



ARTS Newsletter

Fall 2013

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FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS:

GDOT Area Office— Augusta (706) 855-3466

GDOT District 2 — Tennille (478)-552-4601

Augusta Engineering Department (706) 796-5040

Augusta Traffic Engineering Division (706) 821-1841

Columbia County Road Construction Department (706) 447-7600

Columbia County Traffic Engineering Department (706) 868-4223

Augusta Public Transit (706) 821-1721

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.

CSRA AIR QUALITY ALLIANCE MEETING

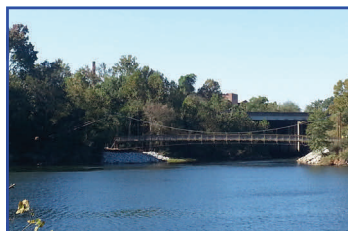


A meeting of the CSRA Air Quality Alliance was held on November 14, 2013 at the Julian Smith Barbeque Pit in Augusta. The meeting included remarks from federal and state partners, updates on regional air quality levels and an overview of air quality program opportunities and the park-and-ride lot project in North Augusta. According to state officials, air quality is improving in the region, thanks in part to milder, wetter weather this past summer. The levels of ozone and fine particulate matter in the atmosphere are within the standards set for these two pollutants, even though the primary annual standard for fine particulate matter was reduced to 12 micrograms per cubic meter in December 2012. In spite of this good news, the message from our state and federal partners was clear: remain proactive in improving air quality in the region. Air quality standards for ozone will be tightened at some point in the near future, thereby making a non-attainment designation more likely.

Thanks to all who attended the meeting and to our presenters. Copies of the meeting agenda and presentation can be viewed and downloaded from the CSRA Air quality Alliance website: <http://www.csra-airquality-alliance.com/index.html>. For more information, and to become involved in the Alliance contact either Jack Porter at (803) 898-3829 porterje@dhec.sc.gov or Paul DeCamp at (706) 821-1796 pdecamp@augustaga.gov.

AUGUSTA TRAIL EXTENSION PROGRESSING

Construction is progressing on Phase III of the Augusta Canal River Levee Trail. This section of the multiuse trail is located on the levee between Riverwatch Parkway and the Savannah River and behind the Sibley and King mills. Both the prefabricated Steadfast bridge, over the Sibley Mill tailrace, and the cable suspension over the King Mill tailrace are now in place. Approximately 1,800 linear feet



of asphalt and concrete will create a durable, low maintenance surface for the trail. A boardwalk to extend the trail to the top of Savannah River levee is awaiting an additional approval required by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Partial funding for the trail is provided by the GA DOT and SPLOST. When completed early next year, the levee trail will provide a new and exciting venue for walkers and bikers to enjoy.

LONGTIME ARTS PROJECT DIRECTOR RETIRES, NEW DIRECTOR APPOINTED



George Patty and Melanie Wilson pictured at George's retirement reception.

George Patty, the Project Director for the Augusta Regional Transportation Study for over 30 years, retired on September 27, 2013. During his tenure, the ARTS area grew substantially in population and land area. George guided the programming of a variety of transportation projects. He also successfully adapted the transportation planning process as changes were made to federal transportation planning requirements over the years. We extend our sincere thanks to George and wish him the best of luck in the coming years.

Ms. Melanie Wilson is the new Director of the Augusta, Georgia Planning and Development Department, thus becoming the new Project Director for the ARTS. Ms. Wilson comes to Augusta from Raleigh, NC, where she was a consultant with Bree and Associates. Prior to that, she served as Wake County, NC Planning Director from 2002-09. Please join us in welcoming Ms. Wilson as the ARTS Project Director.

REGIONAL I.T.S. PLAN FINALIZED



The draft ARTS Advanced Transportation Management System Master (ATMS) plan has been completed and is available for review on the ARTS website.

The text of the plan includes an executive summary, an inventory of existing traffic signal systems, ITS devices and communications equipment, an assessment of needs identified by stakeholders and an implementation plan.

The implementation plan includes a group of ITS projects as prioritized by stakeholders from throughout the study area. High priority projects include ITS master plan implementation and emergency vehicle and transit signal priority system projects in Augusta, the build-out of ITS devices on major arterials in Columbia County, the expansion of ITS components in and around the cities of North Augusta and Aiken and installing dynamic message signs on Interstate 20 in Georgia and South Carolina.

To view the draft plan click on the following link:

<http://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4794>

The final version of the plan will be published in December. For additional information contact Paul Decamp at pdecamp@augustaga.gov or phone (706) 821-1796.

