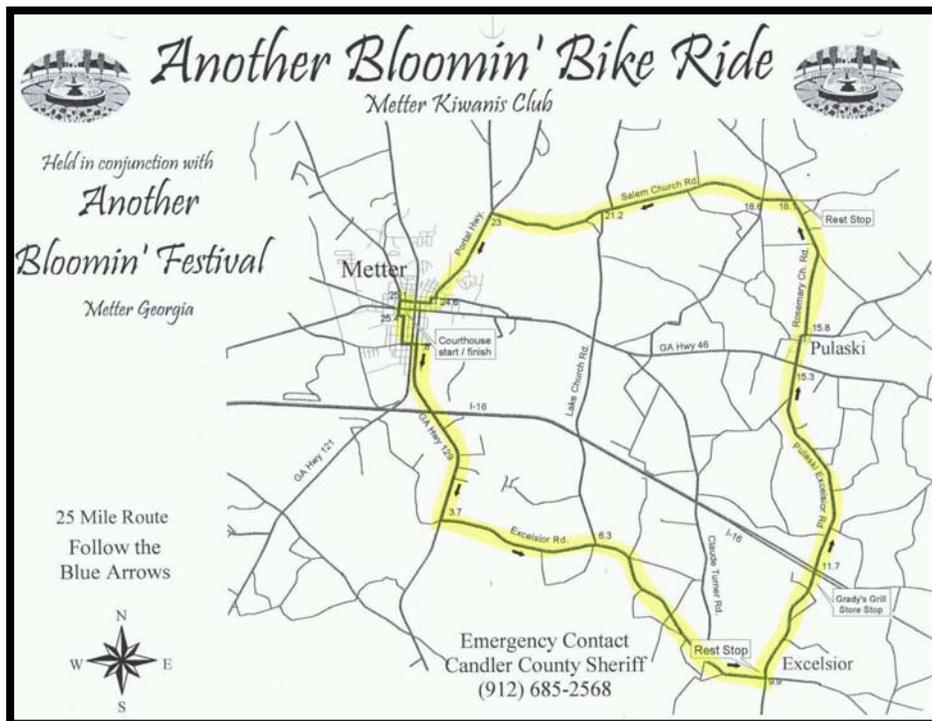
Sweet Onion Century. The Sweet Onion Century is the third largest regional biking event with somewhere around 250-300 participants annually. It is held the first Saturday of each May, and is sponsored by the Sweet Onion Cyclist Club. The ride takes participants through Toombs, Candler, Montgomery, Tattnall, and Treutlen counties. In 2004, the ride witnessed its ninth year of participants. There are five rides for bikers to choose from in the Sweet Onion Century: 24, 50, 62.5, 100, and 125 mile rides.



Saint Patrick's Day Century. This is the oldest biking event in the Region. 2005 will celebrate its 23rd year. It is sponsored by the Dublin Rotary Club and the Emerald City Bicycle Club. The event offers rides of 10k, 25, 50, and 100 miles. In 2004, 300 riders participated, but the goal for 2005 is 1,000.

Biking Bleckley Metric 100. This annual event was inaugurated in 2004, and is sponsored by the Cochran-Bleckley Chamber of Commerce. The event offers rides of 15, 30, 50 and 62.5 miles (metric century).

Another Bloomin' Bike Ride. This event in Metter, Georgia was established in conjunction with the Another Bloomin' Festival held in downtown Metter. Metter has been given the unofficial title of "Bicycle Capital of Georgia" by the Bicycle Ride Across Georgia. The bike ride is sponsored by the Metter/Candler Chamber of Commerce and the local Kiwanis Club. It offers rides of 25 and 50 miles.



SPAR: Southern Pride Agricultural Ride. The Southern Pride Agricultural Ride (SPAR) was held for the first time in Wayne County in early 2004. The inaugural ride saw 47 participants ride through portions of Wayne and Appling counties. Riders are given several options as to what route they would like to ride. The event is sponsored by the Wayne County Board of Tourism, Wayne County Young Farmers, and Wayne County 4-H Club, and starts in Screven, Georgia. Options for rides include a 23 mile ride, 48 mile ride, Century Ride, or a Metric Ride.

Bandana Ride. This event was established in Tattnall County in 2005. Information is sketchy, but may be available through the Tattnall County Development Authority ([tatttnall@alltel.net](mailto:tattnall@alltel.net)).

Bicycle Ride Across Georgia. This largest bicycle event in Georgia involves thousands of riders on an annual summer tour and other events in and across Georgia. The event began in 1980 and traveled through the Region in each of its first two years of existence, and many times since. The City of Metter has been unofficially designated by the organization as the “Bicycle Capital of Georgia” because of its accommodating and outgoing support of the ride when it passes through the town, as it did in the initial 1980 ride. (See website: www.brag.org)



Existing Bicycle Clubs

Evidence of the growing numbers of bicyclists in the Region is the emergence of several formal bicycle clubs in the Region. Several clubs now exist in two of the more populous Region counties, Laurens and Toombs.

Emerald City Bicycle Club (Dublin). This club co-sponsors the annual St. Patrick’s Day Century Ride in Laurens County. The contact information is Emerald City Bicycle Club, 1812 Knox Street, Dublin, Georgia 31021-5519, and (478) 275-7154.

Sweet Onion Cyclists (Vidalia). This club sponsors the Sweet Onion Century Ride in Toombs County. The contact information is the website: www.letsride.net, or Sweet Onion Cyclists, 104 Amberwood Drive, Vidalia, Georgia 30474, and (912) 537-2155.

Two other regional bicycle clubs are listed on the Georgia Bicycle Federation website (www.bicyclegeorgia.com), the Laurens County Bicycle Club (Dublin) and the Vidalia-Toombs

Bicycle Association (Vidalia), but these are believed to be small, and relatively inactive, if in existence now.

Existing Plans

No formal bicycle or pedestrian plans are known or were discovered to be extant in the Region. Little or no mention of the subject was included in any of the local comprehensive plans or the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center Regional Plan except as occasional action items, usually for sidewalk construction improvements in a general sense. The Regional Work Program 2005/6 Update of the RDC refers and defers to the preparation of this Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The recently adopted joint Johnson County comprehensive plan did recommend development of a bike path along S.R. 57 to the proposed new Ball's Ferry State Park in Wilkinson County. This Regional Bike/Ped Plan, as stated earlier, is the first such formal plan addressing the subject within the Region.

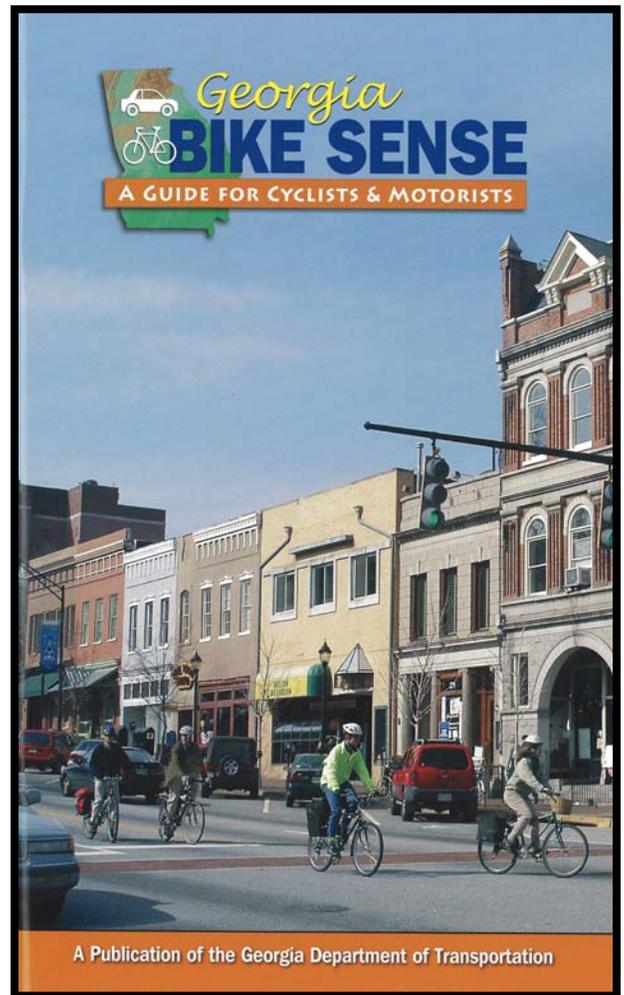
As the Regional Bike/Ped Plan was nearing completion, the Cochran Greenways Partnership (a new group of interested citizens) contacted the RDC to say it was developing a City of Cochran Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. The City of Cochran approved this plan on March 15, 2005. The main objectives of this plan are to develop a comprehensive city network of bicycle facilities, to develop a multi-use rail trail (the Ogeechee Trail) inside the City Limits of Cochran, and to promote Cochran as the "Bicycle Crossroads of Georgia." This is the first local bike/ped plan of the Region.



Safety and Education

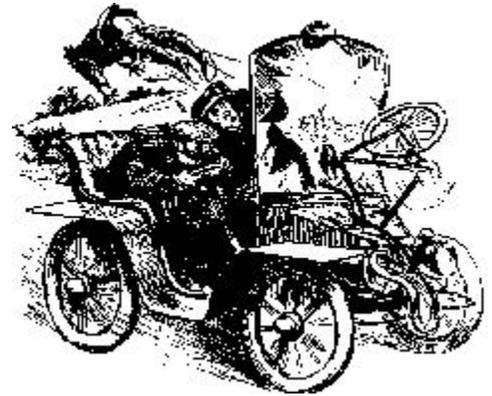
Programs. There are no known current formal education or safety programs specifically for pedestrians or bicyclists conducted at the local level within the Region. This will change soon as the Middle Georgia College (Cochran) Physical Education Department is adding a course to their curriculum, which covers cycling safety, beginning in the fall of 2005. Similarly, there are no currently active Safe Routes to Schools Programs known in the school districts of the Region. State or bicycle interest group programs and campaigns are the only source for bicycle and pedestrian safety and education activities within the Region at present. The Georgia Department of Transportation has “Share the Road” programs, and a new safety guide, “Georgia Bike Sense.” The “Share the Road” program provides “Share the Road” signs along highways (primarily state bike routes) and also “Watch for Bikes” signs (primarily at bridges). “Georgia Bike Sense” is a bicycle safety and rules-of-the-road user’s guide aimed at both bicyclists and motorists to be made available in March, 2005 in print and through the GDOT website. The GDOT bicycle and pedestrian initiative website (www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/bicycle/index.shtml) has both information and links to resources.

