

# City of Americus



## Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 2017



Prepared by:



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## Publication and Publicity

### DISCLAIMER

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# Executive Summary

## Vision



The vision of the River Valley Regional Commission is to enhance the region's quality of life for cyclists and pedestrians by promoting health and tourism while providing convenient, safe, and passive recreation as a practical means of transportation.

The City of Americus's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan represents the efforts of the RVRC staff, Sumter Cycling, local agencies, statewide advocacy groups, and countless dedicated citizens in Americus and Sumter County.

The Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides direction to the residents and local governments of Americus and Sumter County in promoting non-motorized methods of transportation including, bicycling and walking. The plan will provide guidelines to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on the needs and desires of Americus, as well as provide design guidelines, engineering and non-infrastructure recommendations to the local government. The goals of the plan are listed below:

- 🚲 Promote non-motorized transportation as a means of mobility in the urban and rural areas within the community.
- 🚲 Encourage walking and cycling as economic development opportunities and explore the possibility of local rails-to-trails projects.
- 🚲 Promote bicycle transportation and programs as being environmentally and health friendly as well as means to develop tourism.
- 🚲 Establish a primary network for bicycling and walking, which will include building new facilities-where feasible-throughout the city including end trip destinations.
- 🚲 Promote education opportunities for cyclists, motorists, and law enforcement about safe cycling, bicycle laws, trail etiquette and sharing the road.
- 🚲 Develop and promote Safe Routes to School Programs, and encourage walking and cycling to school.
- 🚲 Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in community land use planning.
- 🚲 Continue to support the efforts of Sumter Cycling – a local bicycle advocacy organization.
- 🚲 Develop maps of bicycle routes and multi-use paths showcasing local tourist attractions.
- 🚲 Develop a comprehensive Complete Streets Policy for the City of Americus.
- 🚲 Continue to plan and execute the celebration of Bike to Work day and its cycling.
- 🚲 Apply to become a Bicycle Friendly Community.
- 🚲 Explore and support local mountain biking opportunities when available.

The Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan focuses on the goal of establishing a network of routes throughout Americus and promotes these facilities to increase economic development through bicycle tourism, and improve the overall health of the community.

The following steps were used in order to identify, plan, and evaluate the Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**1. Develop a public involvement plan and Planning Advisory Committees.** Established the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) in City of Americus (Sumter Cycling); composed of stakeholders from various organizations (public and private), cities, and counties. In addition to establishing the PAC, public involvement was also sought (by hosting public meetings) to gain input from citizens.

**2. Identify goals, objectives, and performance measures.** Public events and meetings with the Planning Advisory Committee were conducted to establish the goals, objectives, and performance measures for the plan. The goals and objectives were then refined by the PAC by identifying routes, developing marketing strategies and programs, advocating the health and economic benefits of walking and cycling, and seeking for funding to implement goals.

**3. Assessment of needs and existing conditions.** The RVRC conducted an analysis to assess current needs and trends in Americus. Based on the assessment, Sumter Cycling along with RVRC identified needed facilities and popular cycling routes to be proposed in the plan.

**4. Implementation Strategy for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.** Completing the needs assessment and conducting an analysis of existing conditions, the RVRC and PAC members developed implementation strategies to be outlined in this plan.

This plan will have a widespread impact on a variety of issues, including economic impact, development of new infrastructure, and health and social issues, which will be discussed at greater detail further in the plan. The resulting plan provides an overview of the local Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategies. Recommendations are also outlined to identify ways of integrating and establishing the non-motorized transportation modes of bicycling and walking throughout the city. Furthermore, additional analysis has identified the increasing desire of residents to establish a bicycle and pedestrian networks within their city and county.

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Using the plan's established goals, objectives, and performance measures, the RVRC Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Staff in conjunction with the local government and PAC members identified and proposed potential facilities for Americus. With the growing interest of cycling and walking both as forms of leisure and transportation, the planning partners of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan understand the importance of identifying and implementing this Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. However, implementation can not occur without the availability of funds. Due to the current competitiveness for funds, there will not be enough money to fund all projects. Therefore, it is important for the planning partners and their local government to prioritize projects and work closely with the Georgia Department of Transportation to incorporate on-street projects along with road improvements throughout the region.

## Section I: Introduction

As bicycling and walking are increasing in popularity among youth and adults across America, both have become viable modes of non-motorized transportation.

Many urban areas experience roadway congestion, lack of parking, and stop-go movement in everyday traffic situations. These combined traffic situations create an excellent opportunity for bicycling and walking. Leisure time is becoming increasingly scarce due to a number of factors such as the increase in the duration of a normal work day.

There are benefits of bicycling and walking for today's society. These include:

- 🚲 Reducing traffic congestion;
- 🚲 Reducing air and noise pollution;
- 🚲 Reducing wear and tear on roads;
- 🚲 Reduce crashes and property damage;
- 🚲 Reducing the need for additional roads, travel lanes and parking; and
- 🚲 Improving health (reducing adult and childhood obesity) and the quality of life.

Bicycling or walking to work or for personal trips provides an enjoyable, efficient, and environmentally friendly method of incorporating exercise into one's hectic schedule. With this in mind, the Georgia Department of Transportation along with Regional Commissions (RCs) and their local governments throughout the state is looking to utilize these transportation modes to relieve traffic strain in urban areas and to provide a way of improving the quality of life and boosting economic development through bicycle tourism in rural areas.

### Community Profile - The City of Americus

**The City of Americus** is located in Southwest Georgia in Sumter County. As of the 2010 census, the city had a population of 17,041. Americus is the home of Habitat for Humanity's international headquarters, the famous Windsor Hotel (1892), The Fuller Center for Housing international headquarters, The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, Glover Foods and many more well-known organizations.