STATUS OF ROAD / TRAIL PROJECTS

- **Wrightsboro Road** - widen to 4 lanes from Jimmie Dyess Parkway to I-520 Southbound ramp - 34% scheduled time to date. Current completion date is July 4, 2015. Contractor is Reeves Construction.
- **SR 232 / Columbia Rd.** - widen to 4 lanes from CR 221 / Old Belair Rd. to SR 383 / Belair Rd. (PI # 231440) - **Contract for \$7.9 million awarded on July 5, 2013 to Beams Construction .**
- **SR 56 / Mike Padgett Hwy.** - widen from Benlock Mill Rd. to Old Waynesboro Rd. (PI # 0006431) - **Contract for \$23.9 million awarded on August 8, 2013 to Reeves Construction. Notice to Proceed issued October 4, 2013.**
- **Old Petersburg / Old Evans Road** (River Watch Parkway Ext.) - widen to 4 lanes from Baston Rd. to Old Evans Rd. and extend from Old Evans Rd. to Washington Rd. - **Contract for \$34.1 million awarded on November 14, 2013 to E. R. Snell Contractor. Completion date is April 30, 2017.**
- **Augusta Canal Multi-Use Trail, Phase IV** – extend the multi-use trail from 12th St. to 7th St. along the Third Level Canal (PI # 0008195) - **To be let in January 2014.**

AIKEN COUNTY NEWS

SPECIAL STUDIES

The **Dougherty Road Corridor Study** was completed during the summer. The consultant team from URS made a presentation to the Aiken City Council in September, and it was well received. Another presentation will be made at the South Carolina ARTS Policy Subcommittee meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 6, 2014.

The **SC 19 (Edgefield Highway) Corridor Study** is approximately 30% complete. The city of Aiken and Aiken County have engaged DRMP, Inc. to examine existing conditions and evaluate future improvements to the road corridor from Hampton Avenue to the Edgefield County line. A steering committee including community volunteers held an initial meeting in October. City and county staff are now holding community meetings to gather more information and answer questions from residents, property owners, business owners, and others affected by the highway. Recently, approximately 100 respondents completed a questionnaire related to the study. The questionnaire sought information about how people use the corridor and what improvements they would like to see included in the study. To become involved, please visit www.aikencountysc.gov or www.cityofaikensc.gov to learn more about future meetings and the next steps.

ROAD PROJECTS

SC 118 (Hitchcock Parkway) - The South Carolina Department of Transportation will hold a public information meeting on Thursday, December 5, 2013 to receive public comments on the revised concept plan for the road widening project. The drop-in format meeting will be held at the St. Paul Lutheran Church gym, 961 Trail Ridge Road, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

SC 125 (E. Buena Vista Avenue / Atomic Road) - Right-of-way obligation for the corridor improvement project is scheduled for November 2014, and construction is scheduled to begin in May 2015.

US 25/Walnut Lane—Construction continues on this corridor improvement project, and is scheduled to be complete in spring 2014.

SC 126 (Belvedere - Clearwater Road) - A public information meeting is tentatively scheduled for winter 2014.

For additional information about these projects contact Gerald Jefferson, Aiken County Planning and Development Department, at gjefferson@aikencountysc.gov or (803) 642-1520 Ext. 2603.

AIR QUALITY NEWS

North Augusta Park-and-Ride Lot — A construction contract has been awarded and a notice to proceed issued for the project. Grading of the site should begin soon and the project completed by the middle of 2014. The project site is located off Exit 5 at the intersection of I-20 and U.S. Highway 25.

South Carolina ARTS Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee — The committee was formed in June 2013, and its charter was approved by the South Carolina ARTS Policy Subcommittee in November. The committee's mission is to advise SC ARTS, Aiken County, and other local jurisdictions on implementation of the Aiken County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan and other opportunities to promote safe bicycling and walking in Aiken County.

ROUNDBABOUTS



Roundabouts are in place at several locations throughout our area, and plans call for the installation of additional ones in coming years. According to the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts are a proven method for enhancing safety and reducing crashes at intersections. The Highway Safety Manual indicates that by converting from a two-way stop control mechanism to a roundabout, a location can experience an 82 percent reduction in severe (injury/fatal) crashes and a 44 percent reduction in overall crashes. By converting from a signalized intersection to a roundabout, a location can experience a 78 percent reduction in severe (injury/fatal) crashes and a 48 percent reduction in overall crashes. Roundabouts can be an effective tool for managing speed and creating a transition area that moves traffic from a high-speed to a low-speed environment.

Source: Federal Highway Administration, Proven Safety Countermeasures



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

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UPCOMING ARTS MEETINGS

Policy Committee Meeting
 December 5, 2013, 11:00 AM

TCC and CAC Meeting
 February 12, 2014, 10:30 AM

Policy Committee Meeting
 March 6, 2014, 11:00 AM

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

Augusta Regional Transportation Study Contacts

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