Georgiabikes.org is developing a “Georgia Bicycle Law Enforcement Pocket Guide” to educate law enforcement and bicyclists on traffic laws, has information and links on its website (www.georgiabikes.org), and is trying to promote a Georgia “Share the Road” license plate. The Georgia Bicycle Federation also has information on its website (www.bicyclegeorgia.com). National resources include the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (www.pedbikeinfo.org), and the Federal Highway Administration Pedestrian and Bicycle



Research Safety websites (www.tfhrcc.gov/safety/pedbike/pedbike.htm) and (www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/index.htm).

Crashes. Some information on bicycling crashes by county, state and national data is available, and does provide some insight and definitions to the safety and dangers of bicycling. It is interesting to note that the first recorded automobile crash in the United States occurred in New York in 1896 when a motor vehicle collided with a bicyclist. Over 47,000 cyclists have died in traffic crashes in the U.S. since 1932 – the first year of recorded data. 350 cyclists were killed in 1932, and represented 1.3 percent of all fatalities in traffic crashes that year. In 2002, 662 cyclists were killed and 48,000 were injured in traffic crashes; both numbers were about 2 percent of all traffic fatalities or injuries. The 2002 numbers of cyclists fatalities were about 8 percent lower than 1992. This data is from “Traffic Safety Facts 2002” by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s National Center for Statistics and Analysis (www.nhtsa.dot.gov).



This same data source shows that in 1992, the average age of cyclists killed in traffic crashes was 27.5 years, but increased to 35.7 years in 2002. Conversely, in 1992, cyclists under age 16 accounted for 42 percent of all those killed, but only 24 percent in 2002. This may be indicative of increasingly older cyclists and increasing cycling usage. This data could also be indicative of fewer children riding now as compared to earlier decades (parents driving their kids everywhere now, and children being generally less active with less riding). It could also be indicative of roads/state highways becoming less safe for bicyclists, principally older bicyclists (this would not affect or affect less the child fatality rate since they usually don’t ride on state highways or on the street). Other interesting data includes that 68 percent of cyclist fatalities occurred in urban areas, and that males represented 90 percent of fatalities. Georgia had 13 cyclist fatalities in 2002, 0.9 percent of all traffic fatalities – significantly less than the national average of 1.5 percent.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (www.hwysafety.org/safety_facts/fatality_facts/bicycles.htm) notes 619 bicyclists killed in crashes in 2003, down 7 percent from 2002 and 38 percent since 1975. This website confirms that rural areas again had only 31 percent of

bicyclist fatalities in 2003, also down from 1975's 50 percent. It also reports that deaths among bicyclists younger than 16 have gone down dramatically since 1975 (79 percent). Those younger than 16 represented one quarter of bicycle deaths in 2003 compared with two-thirds in 1975. Other statistics of import were that 61 percent of bicycle deaths occurred on major roads (vs. 35 percent on minor roads); that 85 percent of bicyclists killed were reported as not wearing helmets; and that 24 percent of those killed had a blood alcohol concentration at or above 0.08 percent (the limit for driving under the influence in Georgia).

The Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety in its 2002 Crash Analysis, Statistics, Information Notebook details that 12 people died in bicycle crashes in 2002 in Georgia (down from 18 in 1997). The rate for bicycle fatalities declined from 0.23 per 100,000 licensed drivers in 1997 to 0.14 per 100,000 in 2002. The rate of bicyclist injuries also declined from 11.75 per 100,000 licensed drivers in 1997 to 8.31 per 100,000 in 2002. There were a total of 903 bicyclist injuries in Georgia in 1997, and 711 in 2002. Of the 12 Georgia bicyclists who died in crashes in 2002: only 3 were wearing a helmet; 9 were male; 3 were under age 15 (ages 5, 9, and 13); and 6 occurred at an intersection.

Table 4 details pedacycle (bicycle) crashes by county of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region for the years 2000, 2001, and 2002 combined as provided by the Georgia Department of Transportation. About two-thirds of the 17 regional counties reported bicycle crashes during the period, although only five (5) counties had three (3) or more crashes (an average of one per year.) The Region's three most populous counties (in descending order), Laurens, Wayne, and Toombs, also had the most bicycle crashes. Almost three-fourths (74 percent) of the crashes occurred during daylight hours, and almost 60 percent (57) took place on local, rather than state, routes. More than a third of the crashes were relatively minor and resulted in no injuries. Only one fatality resulted from these crashes (Toombs County at night on a non-lighted state route). While this data may generally confirm less danger in rural areas such as the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region, it also could simply result from less bicycling usage. One interesting piece of the data is the fact that six (6) (one in seven) of the Region bicycle crashes resulted from "Sideswipe-Opposite Direction" crashes – an obvious infraction of traffic laws, most likely by the bicyclist. This fact, along with the fact that three (3) additional crashes were "Sideswipe – Same Direction" crashes, further illustrates the need for safety education of both bicyclists and motorists alike.

**TABLE 4
PEDACYCLE CRASHES BY COUNTY
HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA REGION, 2000-2002**

County	Number of Crashes	Day Light Crashes	Sideswipe-Opposite Direction Crashes	Local Route Crashes	State Route Crashes	Number of Crashes with Injuries	Number of Crashes with Fatalities	Injuries	Fatalities
Appling	2	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0
Bleckley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Candler	2	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	0
Dodge	5	5	1	3	2	4	0	4	0
Emanuel	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Evans	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Jeff Davis	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Johnson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laurens	11	8	0	5	6	8	0	9	0
Montgomery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tattnall	2	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	0
Telfair	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	2	0
Toombs	8	7	0	5	3	5	1	5	1
Treutlen	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	5	3	0	4	1	3	0	3	0
Wheeler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilcox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region Total	42	31	6	24	18	27	1	28	1

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, Office of Traffic Safety and Design, 2005.

Pedestrian Usage



Pedestrians include all those who travel by foot. Most people fall under this umbrella at one time or the other, many on a daily basis. Those who may rely more heavily on pedestrian travel as a mode of travel include children, the elderly, low income persons not able to afford a car, people with disabilities, college students, or those extremely health conscious. Walking for health reasons is probably the number one exercise for many people.

Table 2 noted earlier shows that more than 20 times the number of people who bicycled to work in the Region in 2000 walked to work as their primary means of transportation in 2000. Region workers relied on walking to work at a rate greater than other workers in Georgia.

The previously mentioned 2002 National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviors noted that eight of ten people (78.7 percent) of driving age (16 and older) walked, ran, or jogged outdoors for five minutes or more at least once during the summer of 2002. This represented about 164 million pedestrians nationally. Those persons aged 65 and over walked the least of any age, but two-thirds of this group reported walking. An estimated total of 275 million walking trips were made during the summer of 2002 nationally. People took an average of 1.7 walking trips per day each day they walked. The average distance walked on a trip was 1.2 miles. More than one-fourth of trips (26.9 percent) were less than one-quarter of a mile in length; a total of 46.5 percent were less than one-half of a mile in length; and about two-thirds (67.2 percent) were a mile or shorter in length. The most common reasons for walking were for exercise or health (27.0 percent), to run personal errands (17.3 percent), or for recreation (15.3 percent). Walking trips for exercise or health averaged 1.9 miles as compared to 0.8 miles for trips taken for all other purposes. Most of the national walking trips (45.1 percent) in 2002 were taken on sidewalks, but the next highest percentage (about one-quarter – 24.8 percent) were in auto lanes of paved streets (paved roads, not on shoulders).

Pedestrian Facilities

As noted in the national survey above, sidewalks are the most common and basic transportation facilities for pedestrians. The majority of municipalities within the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region trace their early development to railroad construction and development. The common development pattern was a commercial area adjacent to the railroad in the center of town followed by radiating residential development along travel corridors. These commercial/government center areas almost always had sidewalks adjacent to the stores and office buildings, and additional ones connecting to the nearby residential areas. Subdivision development after World War II was often on the outskirts of the town core, relied on the automobile, and usually lacked sidewalks.

As a result of this pattern of development in the Region, almost all of the Region's municipalities have some sidewalks in their downtown core, unless disturbed by later street widenings or other redevelopment. Larger communities (those with a population of 1,000 or more) often have more sidewalk coverage with connections to neighborhoods, schools, parks, or other important destinations. Generally, the larger the population, the more sidewalks a community has. There are generally no sidewalks outside of municipalities within the Region because of its rural nature and low densities. An inventory of sidewalks in the Region has been conducted by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center utilizing Global



Positioning Satellite (GPS) information under contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation, and is available, although display is not feasible for this document.

Table 5 shows the mileage of sidewalks within the Region by county and municipality as determined by the RDC inventory. There is approximately 315 miles of Region sidewalks. Only seven (7) smaller municipalities out of 63 in the Region do not have any reported sidewalks. These include Nunez and Summertown in Emanuel County, Montrose in Laurens County, Higgston in Montgomery County, Jacksonville and Scotland in Telfair County, and Santa Claus in Toombs County. Fifteen (15) additional Region municipalities (less than one-third) have more than five miles of sidewalks. Only the three most populous Region cities (all less than 20,000 in population), Dublin (c.35 miles), Jesup (c.27 miles), and Vidalia (c.23 miles), have more than 20 miles of sidewalks.