## Americus, GA Population

Population Census, April 1, 2010 17,041

### Age and Sex | April 1, 2010

Persons under 5 years	8.6%
Persons under 18 years	26.8%
Persons 65 years and over	11.4%
Female persons	55.5%
Male persons	45.5%

### Race and Hispanic Origin | April 1, 2010

White alone	30.6%
Black or African American alone	63.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.3%
Asian alone	1.8%
Two or More Races	1.2%
Hispanic or Latino	5.2%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	40.9%

### Population Characteristics

Foreign born person	2.0%
Veterans	1,007

### Housing 2011 - 2015

Housing units	7,135
Owner occupied housing unit rate	42.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units	\$83,700
Median selected monthly owner cost – with mortgage	\$911
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage	\$421
Median gross rent	\$632

### Families and Living Arrangements 2011 – 2015

Households	632
Persons per household	2.52
Living in same house 1 year ago	77.4%
Language other than English spoken at home	5.8%

### Education

High school graduate or higher	77.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	20.7%

### Health

With a disability	10.7%
Persons without health insurance	17.9%

### Economy

In civilian labor force	55.4%
In civilian labor force, female	51.9%
Total accommodation and food services sales	35,450
Total manufacturers' shipments	119,084
Total merchant wholesaler sales	286,777
Total retail sales	17,494
Total retail sales per capita	\$17,494

### Income and Poverty

Median household income	\$24,886
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2015 dollars)	\$14,847
Persons in poverty	41.5%

### BUSINESSES

All firms	1,364
Men-owned firms	595
Women-owned firms	615
Minority-owned firms	761
Nonminority-owned firms	506
Veteran owned firms	167
Nonveteran-owned firms	1,068

### GEOGRAPHY

Population per square mile	1,515.8
Land area in square miles	11.24
FIPS Code	1302116

## Public Involvement

Public involvement in Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning is essential, and works best when the community is involved from the beginning. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can rarely be implemented to meet all of a community's needs. Therefore, selecting projects that prioritize investment and citizen involvement are essential to determine the needs and desires of the community.



To successfully achieve this goal, a Public Involvement Process was employed. The Public Involvement Plan defines the coordination and collaboration efforts between the RVRC, public and private organizations, general public, local government, and advocacy groups. The initial public involvement in the development of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan began during discussions at the monthly Sumter Cycling meetings (Planning Advisory Committee). The committee consisted of local government officials and stakeholder groups. This partnership approach ensured that representatives from a variety of stakeholder groups with different areas of expertise could provide input and guidance on the development of the plan. The Planning Advisory Committee provided valuable direction and guidance to the overall plan effort.

A series of public meetings and visual surveys were also held in Americus. The primary concerns were the lack of bicycling facilities, map of local routes, shoulder width, pavement conditions, the need for a multi-use trail, motorist education, and accommodation for cyclists on roadways and sidewalks throughout the region. Another consistent concern was the lack of marketing and information about local existing bicycle and walking routes, facilities, and events.

After concluding the public meetings and visual surveys, the RVRC evaluated and discussed with Sumter Cycling members different alternatives in addressing the concerns for Americus. In addition to goals and objectives, several recommendations were discussed which included the creation of new routes for the extension and connectivity of existing routes, and the concentration of pedestrian travel within residential and downtown areas. Shorter trips and greater development densities make walking a feasible mode of transportation in urban areas. Developing and participating in The Safe Routes to School Programs was also a priority. Through Safe Routes to School Programs, stakeholders and elected officials hope to increase the number of children walking and cycling to school, as well as address childhood obesity and physical activity. Other alternatives will be addressed throughout the plan.



*Bicycle-Pedestrian PAC work session*

## Transportation, Crash Data and Mobility in Americus

### *City Mode Share Data – Based on a city population of 17,041*

Drove alone	12,780
Carpooled	2,505
Walked	1,056
Public Transportation	0
Work at Home	409
Taxi	102
Bike	102
Motorcycle	51
Other	102

### *Transportation*

Mean travel time to work (minutes)	17.3
------------------------------------	------

### *Crash Data | June 2015-June 2016*

Pedestrian crashes involving a motor-vehicle	4
Motor-vehicle collisions	857
Bicycle Related Crashed	0

## Section II: Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan | Goals and Objectives

The River Valley Regional Commission's Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning staff and the Americus Planning Advisory Committee members (Sumter Cycling) defined the goals and objectives for the Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Goals are generalized expressions which provide direction for bicycle and pedestrian planning and help achieve the vision of the plan. Objectives are specific obtainable targets, which are used to measure the goals of the plan. These specific goals and objectives were developed to guide the present and future implementation of the plan.

### Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1: Provide a local system which is safe, convenient and accessible for cyclists and pedestrians.**

Objective 1: Identify and develop connectivity between destination points within the city of Americus and its surrounding areas – (i.e. Bicycle connectivity in downtown Americus including bicycle parking, bicycle connectivity from Georgia Southwestern University to Downtown Americus, etc.).

Objective 2: Develop bicycle and pedestrian systems that meet the highest safety standards, including ADA standards, and accessibility to other modes of transportation.

Objective 3: Establish and maintain partnerships with community organizations, River Valley Regional Commission, school district, law enforcement agencies, recreation organizations, and other interested parties on providing bicycle and pedestrian transportation and safety education opportunities.

Objective 4: Develop a local bicycle and pedestrian information guide (Web based, guide book, brochure) to include all local facilities and points of interests.

Objective 5: Increase the number of user friendly signage on roadways to increase awareness of bicycle and pedestrian activity including Share the Road, Georgia 3ft passing law (HB101), and Route Directional arrows.

**Goal 2: Identify adequate funding resources to assist in the continuous development and implementation for a local bicycle and pedestrian system.**

Objective 1: Identify eligible federal, state, local, and private funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian planning, project development, education and infrastructure improvements.

Objective 2: Coordinate the development of joint bicycle and pedestrian projects using public or private resources.

Objective 3: Provide assistance to local advocacy groups implementing inventive ways of financing options for bicycle and pedestrian facilities (i.e., local sales tax and capital improvement programs.)

**Goal 3: Encourage tourism and economic development opportunities that enhance bicycle and pedestrian mobility, using the bicycle as means of tourism and economic development.**

Objective 1: Promote Americus and its surroundings (including both National Sites – Jimmy Carter and Andersonville National Historic Sites) as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly destination by promoting facilities, accessibility and local points of interest.

Objective 2: Work with the local advocacy group to encourage and establish bicycle events, walking tours, races, festivals, and fundraisers for education and/or infrastructure development.

Objective 3: Identify areas where local trails, pathways and walkways can be developed and use these as local attractions and bicycle tourism destinations.

