



ARTS Newsletter

July 2008

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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.

State Transportation Board Elects Bill Kuhlke as new chairman



On Thursday, June 19, 2008, Bill Kuhlke, Jr. of Augusta was elected to serve a full term as chairman of the Georgia State Transportation Board. Kuhlke represents the 10th Congressional District. Prior to joining the Board in 2004, Kuhlke served on the Richmond County Commission, a former member of the Richmond County Coliseum Authority, a former member and chairman of the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism (now the Georgia Department of Economic Development) and former member of the World Congress Center Authority. Mr. Kuhlke is the owner of Kuhlke Properties, a commercial construction company.

Augusta Wayfinding Signage Project



New downtown arrival signs, banners, and pedestrian directional signs were installed as part of Phase I of the Wayfinding Plan the Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) has been managing on behalf of the City of Augusta. **Wayfinding** is a comprehensive signage program for the entire City of Augusta. Wayfinding elements include replacing various existing vehicular signage located around town, adding signs for public parking, pedestrian directional signage, information kiosks and establish city entrance gateways. This new sign system will improve navigation for visitors and residents and will aesthetically improve the look of downtown.

Installation of Phase I which consists of Downtown Augusta arrivals, banners on bridges at 13th Street, and Walton Way began in April.

Additionally, the ACVB placed two examples of pedestrian signage in the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) streetscape demonstration block at 10th and Broad Streets. The example of a pedestrian information kiosk will be one of several strategically placed downtown to provide directions, and information about area attractions, parking and points of interest. Funding for the Downtown Gateways and Vehicular Directional signs leading to downtown were funded by the DDA.

Additionally, the Mayor and Commissioners identified improving city gateways as one of their top priorities during the annual planning retreat in February. In so doing, the commission approved spending more than \$140,000 to implement Phase IA of the wayfinding plan to install City of Augusta arrival signs, and replace all county-line welcome signs. Approximately 25 signs plus banners will be installed as part of Phase IA. City leaders also identified three vehicular corridors to beautify with a landscaping beautification plan.

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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) 541-4011

Columbia County Traffic Engineering Department (706) 447-7611

Augusta Public Transit (706) 821-1721

Aiken County Transit (Best Friend Express) (803) 648-6493

Economic & Community Development (North Augusta)
(803) 441-4221

Air Quality Initiatives

- On April 26, several ARTS staff members participated in the Time to Care Family Fair held on the Augusta Common. Staff distributed brochures, flyers, coloring books and other items with information on air quality, the ARTS transportation planning process and the update of the Augusta-Richmond County Comprehensive Plan.
- During the month of May, several members of the CSRA Air Quality Stakeholders group made presentations to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Sego Middle School in Augusta, and to 2nd and 4th graders at Dearing Elementary School in McDuffie County. The presentations is one way of reaching out to the community and making them more aware of the need for cleaner air in the metropolitan area.
- Fort Gordon continues the transformation of the administrative vehicle fleet to hybrid vehicles capable of using E85 fuel and is actively working to make E85 available at all vehicle fuel points.
- Fort Gordon is considering using biodiesel fuel on a trial basis in some diesel tractors.
- The CSRA Air Quality Alliance has developed a new website with useful and timely information related to air quality and links to other websites. Please check our website at: <http://www.csra-airquality-alliance.com/>

Related Air Quality Links:

[Clean Air Campaign](http://www.cleanaircampaign.com/) – link to <http://www.cleanaircampaign.com/>

[Georgia Environmental Protection Division \(EPD\)](http://www.gaepd.org/Documents/index_air.html) - link to http://www.gaepd.org/Documents/index_air.html

Georgia Department of Natural Resource Air Protection Branch—link to <http://www.georgiaair.org>

[South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control](http://www.scdhec.net/environment/baq/pm.aspx) – link to <http://www.scdhec.net/environment/baq/pm.aspx>

Transit Development Plan to be Updated



The ARTS Policy Committee has approved a request to use planning funds to update Augusta Public Transit's (APT) Transit Development Plan (TDP). The project will involve collecting data on the existing APT system, identifying the deficiencies and needs, evaluating alternatives for addressing existing service needs, as well as expanding service, identifying the preferred plan of action and outlining a timeline for implementation of the recommended plan. One goal is to develop a public transportation system that will allow effective mobility and provide efficient movement between neighboring communities. The consultant selection process is underway and the TDP is to be completed in late spring 2009.

Freight Study Update

Work on the ARTS Regional Freight Study continued during the spring. An open-house meeting on April 15th gave the general public an opportunity to learn about the project and identify freight needs and deficiencies. Interviews with 26 freight shippers and for-hire truck firms revealed a high level of satisfaction with the region's freight infrastructure. Some firms expressed a need for better connectivity to Savannah, Macon, Charleston and Greenville.