**TABLE 5
MILEAGE OF SIDEWALKS IN THE HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA REGION
BY COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITY**

County (Municipality)	Total Mileage	County Percent of Region	County (Municipality)	Total Mileage	County Percent of Region	County (Municipality)	Total Mileage	County Percent of Region
Appling Baxley Graham Surrency	17.09 14.57 0.63 1.89	5.4	Laurens Cadwell Dexter Dublin Dudley East Dublin Montrose Rentz	44.17 1.68 1.21 34.80 .85 4.11 0 1.52	14.0	Wilcox Abbeville Pitts Pineview Rochelle	11.69 2.76 2.06 1.29 5.58	3.7
Bleckley Cochran	7.82 7.82	2.5	Montgomery Ailey Alston Higgston Mt. Vernon Tarrytown Uvalda	13.33 5.54 .95 0 5.81 .33 .70	4.2			
Candler Metter Pulaski	10.93 9.96 .97	3.5	Tattnall Cobbtown Collins Glennville Manassas Reidsville	25.00 1.11 1.76 13.19 .82 8.12	7.9			
Dodge Chauncey Chester Eastman Milan Rhine	22.96 1.8 1.94 15.27 2.37 1.58	7.3	Telfair Helena Jacksonville Lumber City McRae Scotland	14.12 1.22 0 1.04 11.86 0	4.5			
Emanuel Adrian Garfield Nunez Oak Park Stillmore Summertown Swainsboro Twin City	20.00 .80 .22 0 .57 .29 0 17.62 .50	6.4	Toombs Lyons Santa Claus Vidalia	35.22 12.71 0 22.51	11.2			
Evans Bellville Claxton Daisy Hagan	19.65 1.69 16.19 .44 1.33	6.2	Treutlen Soperton	11.96 11.96	3.8			
Jeff Davis Denton Hazlehurst	14.40 .64 13.76	4.6	Wayne Jesup Odum Screven	31.17 27.23 2.11 1.83	9.9			
Johnson Kite Wrightsville	9.72 .76 8.96	3.1	Wheeler Alamo Glenwood	5.61 2.49 3.12	1.8			

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha GIS staff, Region GIS files, 2005.

Because of the age of many of the sidewalks in the Region (most date from the early 20th Century coincident with the heyday of many towns' development and expansion), many of the existing Region sidewalks are in bad repair, have obstacles (utility poles, fire hydrants, etc.) in the travel lane, are narrow, and lack curb cuts or other ADA compliance. Lighting of these facilities is also often limited. Crosswalks within the Region are often unmarked, and only a very small percentage in the Region's largest cities have any signalization. Only in the downtowns utilizing Transportation Enhancement funds for streetscape improvements in recent years can bulbouts or other traffic calming measures be found. There are few, or very limited if they do exist, sidewalk buffers between the curb and sidewalk within the Region.

Outside of downtown sidewalks, the next most likely routes for sidewalks are between older residential areas and schools. Most larger municipalities of the Region do have schools within their borders, a trend that was reinforced during much of the 20th Century with school consolidation and the accompanying closing of schools in rural areas and smaller municipalities. As in many other places, school bus transportation, the automobile, and crime or fear of crime, are believed to have lowered the number of kids walking or biking to school, but no formal local data exists. Other trends in recent years ameliorating or lessening the need, or at least the cost-effectiveness of building new sidewalks to schools, are the migration of municipal residents to larger lots in the unincorporated countryside within the Region and the location of new schools at the fringes or outside the municipal city limits. Nevertheless, it is believed there is some need within the Region for school sidewalk improvements, either to rehabilitate existing older ones or to establish new ones.

While it is beyond the scope of this Regional Plan to evaluate particular local sidewalk needs, each county and municipality, as appropriate, will need to perform an analysis of population within a mile of individual schools and other factors deemed appropriate to determine the actual lack of, and need for, sidewalks for that school. There is a national push with substantial funding, the Safe Routes to School Program, to enable more kids to be able to walk or bike to school. This program could and should be used to assist in meeting the identified, cost-effective local school sidewalk needs. The Safe Routes to School Program is an international program designed to increase the number of children walking and biking to school while reducing traffic the program uses the "4 E's" of "education, encouragement, enforcement, and

engineering” to accomplish these objectives. (See the website www.saferoutestoschools.org for more information.)

There are a number of trails and more walking paths within the Region. As noted earlier, all three state parks within the Region have multi-use paths, primarily used by hikers/walkers. The public fishing areas (Dodge County, Evans County, Hugh M. Gillis (Laurens County), and Bleckley County (under construction) offer walking opportunities. The Dodge County Public Fishing Area has a formal nature trail as a facility. Most of the larger community parks within each county have walking/multi-use paths or trails. A large number of even the Region’s smaller municipalities have, at least, a short walking path. There is a demand for even more, as walking paths are often mentioned as needs in local government grant requests to the RDC.

Although pedestrian improvements have been an important component of downtown and other streetscape improvement projects built or requested under Transportation Enhancement funding, no known formal local plans for sidewalk or pedestrian facilities exist within the Region.

Safety and Education

As noted under bicycling, there are no known formal education or safety programs specifically for bicyclists or pedestrians at the local level within the Region (although one (a cycling safety course) is planned at Middle Georgia College in Cochran). There is a perceived need for both improved, upgraded, and new sidewalks and separate walking paths/trails within the Region. Given the rural nature and low population densities of the Region, and the large existing need for more pressing transportation priorities (paved roads, widened thoroughfares, e.g.), it is likely that much of the Region will not be sidewalked in the foreseeable future. This indicates a great educational need on safety issues such as how to walk (facing traffic) on roadways, the need for wearing light colored or reflective clothing when walking at night, and other related issues and risks.



The Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety’s Crash Analysis, Statistics, and Information Reports available on its website (www.dmv.ga.gov) has data available on pedestrian safety by county. Table 6 shows this data for the Region by county and in comparison to Georgia for the years 1996-2003. Generally, pedestrians within the Region are involved in

crashes and are injured at lesser rates than in Georgia as a whole. However, Table 6 also shows a greater percentage of pedestrian fatalities as a percentage of the total number of pedestrians in crashes within the Region (13.7%) than in the state as a whole (61). According to the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia has over 100 pedestrian fatalities a year and tracks the national trend of approximately 10-12 percent of all traffic related fatalities involving pedestrians. Analysis of 2001 fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes for the Region by County and Georgia (Table 7), shows that both the Region and Georgia had percentages of about 9 percent of traffic crash fatalities involving pedestrians that year. (The Region was actually slightly higher.) This statistic is variable, though, within the Region as only 6 of 17 counties had a pedestrian fatality in 2001.

Thus walking within the Region may or may not be relatively safer than elsewhere in Georgia as seen in these statistics, 55 persons lost their lives as pedestrians within the Region from 1996 to 2003. This included at least two pedestrians dying in all 17 Region counties, except for in Montgomery and Telfair which had no pedestrian fatalities. It certainly appears that if a pedestrian is involved in a motor vehicle crash within the Region, the pedestrian is just as, and maybe more likely to be, fatally injured than elsewhere in Georgia. The complexity of reducing pedestrian fatalities is noted by the Georgia Department of Transportation in its Safety Action Plan. This plan notes that over 91 percent of pedestrian crashes statewide occur in the roadway; only 5 percent occur in marked crosswalks; and over 50 percent involve either an impaired driver or pedestrian. This would appear the case in the Region as well. Education about safe walking and enforcement, including that involving impaired driving or walking, is an appropriate response. More off-road walking facilities are an obvious need, as well.

TABLE 6
PEDESTRIANS IN CRASHES, INJURIES, AND FATALITIES, 1996 - 2003

County	Pedestrians in Crashes		Pedestrians Injured		Pedestrian Fatalities	
	Number	Rate Per 10,000 Licensed Drivers	Number	Rate Per 10,000 Licensed Drivers	Number	Rate Per 10,000 Licensed Drivers
Appling	18	1.8	12	1.2	5	N/A
Bleckley	12	1.8	8	N/A	3	N/A
Candler	8	N/A	6	N/A	2	N/A
Dodge	16	1.6	10	1.0	2	N/A
Emanuel	38	3.0	34	2.7	3	N/A
Evans	16	2.9	9	N/A	5	N/A
Jeff Davis	16	2.0	11	1.4	4	N/A
Johnson	5	N/A	3	N/A	2	N/A
Laurens	115	4.4	96	3.7	9	N/A
Montgomery	5	N/A	4	N/A	0	0
Tattnall	21	1.9	16	1.5	4	N/A
Telfair	14	2.1	13	2.0	0	0
Toombs	46	3.1	42	2.8	3	N/A
Treutlen	11	3.1	8	N/A	3	N/A
Wayne	36	2.4	26	1.8	4	N/A
Wheeler	5	N/A	2	N/A	3	N/A
Wilcox	19	4.5	14	3.3	3	N/A
Region	401	N/A	314	N/A	55	N/A
Georgia	21,221	4.5	17,976	3.8	1,300	0.27

N/A: Report did not calculate if number was less than 10.

Source: Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety, Crash Analysis, Statistics, and Information Reports, 2004.

**TABLE 7
FATALITIES IN MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC CRASHES, 2001**

County	Total Number of Fatalities in Motor Vehicle Crashes	Number of Pedestrian Fatalities
Appling	9	0
Bleckley	0	0
Candler	3	0
Dodge	8	0
Emanuel	10	0
Evans	2	2
Jeff Davis	7	0
Johnson	0	0
Laurens	15	1
Montgomery	4	0
Tattnall	8	1
Telfair	1	0
Toombs	9	0
Treutlen	3	1
Wayne	11	3
Wheeler	4	1
Wilcox	3	0
Region Total	97	9
Georgia	1,647	146

Source: National Center for Statistics and Analysis, Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) 2001, (Final).

Health and Fitness Benefits of Walking and Bicycling

According to bicyclinginfo.org, the American Medical Association (AMA) reported in 1998 that 60 percent of Americans led completely sedentary lifestyles, and 40 percent were clinically overweight. The AMA Journal reported in October, 1999 that Centers for Disease Control research had found “obesity and overweight are linked to the nation’s number one killer--heart disease -- as well as diabetes and other chronic conditions.” The report also stated that one reason for Americans’ sedentary lifestyle is that “walking and cycling have been replaced by automobile travel for all but the shortest distances.” The Surgeon General now recommends thirty minutes of moderate intensity physical activity daily, or almost daily, in addition to customary daily activities for a healthy lifestyle.