**Goal 4: Plan, execute and evaluate yearly bicycle and pedestrian activities/events as a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle, with alternative commuting options, and to promote Americus as being bicycle friendly while providing safety education to all participants.**

Objective 1: Work with local advocacy groups to develop programs that encourage family-oriented activities and active lifestyles (i.e. Prison to Peanuts Bicycle Adventure, Historic District Walking Tours/ community rides/ runs).

Objective 2: Educate the community about the impact of bicycling and walking and encourage community participation for local events such as coordinated bicycle rides, marathons, bicycle tours and safety workshops (rodeos).

Objective 3: Educate cyclists and motorists about safe cycling, including the importance of sharing the road and exercising the 3 Feet passing law (HB 101).

**Goal 5: Promote programs to encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel as a viable form of transportation, as a healthy form of exercise, and as an environmentally sensitive way to travel.**

Objective 1: Continue to participate in the annual Bike Week activities, which include the National Ride of Silence, National Bike to Work Day, and the Ride with the Mayor events.

Objective 2: Encourage participation from local schools to promote bicycle and pedestrian activities, and the health benefits associated with them amongst students, faculty, staff and parents.

Objective 3: Incorporate demonstrations and literature of the health benefits of cycling and walking at public health fairs, as well as the execution of bicycle rodeos and first time commuter classes.

**Goal 6:**                    **Develop Safe Routes to School Program Partnerships in local elementary and middle schools and increase the number of students walking and cycling to school.**

Objective 1:                Partner schools with the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center through implementing education and encouragement programs.

Objective 2:                Work with schools and River Valley Regional Commission to develop travel plans and/or walk audits in order to identify infrastructure needs that increase the number of parents walking and cycling to school.

Objective 3:                Promote and participate in Georgia and International Walk to School Day along with elementary and middle schools in Americus.

Objective 4:                Assist school districts in identifying and applying for funds in order to construct and improve walking and cycling facilities within a 2 mile radius from local schools.

**Goal 7:**                    **Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in community land use planning.**

Objective 1:                Incorporate designated bike lanes, sidewalks, and trails into city future land-use planning.

Objective 2:                Incorporate provisions for sidewalks and protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities into comprehensive planning documents, zoning, and subdivision ordinances.

**Goal 8:**                    **Identify, maintain and designate local bicycle routes and facilities.**

Objective 1:                Identify new bicycle routes to include bicycle lanes and signage, while continuing to maintain existing routes and signage.

Objective 2:                Develop routes connecting local cultural and historic sites, as well as nearby communities and points of interest.

Objective 3:                Identify potential areas for locating bicycle paths and routes along abandoned railroad corridors (rails-to-trails projects) and identify existing facilities in order to promote their location and usability.

Objective 4:                Develop a map of bicycle routes and multi-use paths (when available) showing local tourists attractions, restaurants, lodging facilities and parking availability.

**Goal 9:** **Apply for Bicycle Friendly Community Designation by the League of American Cyclists, as well as promote the Bicycle Friendly Business Program.**

Objective 1: Work with River Valley Regional Commission and local advocacy groups in order to meet the criteria established by the League of American Cyclists in order to obtain Bicycle Friendly Community Designation.

Objective 2: Work with local employers/businesses to strive and promote bicycling/walking to work and applying for Bicycle Friendly Business designation.

**Goal 10:** **Continue to embrace the Complete Streets concept and work with local public works, planning and engineering departments in developing and implementing a Complete Streets Policy.**

Objective 1: Partner with Georgia Bikes! And River Valley Regional Commission to host Complete Streets workshop for city staff and interested parties.

## Performance Measures

Performance measures are used to evaluate the goals and objectives of this plan. The outcome is designed to provide information to the transportation planning process relevant to decision making. To ensure that the City of Americus is meeting its goals, the Bicycle/Pedestrian Program tracks three performance measures:

- 1. Projects that meet criteria for accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists (i.e., paved shoulders, bike lanes, sidewalks, or wide curb lanes).**
- 2. Funding sources which have been established for developing, improving, and maintaining bicycle and pedestrian facilities.**
- 3. Coordination and collaboration of programs, events and services to educate bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians of the “Share-The-Road” and 3ft Passing Law, in addition to health and environmental benefits.**

With the implementation of the bicycle and pedestrian plan, the City of Americus plans to continue collecting data required to successfully meet the performance measures used to identify the City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan’s goals and objectives.

During the bicycle and pedestrian planning process, it was recommended that the RVRC staff develop the best practices for bicycle and pedestrian facility design as a technical resource for the City of Americus based on the NACTO urban street design guide. The development for design along with typical cost estimates for recommended facilities will be identified in the project recommendations.

In order to identify the design for a facility, it is important to understand the users of the proposed facilities. The varying types of users have different requirements. A successful bicycle and pedestrian network of facilities must be provided for all types of users if it is to be successful as a viable transportation network. RVRC staff will use the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide as well as the AASHTO Guide for Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities and the Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities as a reference and model when working with Americus in planning for and building bicycle-pedestrian facilities.

## Section III – Users and type of Facilities

### Defining Rider Types

In 1994, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted a study that identified bicycle user types (**A, B, C**) to assist highway designers in determining the impact of different facility types and roadway conditions on bicyclists. Types include:

1. **Advanced bicyclists:** experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions. They comprise the majority of the current users of collector and arterial streets and are best served by the following:
  - a. Direct access to destinations via existing streets and highway;
  - b. The opportunity to operate at maximum speed with minimum delays; and
  - c. Sufficient operating space on the roadway or shoulder to reduce the need for either the bicyclist or the motor vehicle operator to change position when passing.
2. **Basic bicyclists:** casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles. Basic bicyclist prefer:
  - a. Comfortable access to destinations, preferably by a direct route (i.e., low traffic volumes streets and designated bicycle facilities); and
  - b. Well defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles on arterial and collector streets, or separate paths.
3. **Child riders:** initially monitored by parents, but eventually released and are independent to access the system. Young riders and their parents prefer:
  - a. Access to key destinations surrounding residential areas, including schools, recreation facilities, shopping, or other residential areas;
  - b. Resident streets with low motor vehicle speed limits and volumes; and
  - c. Well-defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles on arterial and collector streets, or separate bicycle paths.

