



ARTS Newsletter

December 2011

IN THIS ISSUE

ARTS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update	1
Wheel Movement - Cycling Advocacy in Metro-Augusta	1
Transportation Investment Act of 2010 - Update	2
Safe Routes to School	2
North Augusta Park and Ride Facility	2
The Morning Ritual That's Ruining Your Car's Engine	3
Aiken County Update	3

This newsletter is part of an ongoing effort of the Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) to share information about transportation issues and activities with the citizens of the metropolitan area.

ARTS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update

Since walking and bicycling has increasingly become a more popular pastime, coupled with a need to improve air quality of transportation, the Augusta-Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) has undertaken an primary goal of this planning endeavor is to determine where the public would like to see infrastructure improvements, prioritize bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects, and to set the framework for a Bicycle and Walk Friendly designation.



In an effort to get the word out and obtain as much public input as possible, ARTS staff has participated in numerous public outreach events in both Augusta and Aiken County, including, but not limited to, Arts in the Heart, Aiken's Makin', and the Whiskey Road Race. Additionally, a dedicated webpage, which can be accessed through the link www.BikeWalkARTS.com, has been created to allow the public to follow the progress of the plan update, and to provide public comment through a linked survey.



Multiple agencies and organizations have participated so far in gathering data for this plan, which included a multi-week, volunteer staffed, bicycle and pedestrian count that encompassed over twenty-six locations within Augusta-Richmond County, Columbia County, and Aiken County.

Once the plan has been completed, it will be posted on the webpage and the webpage itself will continue to function as a public resource. The webpage will continue to provide dedicated space for bicycle and pedestrian event announcements, information on the progress of bicycle and pedestrian-oriented projects, and ultimately, a place where the public can access route maps, safety information, and links to other partner organizations.

Wheel Movement – Cycling Advocacy Begins in Metro-Augusta

As the 2011 calendar year comes to an end, efforts to create citizen-led cycling education and awareness initiatives – and to encourage greater investments in cycling infrastructure - are just beginning. An energized group of metro-area citizens have quietly spent the summer and fall putting the pieces in place to establish metro-Augusta's first cycling advocacy group: **Wheel Movement of the CSRA, Inc.** This registered non-profit corporation includes founding members from Aiken, Columbia and Richmond County intent on making cycling throughout Augusta safer and more viable for a greater segment of the population. For more information, visit Wheel Movement on Facebook, or at: www.wheelmovement.blogspot.com.

FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS:

GDOT Area Office—Augusta	
(706) 855-3466	
GDOT District 2 —Tennille	
(478)-552-4601	
Augusta Engineering Department	De-
(706) 796-5040	
Augusta Traffic Engineering Division	
(706) 821-1841	
Columbia County Road Construction Department	Con-
(706) 447-7600	
Columbia County Traffic Engineering Department	En-
(706) 868-4223	
Augusta Public Transit	(706)
821-1721	
Aiken County Transit (Best Friend Express)	
(803) 648-6493	
Planning and Economic Development (North Augusta)	
(803) 441-4221	

GA Transportation Investment Act of 2010 - Update

On October 11, 2011, the CSRA Regional Transportation Roundtable unanimously approved a final investment list of transportation projects for the 13-county Central Savannah River Area in Georgia. These projects will be implemented between 2013 and 2022 if a majority of the region's voters approve a 1% transportation sales tax that will be on the general primary ballot on July 31, 2012.

The final investment list has a total of eighty-four (84) projects region-wide, including fifty (50) in Richmond County and eight (8) in Columbia County. Several ARTS projects are on the final investment list, including the widening of Wrightsboro Road, 15th Street, Windsor Spring Road, Lewiston Road, Horizon South Parkway and Fury's Ferry Road, and the widening and extension of Old Petersburg Road / Old Evans Road from Baston Road to Washington Road. Additional project types on the list include bridge repair and restoration, traffic signal modernization, intersection improvements, road resurfacing and operating assistance for Augusta Public Transit.

If the tax is approved, proceeds would begin flowing to cities and counties in the region in the first quarter of 2013. If voters reject the tax, then the levy cannot be on a ballot again for at least 24 months.

The final list of transportation projects for the Central Savannah River Area is posted at the following website - www.it3.ga.gov/Pages/Roundtable.aspx or by contacting the CSRA Regional Commission at (706) 210-2000.