Walking is often cited as the best choice for regular, healthy exercise. It is free, requires no special equipment or training, can be done almost anywhere, and almost everyone is capable of doing it. It is relatively safe and low-impact, and walking for health can be easily combined with walking for other reasons, such as to work, to school, to shop, to visit, or to exercise the dog. A brisk 30-minute walk burns about 200 calories, while walking slowly uses about 100 calories. Walking is relatively easy on the joints. During walking, at least one foot is on the ground at all times, so the force with which the foot strikes the ground is never much more than the person’s weight. Bicycling can be even better for one’s health. While cycling can be fun,



social, and offer aesthetic values, the exercise has value whether the pedaling is slow and casual or fast and aerobic. Bicycling does not pound leg joints like running can. Bicycles are pedaled in a smooth circular motion that does not jolt the muscles, but bicycling does require balance. Pedaling strengthens the upper leg muscles.

Specific studies on the health benefits of walking or biking have been undertaken, and continue to prove of significant benefit. The Honolulu Heart Study, which looked at over 8,000 men over a 12-year period and was reported on in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1998, found that walking just two miles a day cut the risk of death almost in half. Those who walked infrequently were about 2½ times more likely to die of cancer than the two-mile-a-day men. A large study of 80,000 men and women in Scandinavia in the 1970's, as reported on about.com, uncovered that walking and other moderate recreational activity reduced colon cancer risk among women by 40 percent. The Nurse's Health Study of 121,701 registered nurses ongoing since 1976 has found (according to about.com) that vigorous exercise (such as brisk walking) for 7 hours a week was associated with 20 percent less incidence of breast cancer. A 2000 report in the Archives of Internal Medicine (as reported on nybc.net) found that in a prospective study of over 13,000 women and 17,000 men which followed participants for an average of 14.5 years, bicycling to work decreased the risk of death by about 40 percent after controlling for other factors including leisure time physical activity.

According to the American Heart Association (as reported on nybc.net) daily physical activity, such as brisk walking or bicycling, will provide the following physical and mental health benefits:

- Reduces the risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation throughout the body.
- Keeps weight under control.
- Improves blood cholesterol levels.
- Prevents and manages high blood pressure.
- Prevents bone loss
- Boosts energy level
- Helps manage stress.
- Releases tension.
- Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well.
- Improves self-image
- Counters anxiety and depression and increase enthusiasm and optimism.
- Increases muscle strength and the ability to do other physical activities.

- Provides a way to share an activity with family and friends.
- Establishes healthy habits in children and counters the conditions (obesity, high blood pressure, etc.) that lead to heart attack and stroke later in life.
- Helps delay or prevent chronic illnesses and diseases associated with aging and maintains quality of life and independence longer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes on its website, www.cdc.gov, that regular physical activity, such as that achieved by walking or bicycling, can improve health and reduce the risk of premature death in the following ways:

- Reduces the risk of developing coronary heart disease (CHD) and the risk of dying from CHD
- Reduces the risk of stroke
- Reduces the risk of having a second heart attack in people who have already had one heart attack
- Lowers both total blood cholesterol and triglycerides and increases high-density lipoproteins (HDL or the “good” cholesterol)
- Lowers the risk of developing high blood pressure
- Helps reduce blood pressure in people who already have hypertension
- Lowers the risk of developing non-insulin-dependent (type 2) diabetes mellitus
- Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer
- Helps people achieve and maintain a healthy body weight
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety
- Promotes psychological well-being and reduces feelings of stress
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling or becoming excessively fatigued

It is without doubt that there are far-reaching benefits for everyone, both on an individual and a societal basis, in regular physical activity. There is a need for us all to walk or bike more.



Opportunities/Strengths/Weaknesses

The existing conditions analysis has shown a Region with current bicycling at rates comparable to the state, and one with apparently growing bicycle usage. Bicycling in the Region is increasingly being used through events for tourism and economic development, and becoming more organized for promotion and recreation through bicycle clubs. The Region is a rural area with an accommodating climate and topography for bicycling, and as statistics show, a relatively safe one for bicycling activities. Many of its roads, including some state routes, have average daily traffic counts of less than 2,000 vehicles, which makes them attractive and generally safe and enjoyable, even for beginning adult bicyclists. Other strengths of the Region include its scenic/pastoral setting, abundant natural resources, and many historic/cultural amenities. The relatively inexpensive cost of accommodations and restaurants for travelers, including those who bicycle, in the Region as compared to more traditional tourist destinations also is a strength. All of these factors combine to enable the Region to have much upside potential for growing bicycle use and development. There is an opportunity to develop facilities and market the Region as a destination and outlet for beginning and intermediate cyclists in particular. The previously discussed Atlantic Coast Route of the Adventure Cycling Association presently utilizing portions of the Region already illustrates and confirms this potential.



Regional bicycling weaknesses include the lack of facilities and designated paths/routes; the lack of signage; the lack of coordination, vision, marketing and promotion; the lack of education and enforcement; and other safety issues. Given the lack of separate facilities, there is a reliance on use of the paved lanes or shoulders of roads. Rumble strips are widely used and cause the shoulders to be unusable for bicycling when utilizing all of the paved shoulder. The rock treatment utilized for surface treatment of many paved county roads also makes them virtually unusable for bicycling. The promotion of bicycling for tourism such as adventure cycling would require coordination, marketing materials, and detailed route maps which currently do not exist. The lack of bicycle repair shops within the Region is also a handicap. The

lack of education is an issue that cuts both ways, both for drivers and for cyclists. Cyclists continue to drive on the wrong side of the road and need further education on their responsibilities and rules, while drivers need education on cyclists' rights and their need to "share the road."

The Region also walks at a rate greater than the state average, and has great potential for even more. The lack of facilities, especially sidewalks, does dampen walking activities. The existing coverage and conditions of the existing sidewalks are major concerns. On the other hand, many of the Region's municipalities do have small, often circular, walking paths for recreation/exercise. Many of the attributes of the Region conducive to bicycling also make it attractive for pedestrian activities. There is also a corresponding lack of education, and needs for signage, marking and better lighting.

There are opportunities to promote safe bicycling and pedestrian activities through such campaigns as "Share the Road," GDOT's "Georgia Bike Sense," and such national programs as "The Ride of Silence," "Walk to School Day," and "Safe Routes to Schools." The "Ride of Silence"

(www.rideofsilence.org) is a national event honoring those who have been injured or killed bicycling on America's public roadways. Georgia Bikes! has been promoting it for Georgia, and the first such event in Georgia was held in May, 2004 in Valdosta. The Walk to School Day or Week (www.iwalktoschool.org) is an internationally promoted event usually held in the first week of October to encourage parents and children to walk to school to teach safe walking behaviors, to illustrate how easy, enjoyable, and healthy walking is, and to take specific steps to create more walkable communities. It is sponsored nationally by The Partnership for a Walkable America. The Safe Routes to Schools (www.saferoutestoschools.org) is a popular program spreading across the United States designed to promote walking and biking through education, incentives, enforcement of traffic laws, and other ways to create safer streets. The support of this program has been funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



Local resources/opportunities. Each county has historic and natural resources that could be important or utilized to create local biking/walking facilities, - or to capitalize on bicycling tourism. The following table summarizes some of them.

Appling – Moody Forest, Lake Mayers, Altamaha River, Bullard WMA, S.R. 121 (Woodpecker Trail), Appling Heritage Center

Bleckley – *Cochran/Bleckley Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan*, Middle Georgia College, Bleckley County Public Fishing Area

Candler – Harrold Nature Preserve, South Metter Residential National Register Historic District, S.R. 121 (Woodpecker Trail)

Dodge – Dodge County Public Fishing Area, Jaybird Springs



Emanuel – George L. Smith State Park, Ohoopsee River, East Georgia College, S.R. 121 (Woodpecker Trail)

Evans – Evans County Public Fishing Area

Jeff Davis – Bullard Creek WMA, Big House, Altamaha River, State's Largest Dogwood Tree, Dipping Vats, Fairgrounds

Johnson – Civil War sites, S.R. 57

Laurens – Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area, Buckeye Park, Stubbs Park/Stonewall Neighborhood National Register Historic District, Downtown Dublin National Register Historic District, Oconee River



Montgomery – Yamassee Trail, Oconee River, Long Pond, Dead River Cemetery,
Brewton-Parker College



Tattnall – Altamaha River, Ochoopee River, S.R. 57 (Wiregrass Trail), Alexander Hotel, Big Hammock Natural Area/WMA, Gordonia-Alatamaha State Park, S.R. 121 (Woodpecker Trail)

Telfair – Jacksonville, Ocmulgee River, S.R. 117, Little Ocmulgee State Park

Toombs – Altamaha River, S.R. 135, Vidalia Onion Museum, Altama Museum of Art and History

Treutlen – S.R. 15/29

Wayne – Altamaha River, Doctortown Bridge, State’s Largest Turkey Oak, Lake Grace

Wheeler – Oconee River, S.R. 149, Little Ocmulgee State Park, Woodland Plantation

Wilcox – Abbeville, Ocmulgee River



Resources

Many resources have been identified throughout this existing conditions analysis. Two particularly useful resources for local communities and organizations wishing to evaluate/improve themselves for bicycling and walking are www.bicyclinginfo.org and www.walkinginfo.org. These sites (actually links of the National Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center – www.pedbikeinfo.org – of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) provide checklists (Bikeability Checklist – “How Bikeable is Your Community?”, and Walkability Checklist – “How Walkable is Your Community?”) which can be utilized as an evaluation tool, as well as a source for ideas for improvements, and a bibliography of resources for additional information.



Needs Assessment

The Region’s bicycle and pedestrian needs can be summarized as follows.

1. There is a need for additional safe and convenient facilities for bicycle and pedestrian activities, both at the state and local levels.

Because the majority of bicycle usage in the Region will continue to be on on-road facilities, the majority of these facilities should be paved shoulders, at least four feet wide with at least two feet without rumble strips, or wide curb lanes. This is especially so because of the scenic nature of the Region, the fact that many bicyclists oppose separate facilities, and general cost factors.