### Bicycling Facility Types

The evaluation of bicycle facility types is dependent on many factors, including the ability of the users, specific corridor conditions, and facility cost. The descriptions below provide an overview of each specific facility type and general design for the City of Americus.

a. **Signed Shared Roadway.**

According to the AASHTO Guide which describes signed shared roadways as "those that have been identified by signing as preferred bike routes" and goes on to describe the reasons why routes might be so designated:

- 🚲 Continuity between bicycle lanes, trails or other bicycle facilities;

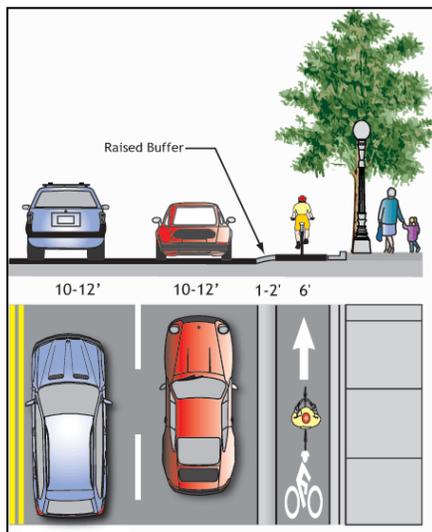


- 🚲 marking a common route for bicyclists through a high demand corridor;
- 🚲 directing cyclists to low volume roads or those with a paved shoulder; and
- 🚲 directing cyclists to particular destinations (e.g. park, school or commercial district).



In addition, designation indicates that there are particular advantages to using the route rather than an alternative. Signed shared roadways generally do not succeed in diverting cyclists away from routes that are more direct, faster, and more convenient even though they may be on quieter streets.

- b. **Bicycle Lane.** Bicycle lanes are established with appropriate pavement markings and signing along streets where there is significant bicycle demand and where there are distinct needs that can be served by them. The purpose of bike lanes is to improve the conditions for bicyclists on the streets. Bicycle lanes are intended to delineate the right of way assigned to bicyclists and motorist and to provide for more predictable movements by each.



Bicycle lanes also help to increase the total capacities of highways carrying mixed bicycle and motor vehicle traffic. Another reason for constructing bicycle lanes is to better accommodate bicyclists where insufficient space exists for comfortable bicycling on existing streets. Regular maintenance of bicycle lanes should be a top priority, since bicyclists are unable to use a lane with potholes, debris or broken glass.

If bicycle travel is to improve, special efforts should be made to assure that a quality network is provided with these lanes. However, the needs of both the motorist and the bicyclist must be considered in the decision to provide bike lanes.

- c. **Shared Use Path.** Shared-use paths should be used to serve corridors not served by streets and highways permitting such facilities to be constructed away from the influence of parallel streets. Shared-use paths offer opportunities, such as recreation, that are not provided by the road system. There may be many situations in which these facilities can be provided as part of planned developments. For example, in 1994 the Columbus Riverwalk



was completed, providing opportunities for a shared use path for bicyclists and walkers along the Chattahoochee River. In 2011, the Columbus Fall Line Trace (Rails-to-trails project) was completed also providing shared use paths for bicyclists and pedestrians. These two developments together provide over 30 miles of designated shared use paths for the residents of the City of Columbus.



- d. **Paved Shoulder:** Smooth paved roadway shoulders provide a suitable area for bicycling with few conflicts with faster moving motor vehicles. In the City of Americus paved roadway shoulders are an effective way to provide better bicycling facilities. In developing paved shoulders for the rural communities, GDOT uses AASHTO's guidelines for the design of bicycle facilities. GDOT uses a 5' bike lane in urban sections and a 6.5' paved shoulder for rural sections. However, GDOT does require that rumble strips be installed on rural sections with a posted speed limit of 50 mph or higher. The design standard includes a 16' long by 4' wide mille rumble strip that begins one foot from the edge of the travel lane. Providing paved shoulders and following the standards for rural sections by GDOT adds safety to cyclists by providing a means for emergency pull-off and riding on the steep inclines or sharp curves in the region. Paved shoulders can be beneficial for improved safety and mobility for both cyclists and motorists.



- e. **Wide Outside Lanes:** In urban areas, paved shoulders are not normally provided on major roads. A wider outside lane allows a motorist to safely pass a cyclist while remaining in the same lane. This can be a significant benefit and an improvement for cyclists, especially more experienced riders. A wider outside

lane also helps trucks, buses, and vehicles turning onto the major road from a driveway or wide street.

Dimensions: 14-ft. (4.2m) is the recommended width for an outside lane, to make the lane useable. The measurement should be from the edge line, or joint of the gutter pan, to the lane line.

15-ft. (4.5m) is the preferred width when extra space is required for maneuvering or to keep clear of on-street parking or other obstacles. Continuous stretches of lane 15 feet or wider may encourage the undesirable operation of two motor vehicles in one lane. When this much width is available, consideration should be given to striping bike lanes or shoulders.



## Defining Pedestrian Facility Types

The American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) have not defined types of pedestrians. For the purpose of this plan, pedestrians will be designated into three types: Adult Pedestrian, Children Pedestrians, and Pedestrians with Disabilities.

1. **Child Pedestrians:** Children Pedestrians use the facilities for playing. They often have trouble judging traffic speed, gaps in traffic, or whether a car is coming, going or standing still.
2. **Adult Pedestrians:** Adult Pedestrians use pedestrian facilities for commuting, recreation, and exercise.
3. **Pedestrians with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination to pedestrians with disabilities. Pedestrians who are blind, deaf, or who rely on wheelchairs need visible warnings about crossing vehicular traffic. For example, people who are deaf need visible warnings about crossing vehicular traffic and people who are visually impaired need tactile indications that they are approaching an intersection or hazard.

## Defining Pedestrian Facility Types

When designing pedestrian facilities, understanding the need of pedestrians is an important factor that affects pedestrian travel. In Americus pedestrian travel is not a vital mode of transportation due to the widespread rural nature of the city. However, in some areas, pedestrian travel is common among children and young adults walking for leisure, attending educational institutions, and going to concentrated businesses areas in local municipalities. Most pedestrian facilities are located in business and downtown districts. The pedestrian facilities in the local municipalities include sidewalks with some areas with crosswalks and paved shoulders mostly on state routes.