The public and stakeholder comments, and the information in the regional freight profile, are being used to develop a list of regional freight needs and deficiencies. Freight improvement projects will be developed to address the identified needs and incorporated into the ARTS transportation planning process.

The Project Advisory Committee and project consultants met on June 2nd to review the progress and discuss the next steps. A second public information meeting will be held sometime in August and the project is on track to be completed in September.

Tips to Save Gas and Reduce Air Pollution

With gas prices continuing to rise, here are some tips for saving gas, improving mileage, and reducing air pollution:

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

Transition

It is with much regret that we announce the resignation of Transportation Planner Cristhine Kraft from the staff of the Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission, effective August 1, 2008. We are grateful for the many contributions Cristhine has made to ARTS and the Planning Commission over the last three years and will miss her many skills, enthusiasm, and cheerful presence. Fortunately, Cristhine is taking a job at the Savannah River Site, so we expect to see her on occasion. Please join us in wishing Cristhine and her family the best of luck!

Fort Gordon News

On June 2, 2008, Colonel John S. Holwick, Garrison Commander at Fort Gordon, Deputy Garrison Commander Mr. Terry Smith, and other invited installation staff received a briefing and overview on the Clean Air Campaign's Commute Options Program. Participating in the presentation were representatives of the Clean Air Campaign, the Army's Installation Management Command Regional Office and the Georgia Department of Transportation..

Colonel Holwick approved the fort's participation in the program and appointed Mr. James Hudgins, Public Relations Officer, to coordinate with the Clean Air Campaign. Mr. Hudgins will prepare an implementation plan for Colonel Holwick and staff to review and approve.

~ Steve Willard, Fort Gordon

ARTS Certification Review

Every four years, Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) is required to undergo a certification process conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The ARTS certification review will take place on July 30th and July 31st. On **Wednesday, July 30th**, a public meeting will be held to solicit public comments on ARTS planning process from **5:30-7:30 P.M.** at Enterprise Mill on Greene Street.

Commuter Rewards



Employers help your employees fight rising fuel costs!

Commuter Rewards is a program that rewards commuters who carpool, ride transit, vanpool, telework, bicycle or walk to work. **The concept is simple: Use a commute alternative. Log your commute. Earn cash and gas cards. Win prizes including Visa gift cards.**

Simple, voluntary changes can help the region reduce air pollution, meet air quality standards and reduce the strain of high fuel costs. Employers can play a leading role by working with the CSRA Air Quality Alliance and leveraging The Clean Air Campaign's commute options programs. Resources to help you design and implement a custom program are available *at no cost* to your business or organization.

To learn more or to bring this free commute options program to your work site, contact *Mattice Haynes*, Georgia Employer Program Manager, at 478-361-4476 or mhaynes@cleanaircampaign.com. More information is also available at www.cleanaircampaign.com.

Work Zone Safety Tips

- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Allow ample space between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Obey work zone signs. Don't **SPEED!**
- Minimize distractions: avoid using cell phones, reading, applying makeup, or changing the radio station.
- If merging for a lane closure, don't wait until the last minute.

Aiken County News

The Aiken County Planning & Development Department (ACPDD) now coordinates a monthly Technical Subgroup meeting to discuss transportation issues and projects affecting Aiken County and the cities of Burnetown, Aiken and North Augusta. The goal of the Technical Subgroup is to ensure that the work program and transportation projects reflect the priorities of the local governments in the South Carolina part of the ARTS area. The Technical Subgroup makes recommendations to the ARTS South Carolina Policy Subcommittee. For more information contact Gerald Jefferson, Transportation Planner, ACPDD at (803) 642-1520 or gjefferson@aikencountysc.gov.

Wayfinding (continued)



This highly visible project will give all visitors a sense of arrival, a sense of place and foster community pride. This is the first phase of implementation with a total of three phases needed to complete the plan.

~ Jennifer Bowen, ACVB



Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission
525 Telfair Street
Augusta, GA 30901

UPCOMING ARTS MEETINGS

July 2008

CAC/TCC—No Meeting
Policy Committee—No Meeting

August 2008

CAC/TCC— 8/13/08 @ 10 AM
Policy Committee—No Meeting
SC Policy Subcommittee—8/21/08
@ 4 PM

September 2008

CAC/TCC—9/10/08 @ 10 AM
Policy Committee—9/4/08 @ 11 AM

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

The ARTS Staff

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Visit Us at the Web!

http://www.augustaga.gov/departments/planning_zoning/arts_home.asp