2. There is a need for additional state bicycle routes in the Region, and for better state signage.

Only Georgia Bike Route 40 currently traverses the Region on the northern edge, and it travels through only 4 of 17 Region counties. There are needs to inter-connect the three state parks in the Region (as well as the newly planned Balls Ferry State Park just beyond the Region in Wilkinson County), and to interconnect Regional bike routes to other State Bike Routes. In

addition to the long-term upgrading of the paved shoulders of these routes, there needs to be short-term upgrading of safety and marking signage. All new state highway improvement projects, whether new widening, resurfacing, shoulder, or other improvement projects, need to include bikeable paved shoulders (“complete streets”) as part of the upgrade, especially if identified in this or a local plan.

3. There is a need for more local bicycle routes to connect to the proposed state bike routes to both provide more local opportunities, and to provide outlets for bicycling tourism by connecting local historic, scenic, natural or other points of interest.

Local plans and implementation strategies should be developed to capitalize on developing such local connectors. This could begin by simple designation marking of local routes, development of maps, and preparation of marketing materials. This should be coordinated regionally.

4. There is a need to upgrade sidewalks, and to provide separate recreational walking paths in all counties of the Region.

There is a need of new, more ADA compliant sidewalks, including more curb cuts, marked crosswalks, and better street lighting of these facilities in virtually every municipality of the Region. Most communities also want to add, expand, or upgrade walking paths. Sidewalk facilities are especially needed to connect schools, recreation parks, downtowns, community centers, government facilities, and other points of interest and activity.

5. There is a need for state, local, and bicycling organizations’ sponsorship of safety and education programs, campaigns, and facilities to promote increased bicycling and walking usage, and to make such usage safer.

A sampling of such campaigns, such as GDOT’s “Georgia Bicycle Sense,” “Share the Road,” and others such as “Safe Routes to Schools,” “Ride of Silence,” “Walk to School Day,” and the “Georgia Pocket Law Enforcement Guide,” have been mentioned earlier. The addition of more facilities, whether signage, new paved shoulders, or sidewalk expansions/upgrades will also help.

6. There is a need to cooperatively promote the Region as a bicycling destination for beginning and intermediate cyclists to increase bicycle tourism and enhance diverse economic development.

The Region is attractive for bicyclists for many reasons, including its climate, topography, low traffic counts, scenery, and history. This could be promoted for tourism purposes and the diversification of economic development. Bicycle events attract bicyclists from across the country and from more urban areas of Georgia. In addition to immediate economic impact of bicyclist spending on food, lodging, and other expenses, there is evidence that such visitors often return for other types of vacations. In addition, self-guided tours, such as those advocated by the Adventure Cycling Association, opens up such bicycling tourism beyond one specific day or week to anytime convenient to the bicyclists. To make such tourism work, there needs to be local development/promotion of facilities and marketing information and regional cooperation. Through regional cooperation of tourism boards/chambers of commerce and/or local governments, one regional number for bicyclist contact needs to be established as well as a local network or response. There also needs to be detailed, GPS-coordinated maps of routes, and accompanying promotional/marketing materials developed. The local response network should be able to respond to common bicyclist needs in a timely and complete manner, and could be financed through user fees to the bicyclists.



**HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA RDC
REGIONAL BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLAN
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES,
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

GOAL 1: Long term, to ensure that the region’s transportation system is safe and convenient for bicycle and pedestrian activities through improved access to facilities for all users.

Short Term Goal: To upgrade access to on-road facilities through the implementation of such means as paved shoulders, wide curb lanes, etc.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1.1: Encourage GDOT to provide improved bicycle and pedestrian access on all new transportation projects, including bikeable paved shoulders at least four feet wide with at least two feet without rumble strips.

Objective 1.2: Promote and encourage land use patterns in new developments that include access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1.3: Encourage employers to provide facilities for employees who choose to bike to work.

Objective 1.4: Maintain and preserve existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities to ensure their continued function.

Objective 1.5: Increase the level of signage and marking along all regional and state bicycle routes.

Objective 1.6: Target sidewalk improvements for areas of high priority where existing or planned development offers the greatest opportunity for use.

GOAL 2: Long term, to establish a regional network of bicycle routes, including the addition of new state bicycle routes, that is centered on interconnecting the region's state parks.

Short Term Goal: To designate appropriate routes for a regional bicycle/pedestrian system and pursue necessary marking and signage of and along designated routes.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVE:

Objective 2.1: Develop a system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities which interconnects regional bicycle routes to other state routes, as well as the region's three state parks (George L. Smith State Park, Gordonia-Alatamaha State Park, and Little Ocmulgee State Park) and the newly planned Balls Ferry State Park adjacent to the region in Wilkinson County.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 2.2: Develop appropriate safety and marking signage along all regional and state bike routes.

Objective 2.3: Seek to have bikeable paved shoulders included on all new highway improvement/upgrade projects in the region.

Objective 2.4: Pursue permanent funding from the State and other sources to construct and maintain bicycle routes throughout the region.

GOAL 3: Long term, to provide for more local bicycling opportunities and outlets for bicycle tourism by developing new local bicycle routes to connect to proposed state bicycle routes.

Short Term Goal: To establish local bicycle routes which connect local historic, scenic, natural, or other points of interest.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVE:

Objective 3.1: Promote the development of local bicycle/pedestrian plans and implementation strategies to develop more localized bicycle routes.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 3.2: Seek the designation of local bicycle routes within the region.

Objective 3.3: Establish appropriate signage/marketing of designated local routes.

Objective 3.4: Seek to develop maps highlighting local bicycle routes.

Objective 3.5: Prepare appropriate materials necessary to effectively market and promote local routes.

Objective 3.6: Seek regional coordination in establishing/promoting local routes.

GOAL 4: Long term, to provide greater access for pedestrian facilities through such means as improvements to sidewalks and the creation of separate recreational walking paths throughout each county in the region so as to allow for easier and increased pedestrian travel.

Short Term Goal: To improve sidewalks throughout the region so as to provide for more convenient pedestrian activity and to connect community points of interest.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVE:

Objective 4.1: Seek, where appropriate, the addition, expansion, or upgrading of separate recreational walking paths in each county in the region.

Objective 4.2: Develop a system of pedestrian facilities which connects major community destination points such as downtown areas, schools, community centers, government facilities, and major recreation parks.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVE:

Objective 4.3: Pursue the construction of new sidewalks throughout the region's municipalities that are ADA compliant, including additional curb cuts, marked crosswalks, and improved street lighting.

GOAL 5: **Long term, to provide increased education and awareness among the general public as to the benefits of biking and walking so as to foster bicycling and pedestrian travel as a safer and more viable mode of transportation in the region.**

Short Term Goal: **To advocate and pursue the development of programs that will provide education and generate increased public participation in bicycling/pedestrian activities.**

LONG TERM OBJECTIVE:

Objective 5.1: Pursue sponsorship of appropriate safety and education programs, campaigns, and facilities through state and local governments and bicycling organizations to promote increased bicycling and walking participation, and to allow for safer usage of activities.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 5.2: Seek the establishment of local and regional safety and education programs that promote the public health, economic development, and environmental benefits of biking and walking.

Objective 5.3: Seek to increase the level of interest and participation in bicycling and walking by promoting such activities as National Bike Month, Bike-To-Work Week, and Walk-To-School Day.

Objective 5.4: Support and promote GDOT's education and safety campaign (*Georgia Bicycle Sense*) and encourage the distribution of materials.

Objective 5.5: Develop local programs for drivers as well as bicyclists and pedestrians on sharing the road.

Objective 5.6: Continue to provide a regional forum for bicycle and pedestrian planning issues and continued development of regional and local plans among various regional stakeholders including local governments, schools, tourism staff, parks and recreation staff, bicycle interest groups, etc.

Objective 5.7: Seek permanent bicycle planning activities among the region's local governments, including the development of local plans that complement and augment the regional plan.

GOAL 6: **Long term, to provide for a more coordinated effort in marketing the region as a destination for beginner/intermediate bicyclists and to increase tourism and promote more diverse economic development throughout the region in general through the enhancement of local bike routes/events.**

Short Term Goal: **To seek to promote the region more cooperatively through a coordinated marketing of local bike routes/events.**

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES:

Objective 6.1: Increase the level of regional coordination and cooperation in establishing/promoting facilities and marketing.

Objective 6.2: Promote the region more cooperatively as an attractive destination for beginner/intermediate bicyclists through the promotion of self-guided, or venture, bicycle tours.

Objective 6.3: Seek the establishment of a marketing program, on a local and/or regional level, to highlight the benefits of bicycling and walking, including developing promotional/marketing materials and detailed, GPS-coordinated maps of local and regional routes.

Objective 6.4: Pursue an increased level of tourism throughout the region by cooperatively promoting and marketing the various local bike routes/events in the region.

Objective 6.5: Seek the establishment of a regional telephone number to serve as a point of contact for bicyclist needs and an accompanying local network of

response through the regional cooperation of tourism boards, chambers of commerce, and/or local governments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 1.** The number of new state bike routes designated in the Region.
- 2.** The number of miles of new bicycle lanes constructed per year on new highway construction projects.
- 3.** The increased amount of signage and markings along regional/state bike routes.
- 4.** The amount of new local bicycle facilities designated/constructed.
- 5.** The number of miles of sidewalks repaired or constructed per year in areas of need.
- 6.** The number of new local walking paths/trails developed.
- 7.** The number of education and safety programs established in the region.
- 8.** The amount of new participants in local bike events/tours.
- 9.** The number of new bicycle events/tours established in the Region.
- 10.** Increased participation in bicycle interest groups and the number of new groups established in the region.
- 11.** The number of new bicycle storage and parking facilities established.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish new state bicycle routes in the region:
 - Central Route Parallel to U.S. 280
 - Southern Route Parallel to U.S. 341/U.S. 23
 - Northern Route Parallel to U.S. 80
 - North-South connections of Routes (U.S. 1, U.S. 441, U.S. 221/GA 15, GA 57/192, GA 26)
2. Intraconnect regional bicycle/pedestrian routes with the three state parks located in the region: George L. Smith State Park (Emanuel), Gordonia-Alatamaha State Park (Tattnall), and Little Ocmulgee State Park (Wheeler).
3. Interconnect regional bicycle/pedestrian routes with existing state routes adjacent to the region.
4. Develop the Region as a tourist destination for beginning/intermediate cyclists, including Regional coordination in marketing/promotion and a coordinated local response network.
5. Prioritize areas in need of pedestrian access.
6. Add shoulders to rural roads where none presently exist.
7. Provide pedestrian crosswalks in identified areas of need.
8. Increase the number of Share the Road signs throughout the region, and increase signage in general including mile markers, distances to historic sites, etc.
9. Maintain bike paths and sidewalks and keep them free of debris and other potential hazards.
10. Develop local bicycle facilities and events.
11. Distribute maps highlighting bicycle and pedestrian routes.
12. Seek the distribution of materials on basic bicycle and pedestrian safety laws.