Curb ramps



Paved Shoulder



Walkway, Pathway



Sidewalks



Crosswalks

# Bicycle Safety

Most bicycle crashes do not involve collisions with motor vehicles. However, motor vehicles force the cyclists to run into the curb, to swerve to avoid being cut off by a car, or swerving to avoid stationary objects. Injury crashes caused by loss of control can be greatly reduced by:

- 🚲 Improving riding skills;
- 🚲 Ensuring that all equipment is functional (brakes, tire pressure and condition, etc.);
- 🚲 Ensuring that bicycle lanes are clear of obstructions, debris and rough surfaces.
- 🚲 Educating motorists and cyclists on the importance of Sharing the Road and enforcing the “3ft when passing law” (HB 101).

According to the Americus Police Department, between June 2015 and June 2016 there were, zero (0) crashes involving a bicyclist, four (4) involving pedestrians and eight hundred and fifty seven (857) motor vehicle crashes. Fortunately, the number of incidents involving bicyclists and pedestrians is minimal; however, bicycle safety education remains as a top priority for local officials, law enforcement and bicycle advocacy group.

## A. Engineering Solutions to Common Problems.

Although most bicycle/motor vehicle crashes are caused by improper behavior, many improvements can be made to roads to reduce the potential for crashes. Well-designed facilities encourage road safety, decreasing the likelihood of crashes. With the growing trend of cycling and walking, GDOT is beginning to provide facilities that encourage all users to obey the rules of the road.

### A.1. Wrong-Way Riding

Riding against traffic can be discouraged by:

- 🚲 Including a directional arrow on bike lane markings;
- 🚲 Placing bike lanes on both sides of a two-way street or placing bike lanes on both legs of a one-way couplet;
- 🚲 Replacing existing two-way bike lanes with one-way bike lanes on each side of the road;
- 🚲 Providing equal width shoulders on each side of the road;
- 🚲 Providing more crossing opportunities on wide streets; and
- 🚲 Avoiding two-way multi-use paths that begin or end at mid-block.

### A.2. Cyclists Disregard Stop Signs

It is natural for bicyclists to want to ride without breaking their momentum. Good planning places bicycle lanes on streets where there are not excessive stops by:

- 🚲 Providing bike lanes on arterials, which have the right-of-way at most intersections;
- 🚲 Avoid directing cyclists to local streets with many stops, which encourages bicyclists to disregard stop signs that slow them down;
- 🚲 Avoid placing unnecessary four-way stop signs on local streets.

### **A.3. Cyclist Enter the Roadway from Driveway**

Entering the roadway from a driveway is most common among young riders. Young riders often have not fully developed their perception skills, increasing the chance for crashes with motor vehicles. Some simple steps that can help improve motorists' awareness of children are:

- 🚲 Improving sight distance by removing excessive vegetation and other obstructions;
- 🚲 Designing residential streets to discourage excessive motor vehicle speeds.

### **A.4. Motorist enter the Road from Driveway or Alley**

This is a constant source of conflicts for cyclists riding on busy streets with many accesses. Engineering solutions include:

- 🚲 Reducing the number of accesses by elimination or consolidation; and
- 🚲 Improving sight distance by removing excess vegetation and other obstructions.

### **A.5. Motorist Disregard Sign or Signal**

Motorists often commit this infraction because they didn't see a bicyclist. The best engineering solutions to improve the visibility of cyclists include:

- 🚲 Designing bike lanes or paved shoulders that place bicyclists in the flow of traffic; and
- 🚲 Improving sight distance by removing excess vegetation and other obstructions.

## **B. Education Recommendations**

Education of both motorists and bicyclists can curtail unintentional violations of the law as well as promote other safe riding and driving practices. For bicyclists and motorist to safely coexist with each other, they need to understand the vehicle codes and regulations as well as develop good principles of sharing the road. Education provides this knowledge to both users. Comprehensive bicycle safety education programs are designed for users to understand the common errors committed while riding bicycles.

At present, the City of Americus is working on a continuous comprehensive bicycle safety education program which includes bicycling forums throughout the region, as well as on-street bicycle events which teach participants riding techniques, etiquette and safety (see list of events in appendix x). Through the coordinated efforts of a group of expert personnel or agencies including Sumter Cycling, Planning and Engineering departments, and the Police Department a bicycle program will be designed and implemented. In order to establish a foundation to advocate bicycle safety, local advocacy groups such as Sumter Cycling, local governments, Chambers of Commerce, SAFE KIDS, and Boards of Education will be contacted to assist in establishing the foundation needed to educate citizens within Americus.

## **C. Law Enforcement Recommendations**

Law enforcement is a necessary component of bicycle safety. Stricter enforcement can limit both intentional and unintentional infractions. As with any law, lack of enforcement leads to a general disregard of any rules. Local police officers should be willing to enforce the motor vehicle code with bicyclists and motorists. There are practical problems in citing bicyclists, since they often lack positive identification, such as a driver's

license. This is an issue that will be addressed in future educational programs implemented by RVRC staff and involved advocacy groups.

A way to resolve these practical problems is to have frequent contact between local bicycle advisory committees, parks and recreational departments, and law enforcement to collaborate and highlight the need for enforcement in identified problem areas. Community education and support of enforcement efforts builds respect between bicyclists and motorists.

House Bill 101 – Better Bicycle Bill, enforces new rules for motorists such as the 3. Ft. when passing and for cyclists to signalize their every turn and/or move. This bill is an initial tool for law enforcement, motorists and cyclists to follow the new rules.

#### **D. Equipment Recommendations**

There are several bicycle features which contribute to a rider's ability to control his/her movements:

- 🚲 **Size:** a bicycle must be properly fitted. If it is too small or too big, the rider will have trouble reacting properly when stopping, turning or accelerating. The wrong size bicycle is also uncomfortable, leading to fatigue.
- 🚲 **Brakes:** by law, brakes must be sufficiently powerful to enable a rider to bring a bicycle to a skid on dry pavement. Brake levers must be readily accessible.
- 🚲 **Tires:** must be in good condition and inflated to their recommended pressure.
- 🚲 **Fenders:** prevent lights and reflectors from getting dirty in wet weather.
- 🚲 **Luggage racks and panniers:** bicyclists should never attempt to carry loads in their arms while riding.
- 🚲 **Lights:** by law, when riding after dark, the bicycle or the rider must be equipped with a white light visible at least 500 feet to the front and a red light or reflector visible at least 600 feet to the rear.