Tips to Save Gas and Reduce Air Pollution

- ~ ***Walk, bike, take a bus or carpool when possible***
- ~ ***Combine errands into one trip***
- ~ ***Avoid revving or idling engine over 30 seconds***

Safe Routes to School



The Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center has 382 School Partners and 234 Friends (organization partners) statewide.

October is Walk to School Month and October 5th was International Walk to School Day. Over 118 schools held registered events. The Resource Center also began a Pedestrian Safety Curriculum Workshop series in six Georgia cities. The K-5 curriculum was developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA.) The last two of the free trainings will be in Pooler on November 10 and in Columbus on November 17. Register and learn more at www.SafeRoutesGA.org.

Communities and schools are urged to take advantage of the 100% federally-funded services and resources available from the Georgia Safe Routes to School. www.SafeRoutesGA.org

North Augusta Park and Ride Facility



The design contract for the \$1 million park and ride facility to be located in the north west quadrant of exit 5 of I-20 in North Augusta was approved by

the SC Transportation Commission at its October meeting. The notice to proceed was issued the last week of October.

The eleven month design process is beginning with survey work at the interchange and the collection of traffic, GIS and ridership data. URS will be meeting with local user groups, transit agencies and major employers to identify design issues early in the process. Because the city of North Augusta will be managing the facility upon completion, city staff will also be consulted on many of the design details. ~ continued

Based on user input collected in the initial stages, URS will prepare alternative preliminary designs for review by SCDOT, the city, and users. The project will be designed to achieve environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Improved air quality will be the major public benefit. However, additional design objectives will include low impact development and stormwater quality, energy efficient lighting, native landscaping, increased transit use, and public safety.

The Morning Ritual That's Ruining Your Car's Engine



With the chill of autumn comes those frosty mornings that all commuters must endure. But there's one driveway ritual that many Georgia commuters should

stop practicing because it can ruin a car's performance. Warming up your car's engine in the mornings by allowing it to idle can actually wear down engine parts and create more air pollution. Excessive idling can damage cylinders, spark plugs and exhaust systems, as well as break down motor oil more rapidly. Prolonged idling can reduce the operating life of engine oil by 75%

What's more, the practice of unnecessary idling on cold mornings can also produce up to six grams of carbon monoxide per minute. That's equal to the carbon monoxide content from three packs of cigarettes.

Simply put, the best way to warm up your engine and create less air pollution on your morning commute is to drive your vehicle instead of idling. For more tips on how you can take simple steps to improve air quality and save on commute costs, contact **The Clean Air Campaign** at www.CleanAirCampaign.org.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Emission Facts, Air Quality Criteria for Carbon Monoxide

Aiken County News

STUDIES:

- The year-long study of the US 1/78 Corridor is nearing completion. The second public workshop was held in September, and participants reviewed and commented on artist's renderings and design recommendations from the consultant. The final public workshop is scheduled for January 19, 2012 at Aiken Technical College. For further details, please contact Gerald K. Jefferson.

- Aiken County and ARTS are jointly updating the Bicycle & Pedestrian Study for the urbanized areas of Aiken County as well as for the entire ARTS region. Staff set up booths at various local festivals in SC and GA over the last few months in order to publicize the study. The first public workshops were held in October. Proposed bikeway networks and pedestrian facilities are still being designed.

SURFACE ROADS:

- For Hitchcock Parkway, preliminary engineering is underway; and SCDOT has conducted the initial scoping meeting.
- For Silver Bluff Road Corridor Improvements, SCDOT is working on a revised schedule and will advance the project to a public hearing in early 2012.

AIR QUALITY:

- Regarding the Park-and-Ride lot on I-20 @ Exit 5, SCDOT has held initial scoping meetings with the design consultant and is negotiating fees associated with the design.

AIKEN COUNTY TRANSIT:

- All four of the shuttle buses have new wraps. The advertisements are for the ADTRC - Aging Disability Transportation Research Center, which operates out of the LSCOG.



Augusta Planning and Development Department
525 Telfair Street
Augusta, GA 30901

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UPCOMING ARTS MEETINGS

December 2011

TCC and CAC Meeting - December 14, 2011 at 10:00 AM

Policy Committee Meeting - December 1, 2011 at 11:00 AM

ARTS committee meetings are held on the 8th Floor of the Municipal Building at 530 Greene Street, Augusta, GA. Please call the ARCP (706)821-1796 to verify time and place.

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<http://www.augustaga.gov/index.aspx?nid=680>