- 13.** Develop programs for bicycle riders of all ages and skill levels focusing on bicycle safety and hazard identification skills on both shared roadways and separated trails.
- 14.** Investigate increased funding for cities and counties from multiple sources towards the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian components.
- 15.** Installation of bicycle storage racks and other ancillary facilities.
- 16.** Decrease the use of rumble strips along state and federal routes in new highway construction projects.

Table 8
Proposed Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects
and Total Number of Miles

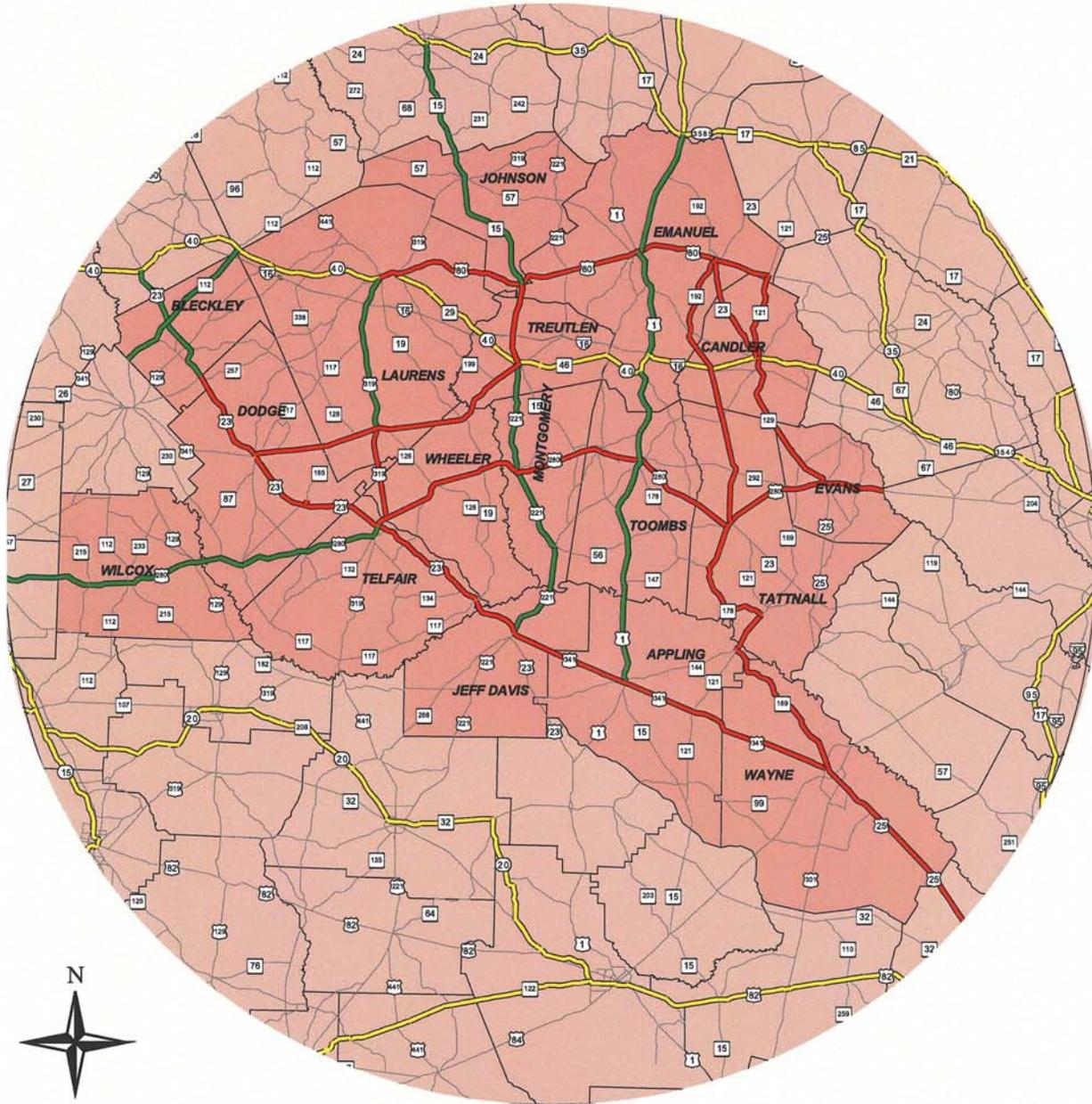
Proposed Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Project	Total Number of Miles
Construct 4' bike lanes along a central regional route parallel to U.S. 280 from Claxton to McRae by 2020	68
Construct 4' bike lanes along a southern regional route parallel to U.S. 341/U.S. 23 from Gardi to Cochran by 2020	115
Construct 4' bike lanes along a northern regional route parallel to U.S. 80 from George L. Smith State Park to State Bike Route 40 at Dublin by 2020	50
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 280 from Seville to McRae as a connector to the southern regional route along U.S. 341/ U.S. 23 by 2020	47
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 112 from U.S. 23 north of Cochran to U.S. 80 (State Bike Route 40) in Laurens County and U.S. 23 from Cochran to GA 96 (State Bike Route 40) in Twiggs County as connectors between U.S. 23 and State Bike Route 40 by 2020	14
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 441 from Cedar Grove in Laurens County to U.S. 80 (State Bike Route 40) in Dublin by 2020 as a connector between State Bike Route 40 and the region's southern route	14
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 441 from Cedar Grove in Laurens County to U.S. 80 (State Bike Route 40) in Dublin by 2020 as a connector between State Bike Route 40 and the region's southern route	21
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 221 from Hazlehurst to GA 46 (State Bike Route 40) in Soperton by 2020 as a connector between the region's southern route (U.S. 341) and State Bike Route 40	39
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 15 from U.S. 80 at Adrian to GA 24 (State Bike Route 35) at Sandersville as a connector between SBR 35 and U.S. 80 (the region's northern route) by 2020	35
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 56 from GA 17 (State Bike Route 35) at Midville to U.S. 80 (the region's northern route) at Swainsboro as a connector between SBR 35 and U.S. 80 by 2020	16
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 1 from Swainsboro to U.S. 341 at Baxley by 2020 as a connector between the region's northern and southern routes	60
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 46 from Eastman to State Bike Route 40 at Soperton as a connector between SBR 40 and U.S. 341 (the region's southern route) by 2020	39

**Proposed Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects
and Total Number of Miles (Cont'd)**

Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 121/GA 147/GA 169/GA 178 from Jesup to U.S. 280 at Reidsville as a connector between U.S. 341 (the region's southern route) and U.S. 280 (the region's central route) by 2020	46
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 57/GA 192 from Reidsville to Twin City by 2020 as a connector between U.S. 280 (the region's central route) and U.S. 80 (the region's northern route)	36
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 129/GA 23 from Claxton to Twin City as a connector between U.S. 280 and U.S. 80 by 2020	32
Total Project Mileage	632

MAP 2

Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC Proposed Regional Bicycle Routes



10 0 10 20 Miles

- Proposed Bicycle Routes
- Proposed Connector Route
- Proposed Regional Bicycle Route
- Currently Designated State Bicycle Routes
- State Roads
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC Region
- Georgia Counties

"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Users are cautioned to consider the nature of this data before using them for decisions that concern public safety or the conduct of business that involves substantial monetary or operational consequences. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

Prepared By:
Scott Jackson, GIS Planner
Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC
5405 Oak Street
Eastman, Georgia 31023
(478)374-4771
Source: Y:\Bike_Trails\biketrails5_05.apr
Date: June 3, 2005

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS							Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year	Beyond 2009				
Access To Facilities											
Construct 4' bike lanes along a central regional route parallel to U.S. 280 from Claxton to McRae by 2020								X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$1.3 million	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along a southern regional route parallel to U.S. 341/U.S. 23 from Gardi to Cochran by 2020		X	X	X	X			X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$2.1 million	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along a northern regional route parallel to U.S. 80 from George L. Smith State Park to State Bike Route 40 at Dublin by 2020								X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$1 million	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 280 from Seville to McRae as a connector to the southern regional route along U.S. 341/U.S. 23 by 2020								X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$875,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 112 from U.S. 23 north of Cochran to U.S. 80 (State Bike Route 40) in Laurens County and U.S. 23 from Cochran to GA 96 (State Bike Route 40) in Twiggs County as connectors between U.S. 23 and State Bike Route 40 by 2020								X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$525,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 441 from Cedar Grove in Laurens County to U.S. 80 (State Bike Route 40) in Dublin by 2020 as a connector between State Bike Route 40 and the region's southern route								X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$400,000	Local, State, Federal

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS					Each Year	Beyond 2009	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009					
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 221 from Hazlehurst to GA 46 (State Bike Route 40) in Soperton by 2020 as a connector between the region's southern route (U.S. 341) and State Bike Route 40							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$760,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 15 from U.S. 80 at Adrian to GA 24 (State Bike Route 35) at Sandersville as a connector between SBR 35 and U.S. 80 (the region's northern route) by 2020							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$625,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 56 from GA 17 (State Bike Route 35) at Midville to U.S. 80 (the region's northern route) at Swainsboro as a connector between SBR 35 and U.S. 80 by 2020							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$300,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along U.S. 1 from Swainsboro to U.S. 341 at Baxley by 2020 as a connector between the region's northern and southern routes							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$1 million	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 46 from Eastman to State Bike Route 40 at Soperton as a connector between SBR 40 and U.S. 341 (the region's southern route) by 2020							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$760,000	Local, State, Federal