#### **E. Riding Skills**

Poor riding skills are one factor associated with bicycle crashes. However, there are many different factors to bicycle crashes, some involving motor vehicles. In riding a bicycle, one must have a good sense of balance. By looking ahead and to the sides, avoiding distractions, and by ensuring that one's bike is in good working order, falls and collisions with fixed objects can be largely avoided. Many crashes with motor vehicles could be avoided if riders learned to better control their bicycles, pay more attention to their surroundings, and maneuver the bicycle to avoid collisions.

#### **F. Helmets**

Wearing a helmet does not reduce the chances of a crash, but can reduce the severity of injuries and even the possibility of a fatality. A properly worn bicycle helmet can reduce the severity of head injuries by up to 80%. SAFE KIDS Columbus is a part of the National organization which promotes awareness campaigns aimed to increasing safety among children. The Columbus branch of SAFE KIDS Program is instrumental in providing education to children about the importance of bicycle safety and helmet use and is able to provide its services to children in Americus.

**Chart 1: Sumter County 2000-2010 Bicycle Crash Data** | Source Georgia DOT

County	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
SUMTER	6	4	2	2	0	1	1	1	5	4	1

## Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian crashes are the result of a collision with a motor vehicle. This is mostly due to an individual's visual capability and perception. Pedestrian injuries are rarely reported as a pedestrian crash. Most pedestrian crashes are the result of an attempt to cross a roadway. Fewer pedestrian crashes occur as pedestrians walk along a roadway.

Analysis of pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes can help establish engineering, education, and enforcement solutions. One important factor in all pedestrian crashes is speed.

Reducing traffic speeds not only reduces the severity of pedestrian crashes, but may also reduce their occurrence. Slower driving speeds decrease braking distances and reaction time. For instance, each school zone located in the city of Americus is designated by a flashing caution light indicating a speed of 25mph during posted morning and afternoon school hours.

All engineering, education and enforcement programs should include the reduction of speed as an important step in pedestrian safety. This does not necessarily mean reducing existing speed limits as much as ensuring that the current limits are observed and respected.

### Long-Term Trends

A future trend may be a rise in the number and severity of pedestrian crashes due to automobiles being built with more safety features, i.e. the isolation of sound. This could lead to pedestrians being invisible to or ignored by motorists. Pedestrian fatalities have been on the rise in the last few years. The statewide data collected by the Georgia Department of Motor Vehicle Safety and the Georgia Department of Transportation reveals the nature of crashes between pedestrians and motor vehicles in Sumter County (see chart 2 pg. 24).

### Engineering Recommendations (A)

Even though most pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes are caused by improper behavior, many improvements can be made to the roads to reduce the potential for crashes. If facilities are well-designed and pedestrians and motorists use them correctly, the likelihood of crashes will decrease.

The most important transportation step cities can take is to design pedestrian facilities that enable motorists to clearly see pedestrians along the roadway and those preparing to cross the roadway. Pedestrians must be given opportunities to cross roadways with minimal conflicts with motor vehicles. Engineering solutions for the city are as listed:

- 🚲 The addition of sidewalks in urban areas and wider shoulders in rural areas.
- 🚲 Sidewalks separated from traffic with planter strips increasing pedestrian safety.

- 🚲 Include road improvement techniques including curbs.
- 🚲 Placement of signs reminding motorists of their duty to yield to pedestrians when they turn left or right.

<b>Chart 2: Sumter County 2004-2006 Pedestrian Crash Data</b>			
<b>County</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Sumter	2	8	6

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Motor Vehicles

### A.1. Motorist Speeding

Although motorist speeding is usually considered an enforcement issue, there are many roadway design features that influence the speed at which motorists drive. Motorists will usually travel at speeds that seem appropriate for the roadway. Traffic calming measures can be used on local streets and minor collectors. On arterials and major collectors, there are features that can be incorporated that discourage excessive speeds i.e. trees along the road, narrower lanes, landscaping, bike lanes, etc (see figures 1-3).



Figure 1: Traffic Calming Crosswalk Improvements



Figure 2: Speed hump



Figure 3: Raised islands at intersection

### B. Education Solutions

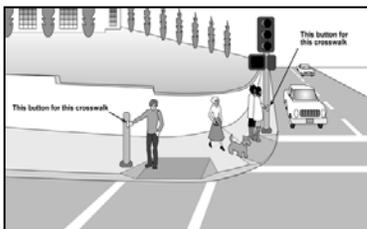


Figure 4: Pedestrian friendly crosswalk

Many pedestrian crashes are due to lack of knowledge of the rules pertaining to the right-of-way. More information should be made available to motorists resulting in their knowledge that pedestrians have the right-of-way at both marked and unmarked crosswalks. The consequences of excessive travel speeds must be made known to motorists. Many do not understand that traveling above the speed limit in residential areas can result in a fatal pedestrian crash.

Also, pedestrians must know how to safely cross streets. It should never be assumed that a signal guarantees safety. One should always look before crossing. The meaning of "WALK/DON'T WALK" electronic crossing signals is not clearly understood by all.

While there are many situations in which the pedestrian is technically at fault, more emphasis needs to be placed on the driver's responsibility because he or she is the one moving in a high-speed, heavy vehicle.

**B. Enforcement Recommendations**

Along with education, increased enforcement can have the greatest effect on pedestrian safety. The lack of consequences to motorists who run lights and stop signs or fail to yield at crosswalks is mostly due to an insufficient number of law enforcement officers dedicated to traffic enforcement.

Increased education efforts aimed at law enforcement officers can help them understand the severity of pedestrian infractions. Attitudes toward the relative severity of pedestrian crashes need to change among prosecutors and judges. Motorists often face little punishment following crashes that result in pedestrian injuries or deaths. The pedestrian is often assumed to be partially at fault for simply "being in the road." In order for motorists to change their behavior, the consequences of failing to yield to pedestrians in designated crosswalks needs to be more severe and better publicized.

# BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN INITIATIVES IN COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

## Land Use

Many land use practices result in long distances between origin and destination points, requiring an automobile for most trips. Zoning for high densities of employment, housing and mixed-use development can place origin and destination points closer together, creating a more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment. This can be done more easily in new developments, but can also be retrofitted into established areas with neighborhood commercial zoning.

## Connecting Streets

Disconnected streets and cul-de-sacs create long travel distances, even though the actual distance from origin to destination may be fairly short, making walking and bicycling impractical. A gridded street system provides continuity for pedestrians and bicyclists along the shortest routes. If gridded street patterns do not exist, disconnected streets can be improved with connecting paths.

## Street Crossings

Wide multi-lane roadways are difficult to cross on foot. Crossing opportunities can be provided with techniques such as raised medians, refuge islands, curb extensions and pedestrian signals, where appropriate.

## Intersections

Intersections built for the movement of motor vehicles can be very difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross. A network of streets with sidewalks and bike lanes does not fully accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists if intersections are not properly designed and built. Improvements for pedestrians include refuge islands, shorter crossing distances, reduced curb radii, crossings at right angles and slower traffic speeds. At busy interchanges, grade-separation for bicyclists and pedestrians may be needed.

## Access Management

Every driveway creates conflicts for pedestrians and bicyclists. One component of access management deals with the number of driveways connecting to the road. Reducing the number of driveways and limiting access from one or more directions improves pedestrian and bicyclist safety and comfort.

## Suburbs

Suburbs create an environment that is somewhat conducive to walking or bicycling. Most suburbs are within an urban growth boundary. In suburban areas planning for bicycle and pedestrian travel should be considered. Many enhancements other than providing bikeways and walkways are needed to make a suburban environment more conducive to bicycling and walking:

- 🚲 Providing safe bicycle and pedestrian access to employment, recreation, and educational centers;
- 🚲 Redesigning parking lots to allow better pedestrian access and circulation;
- 🚲 Providing safe crossings of multi-lane roads;
- 🚲 Encouraging land-use patterns that place origin and destination points within reasonable walking and bicycling distance;
- 🚲 Connecting cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets with streets or paths.

## Section IV: Existing Condition Analysis

The City of Americus' current bicycle and pedestrian system is comprised of a network of commercial and residential sidewalks and two designated bicycle routes within Americus and Sumter County – known as the Dairy Farm Loop. See **figure 1** for a map of the Dairy Farm Loop.

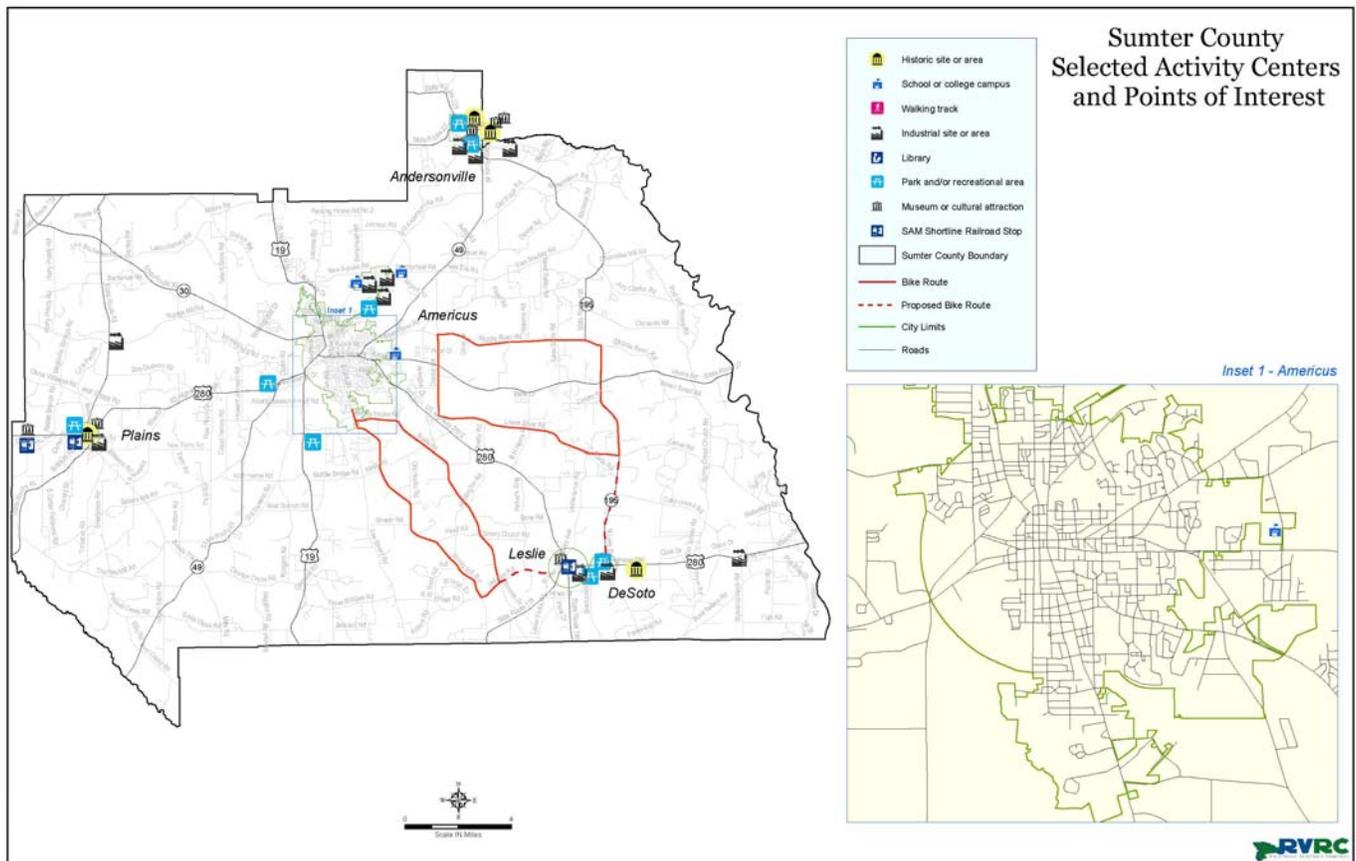
The facilities in Americus include sidewalks, crosswalks, and some paved shoulders, already incorporated the current transportation system. These facilities also include 40 miles of the Dairy Farm Loop totaling close to 40 miles of designated bicycle route with directional arrows and Share the Road signs, however, due to the low volume of traffic and the 2 - 3. Ft. paved shoulders, no bicycle facilities have been built. Cyclists are able to access this route utilizing the free park and ride facility located at Pat's Place (a local pizza restaurant).