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS						Beyond 2009	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year				
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 121/GA 147/GA 169/GA 178 from Jesup to U.S. 280 at Reidsville as a connector between U.S. 341 (the region's southern route) and U.S. 280 (the region's central route) by 2020							X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$900,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 57/GA 192 from Reidsville to Twin City by 2020 as a connector between U.S. 280 (the region's central route) and U.S. 80 (the region's northern route)						X		Local Governments, GDOT	\$700,000	Local, State, Federal
Construct 4' bike lanes along GA 129/GA 23 from Claxton to Twin City as a connector between U.S. 280 and U.S. 80 by 2020						X		Local Governments, GDOT	\$625,000	Local, State, Federal
Seek increased funding for cities and counties to implement and maintain bicycle and pedestrian components						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State, Federal
Evaluate STIP annually to maintain compatibility with regional bike/ped system						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State
Seek to have appropriate signage, including mile markers, signs noting distances to historic sites both on and off bicycle routes, Share The Road signs, and other amenities placed on existing and future bicycle routes						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$20,000	Local, State, Federal
Have bicycle lanes striped on new highway construction projects						X	X	GDOT	\$10,000	State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS							Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year	Beyond 2009			
Encourage the extension of shoulders on all rural roads						X		Local Governments, GDOT, Bicycle Groups	\$25,000	Local, State
Construct or improve sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks in areas of high priority including retail areas, school zones, and residential developments						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$50,000/yr.	Local, State
Consider providing accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians on all new and reconstructed bridges and overpasses						X	X	GDOT	\$30,000	State
Establish Regional Network										
Seek increased funding for cities and counties to implement and maintain bicycle and pedestrian components						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State, Federal
Seek to have appropriate signage, including mile markers, signs noting distances to historic sites both on and off bicycle routes, Share The Road signs, and other amenities placed on existing and future bicycle routes						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$20,000	Local, State, Federal
Have bicycle lanes striped on new highway construction projects						X	X	GDOT	\$10,000	State
Encourage the extension of shoulders on all rural roads						X		Local Governments, GDOT, Bicycle Groups	\$25,000	Local, State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS					Each Year	Beyond 2009	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009					
Seek the development of a regional bicycle/ pedestrian system that will be centered on and connect the region's three state parks, as well as other major regional tourist destinations, including important historic sites						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments	\$1,000/mile	Local, State, Federal
Establishing New Local Bike Routes										
Cooperatively promote and market local bike routes/events in the region and advocate the development of additional activities						X	X	Local Governments, Chambers, Tourism Boards, Bicycle Groups	\$2,500/yr.	Local, Private
Distribute maps of local bicycle and pedestrian routes	X	X						GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups, Local Governments	\$1,000/yr.	State
Seek to have appropriate signage, including mile markers, signs noting distances to historic sites both on and off bicycle routes, Share The Road signs, and other amenities placed on existing and future bicycle routes						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	\$20,000	Local, State
Evaluate STIP annually to maintain compatibility with local bicycle routes						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State
Seek designation of local bicycle routes throughout the region as connectors to regional and/or state bicycle routes						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments	\$1,000/mile	Local, State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS							Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year	Beyond 2009			
Encourage the development of local bicycle/pedestrian plans to develop more localized routes						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups	\$5,000/yr.	Local, State
Access To Pedestrian Facilities										
Construct or improve sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks in areas of high priority including retail areas, school zones, and residential developments						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	\$50,000/yr.	Local, State
Seek increased funding for cities and counties to construct and maintain new sidewalks and other components						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State, Federal
Seek funding for the addition, expansion, or upgrading of separate recreational walking paths in each region county						X	X	Local Governments, GDOT	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State, Federal
Education and Safety										
Have bicycle lanes striped on new highway construction projects						X	X	GDOT	\$10,000	State
Encourage the extension of shoulders on all rural roads						X		GDOT, Local Governments	\$25,000	Local, State
Seek to have appropriate signage, including mile markers, signs noting distances to historic sites both on and off bicycle routes, Share The Road signs, and other amenities placed on existing and future bicycle routes						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	\$20,000	Local, State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS					Each Year	Beyond 2009	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009					
Utilize local bicycle clubs and local volunteers to help keep shoulders clean						X		Bicycle Groups, Civic Orgs., Local Governments	\$2,500	Local
Maintain existing paths, sidewalks and other bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and keep free of debris and other potential hazards						X		Local Governments, Civic Orgs., Bicycle Groups	\$100,000	Local
Encourage the provision of materials on basic bicycle and pedestrian safety laws and distribute in a wide variety of venues	X	X	X					Local Governments, Bicycle Groups, GDOT	\$1,000/yr.	Local, State
Advocate for the construction of adequate bicycle parking and storage facilities and other amenities by both the public and private sectors	X	X	X					Bicycle Groups, Local Governments, Private Businesses	\$5,000/yr.	Local, Private
Seek to have schools, safety organizations, and law enforcement agencies promote bicycle and pedestrian safety issues by advocating the use of safety equipment						X		Schools, Civic Orgs., Law Enforcement	\$25,000	Local, State
Increase the amount of Share The Road signs in rural areas						X		GDOT	\$7,500	State
Provide and encourage the development of regular and continuing bicycle and pedestrian education programs for people of all ages in conjunction with local governments, civic organizations, and bicycle and pedestrian interest groups						X	Bicycle Groups	Local Governments, Civic Orgs.,	\$1,500/yr.	Local, State Private

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS					Each Year	Beyond 2009	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009					
Promote GDOT's education and safety campaign and encourage the distribution of materials	X	X						GDOT, Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	\$500/yr.	State
Seek to establish programs to promote the benefits of biking and walking, including public health, economic development, and the environment	X	X						Local Governments, Bicycle Groups, Civic Orgs.	\$1,500/yr.	Local, Private
Utilize local bicycle interest groups to promote the plan	X	X	X	X	X			RDC, Bicycle Groups	\$1,000	Local
Distribute maps of bicycle and pedestrian routes	X	X						GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups	\$1,000/yr.	State
Evaluate STIP annually to maintain compatibility with regional bike/ped system						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments, RDC, Bicycle Groups	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State
Clearly identify responsibilities for maintaining bicycle and pedestrian facilities	X							GDOT, Local Governments	NA	NA
Work cooperatively to increase the amount of funding programs available for maintaining shared use paths, on-road bicycle facilities and sidewalks						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	Staff Time in Budget	Local, State
Meet as needed with Regional Bike/Ped PAC to review regional plan and make improvements/updates as necessary						X		RDC, Bicycle Groups	\$5,000	Local, State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS						Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year				Beyond 2009
Marketing/Tourism										
Seek the development of a regional bicycle/pedestrian system that will be centered on and connect the region's three state parks, as well as other major regional tourist destinations, including important historic sites						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments	\$1,000/mile	Local, State, Federal
Utilize venture bicycle tours as a means to promote the region as an attractive destination for intermediate/beginner bicyclists						X		Local Governments, Chambers, Tourism Boards, Bicycle Groups	\$2,500/yr.	Local, Private
Establish a marketing program, either regional or local in nature, to promote the benefits of biking and walking, including public health, economic development, and the environment	X	X						Local Governments, Chambers, Tourism Boards, Bicycle Groups	\$2,500/yr.	Local, Private
Utilize events such as National Bike Month to raise awareness and increase the level of interest in biking and walking						X		Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	\$1,000/yr.	Local, Private
Cooperatively promote and market local bike routes/events in the region and advocate the development of additional activities						X	X	Local Governments, Chambers, Tourism Boards, Bicycle Groups	\$2,500/yr.	Local, Private
Distribute maps of bicycle and pedestrian routes	X	X						GDOT, RDC, Bicycle Groups, Local Governments	\$1,000/yr.	State

Regional Implementation Strategy

ACTIVITY	YEARS							Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Each Year	Beyond 2009			
Seek to have appropriate signage, including mile markers, signs noting distances to historic sites both on and off bicycle routes, Share The Road signs, and other amenities placed on existing and future bicycle routes						X	X	GDOT, Local Governments, Bicycle Groups	\$20,000	Local, State

APPENDIX I

HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA RDC REGIONAL BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RDC Staff

Rafael Nail	Assistant Executive Director/Planning Director
Bill Lindsey	Regional Planner
Michelle Brown	Senior Secretary/Public Information Coordinator

County Representatives List of Members

Appling	Lynn Carter (Tourism)
Bleckley	Ann Sineyard (Chamber)
Candler	Polly Porter (Local Bicycle Organizer)
Dodge	Josh Fenn (Chamber)
Emanuel	Billy Carmichael (Recreation)
Evans	Patia Johnson (Chamber)
Jeff Davis	Wanda Marchant (Tourism)
Johnson	Lisa Troup (Local Bicycle Organizer)
Laurens	Danny Jones (Recreation)
Montgomery	Johnny Clifton (Development Authority)
Tattnall	John Cheney (Development Authority)
Telfair	Carol Lavelly (Chamber)
Toombs	Elizabeth Harvill (Tourism)
Treutlen	Alex Spivey (Recreation)
Wayne	Steve Card (Recreation)
Wheeler	Judy Benton (Business/Chamber)
Wilcox	Jan Moore (Local Bicycle Organizer)

Local Bicycle Clubs (Member to be determined by Club)

- Emerald City Bicycle Club (Dublin)
- Sweet Onion Cyclists (Vidalia) – Abe Glazer, Mac Jordan
- Laurens County Bicycle Club
- Vidalia – Toombs Bicycle Association

Advocacy Groups

- League of American Bicyclists – Skip Spivey, Area Representative (Dublin)
- Cochran Greenways Partnership – Hardy Swinson

APPENDIX II

Regional Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries and Regional Public Meeting Summaries

Planning Process and Schedule Summary Details

Formation of Regional Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) by RDC Staff-12/31/03

This activity has been completed

RDC Board Approval/Sanction of PAC and Report PAC to DOT-1/04

This activity has been completed

Collect Existing Bike/Pedestrian Plans and Data-3/31/04

This activity has been completed.

Meet with PAC at least quarterly between 2/04-6/04

One PAC meeting has been held: June 2nd, 2004 in Vidalia, Georgia and another is scheduled for July 13th, 2004 in McRae, Georgia.

The first PAC meeting was held in Vidalia, Georgia at 10 a.m. on Wednesday June 2nd, 2004. This meeting had participation from a number of region counties and cycling organizations. The counties and clubs represented included Appling County, Bleckley County, Jeff Davis County, Montgomery County, Telfair County, Toombs County, Wayne County, Wilcox County, and the Sweet Onion Cyclist Club. Ms. Amy Goodwin also came and spoke with our Planning Advisory Committee and discussed what the Georgia Department of Transportation is attempting to accomplish with the creation of a statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plan.

The purpose of this initial meeting was to have the PAC come together in an effort to provide each of the members with a better understanding of what may be required of them as a group to create this region-wide plan. The meeting lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Prior to its conclusion, the committee scheduled another meeting for July 13th, 2004 at Little Ocmulgee State Park near McRae, Georgia.

Also scheduled was the first Public Hearing required in the Goals and Objectives stage, which will take place August 17th, 2004 in Vidalia, Georgia.

Initial Public Meeting on Goals and Objectives-03/04, Establish Goals and Objectives-03/04, & Report Goals and Objectives to DOT-4/04

These steps in the schedule summary are currently awaiting the August 17th, 2004 public meeting, which is planned for Vidalia. At this meeting, public input will be solicited from members of the community in order to further identify important region-wide goals and objectives which need to be included in the plan.

A preliminary list of goals and objectives as discussed by the PAC includes the following:

- keep paths off of most major thoroughfares in the region;
- formed paths and/or routes should attempt to accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians;
- receive avid support from local governments and communities throughout the region;
- promoting bicycle venture tourism can yield more bikers and additional economic development growth/tourism;
- include bike paths in planning and construction processes on future highway projects within the region;
- connectivity within the region (i.e. connecting the region's three state parks: Gordonia-Alatamaha, Little Ocmulgee, and George L. Smith)

Submitting the agenda and Power Point presentation for the June 2nd, 2004 initial PAC meeting, which was held at City Hall in Vidalia, Georgia, as well as a survey given to each representative present at the meeting to assist in determining regional needs for a Bike/Pedestrian Plan.

Submitting an updated list of Existing Bike Routes/Events in the HOGARDC Rgion

Conduct Needs Assessment/Existing Conditions Report-6/04

Item is currently in progress and awaiting information gathered at the 1st public hearing (August 17th) and the next PAC meeting (September, 2004).

Input/Recommendations on Needs Assessment-6/04

Item is currently in progress and awaiting information gathered at the 1st public hearing (August 17th) and the next PAC meeting (September, 2004).

Report Needs Assessment/Existing Conditions to DOT-7/04

Item is currently in progress and awaiting information gathered at the 1st public hearing (August 17th) and the next PAC meeting (September, 2004).

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Bike/Pedestrian Planning Advisory Committee
July 13, 2004 Meeting
Little Ocmulgee State Park, McRae, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

The second meeting of the PAC was held July 13, 2004 at the Little Ocmulgee State Park in McRae. A good cross-section of the committee was present, along with RDC staff members Jonathan Lynn and Rafael Nail.

A PowerPoint Presentation was provided, along with paper handouts. The agenda was an overview of the first PAC meeting, a summary of survey ideas which had been received, a review of previous recommendations, and new discussion of regional issues/needs. The PowerPoint Presentation (attached) contains the summary of previous items.

Discussion centered on safety issues; regional strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities; and goals/objectives. Safety concerns identified were: no bicycle shops in region; lack of education for drivers and cyclists; rumble strips; and lack of communication/marketing. Strengths included: low traffic counts; scenic/pastoral setting; accommodating citizenry; climate (especially winter); and relatively affordable accommodations (restaurants/motels). Weaknesses existing considered: no local/regional organization/cooperation; no signage; lack of coordination/vision/marketing; and no maps.

Opportunities included: adventure cycling and making the region a destination for beginner/intermediate cyclists; tourism promotion of "paddling and pedaling" within the natural beauty of the region; and accompanying local trail coordination/promotion. Goals/objectives enumerated were: regional bike route connectivity network to state parks; regional bike route connection to existing state bike routes; development of a local system of support/cooperation; and development/promotion of region as a touring destination for beginner/intermediate cyclists. Implementation strategies short term were regional cooperation/promotion; DOT safety education; and DOT putting regional routes on maps. Long term strategies were for DOT marking/signing regional routes; DOT construction of bike lanes; and local bike route/path development.

The next committee meeting was set for September 9 in Hazlehurst. The regional public meeting was set for August 17 in Vidalia.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Bike/Pedestrian Planning Advisory Committee
September 9, 2004 Meeting
Hazlehurst/Jeff Davis Chamber of Commerce, Hazlehurst, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

A third meeting of the PAC was held September 9, 2004 at the Hazlehurst/Jeff Davis Chamber of Commerce in Hazlehurst. The attendance was down from previous meetings. RDC staff members Bill Lindsey and Rafael Nail were present, along with Zoe Hardenbrook from DOT District 5.

A PowerPoint Presentation was provided, along with paper handouts. The agenda was an overview of the previous July 13 committee meeting, a review of the August 17 public meeting, and new discussion of goals/objectives, recommendations/implementation strategy, and local needs. The attached PowerPoint Presentation details the summary. There were few new ideas, but general agreement with the direction and ideas already generated. There was some discussion about the need for local routes and mapping. The RDC agreed to provide a regional map with the routes already preliminarily identified for review prior to the next meeting. RDC Staff were invited to the Golden Isles Parkway Association meeting set for September 29, 2004 to make a presentation as it was deemed beneficial. The next meeting was scheduled for October 28, 2004 in Eastman.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Bike/Pedestrian Planning Advisory Committee
October 28, 2004 Meeting
Eastman/Dodge County Chamber of Commerce, Eastman, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

A fourth meeting of the PAC was held October 28, 2004 at the Eastman/Dodge County Chamber of Commerce in Eastman. Five PAC members from around the Region as well as RDC staff members Bill Lindsey and Rafael Nail were present, along with Zoe Hardenbrook from DOT District 5.

A PowerPoint Presentation was provided, along with paper handouts. The agenda was an overview of the previous September 9 committee meeting, a review of the regional map of preliminary routes, and new discussion of goals/objectives, recommendations/implementation strategy, and local needs. The attached PowerPoint Presentation details the summary. There were few new ideas, but general agreement with the direction and ideas already generated. There was good discussion about the need for local coordination, including how local sites of historic and other tourism interest could be marketed. Adventure bicycling and the terrain/topography of the region were seen as major strengths and opportunities. The need for "Share the Road" signs before bridges was voiced as a principal safety concern. The RDC agreed to provide the PAC with a preliminary draft plan prior to the next meeting, which was tentatively scheduled for January, 2005 in Vidalia.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Planning Advisory Committee Meeting
June 14, 2005 Meeting
Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC Office, Baxley, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center's Regional Planning Advisory Committee met on June 14, 2005 at the RDC office in Baxley, Georgia. The purpose of the meeting was to review the draft Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. A copy of the plan had been mailed to all members prior to the meeting on May 27, 2005. Only limited attendance resulted. One Committee member voiced concurrence with the plan prior to the meeting through e-mail. The plan was complimented and received general concurrence. Local changes to Bleckley County references were provided by the City of Cochran Greenways Partnership member, Hardy Swinson, in attendance. Mr. Swinson also asked that the east-west connector from State Bike Route 40 and U.S. 23 in Bleckley County be changed from S.R. 26 to S.R. 112, as this was a more bike friendly route and could be part of a longer Augusta to Albany/Southwest Georgia route. RDC staff noted the final regional public meeting was to be held in Vidalia, June 16, 2005, and had been advertised in all regional newspapers.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Bike/Pedestrian Plan
Regional Public Meeting
August 17, 2004
Vidalia Community Center, Vidalia, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

The regional public meeting to provide the general public with an overview of the purpose of the regional plan, to inform them of the preliminary PAC recommendations, and to solicit comment/input was held August 17, 2004 in Vidalia at the Vidalia Community Center. The meeting was advertised in all 17 regional counties with a newspaper display ad. An accompanying Public Service Announcement, "Time to Vote with Your Feet," was also sent to region papers.

The meeting was attended by 11 persons (all cyclists) from six (6) region counties (see sign-in sheet). A PowerPoint Presentation hand-out was provided (also attached). Staff members Bill Lindsey and Rafael Nail were present.

Those in attendance were in agreement with the preliminary needs/goals suggested by the PAC and were enthusiastic about the plan and the effort to improve cycling. They noted special needs for: an aggressive public service campaign on "How to Treat Cyclists;" more signage; concerns with surface (rock) treatment on local roads; the location of bike lanes, especially along U.S. 280; more bike lanes all across the region; the investigation of potential "rails to trails," long-term; and the need for increased tourism/recreational amenities to attract cyclists/other visitors.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center
Regional Bike/Pedestrian Plan Public Meeting
June 16, 2005
Vidalia City Hall Council Chambers, Vidalia, Georgia

MEETING SUMMARY

The final Regional Public Meeting on the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Development Center's Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was held on June 16, 2005 at the Vidalia, Georgia City Hall Council Chambers. The meeting was advertised in local newspapers of general circulation in all 17 Region counties. The meeting was attended by three bicyclists, two elderly bicyclists from Toombs County, and a representative of a bicycling organization from Bleckley County. A PowerPoint presentation on the draft regional bike/ped plan was conducted, and handout maps on proposed regional bike routes were provided to those in attendance, along with a copy of the Georgia Bike Sense Guide.

There were questions on implementation of the plan, and the use of motorized/electric bikes on any paved bike routes resulting. Comments were made that given the magnitude of expenditures of public funds, as many multi-uses as possible should be authorized. It was noted that the Adventure Cycling Association was concentrating on the Southeast, and confirmed the Region's opportunity to promote itself for bicycling. There was some question as to use of the term "beginning/intermediate" cyclists, and it was noted the plan does not really address needs of the "basic" bicyclist who usually does not ride on roads. These are needs better addressed on a local basis. There was also a recommendation that there should be Public Awareness Ads (Public Service Announcements) on bicycle laws and safety.