The majority of Sumter County is rural with the exception of the City of Americus. Cycling and walking as a means of non-motorized transportation is limited because travel distances tend to be lengthy. In addition to length, rural communities in the region do not have adequate roadways and pedestrian facilities to provide for bicycle and pedestrian activity in their community.

As rural communities strive for growth, many once quiet streets could someday carry large volumes of high-speed traffic with no pedestrian or bicycle facilities discouraging many people from using these modes. Currently, it is not evident that traffic will increase in the rural communities; however, Americus has the potential for more traffic volume with U.S. and state highways running through the center of the city.

With the possibility of growth and development in Americus and Sumter County, road improvement projects by GDOT and commercial/ residential development can provide opportunities to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Providing good bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Americus and Sumter County will encourage many more people to use an alternative mode of transportation whether it is primarily for commuting or recreational use. Furthermore, good bicycle and pedestrian facilities enhance opportunities for economic growth, tourism, improved quality of life, and decreasing the wear and tear on roadways. Retrofitting these streets by providing good facilities and meeting ADA compliance will make accessibility to bicyclists and pedestrians more encouraging.

**Figure 1 Existing and Proposed Facilities  
Americus and Sumter County**



**Recreation**

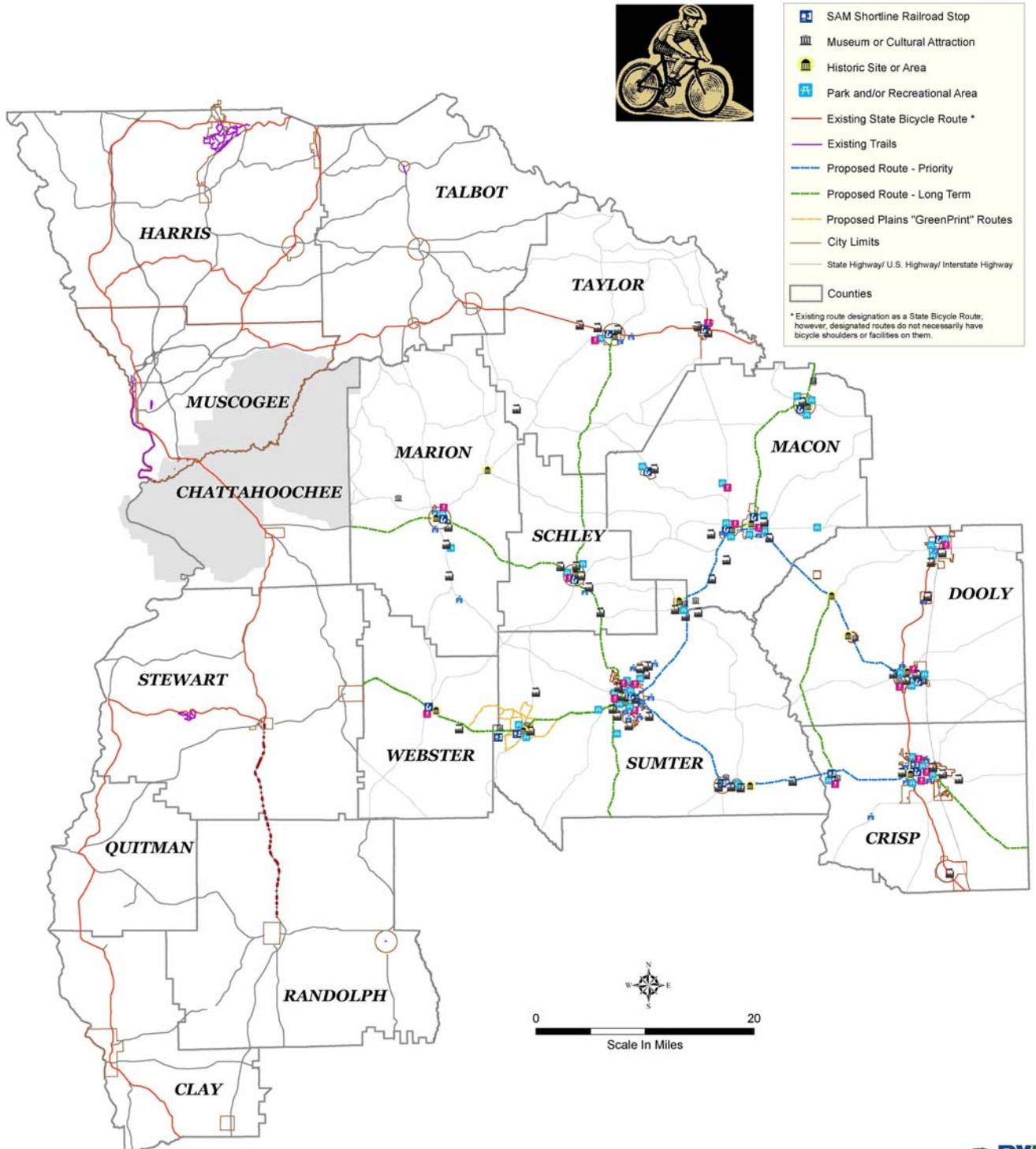
Public recreation is funded jointly by the City of Americus and Sumter County. A large city-county recreational complex, including a variety of playing fields, is located just south of Americus on US Highway 19/State Route 3. A horse riding arena is located on Southerfield Road in northeast Americus; a baseball field is located on the outskirts of DeSoto. Additional facilities are located in Americus (see Americus below).

Andersonville owns and maintains three recreation sites. Andersonville City Park, located on East Church Street, consists of a full length, lighted basketball court. This recreation site also contains children’s playground equipment and a picnic table. A lighted tennis court is located at the intersection of Ellaville and Oglethorpe streets. A large, unfenced and unmarked adjoining grass field is available for softball, football, and other activities. The third recreation site consists of a half-court basketball court, playground equipment, and picnic tables on West Johnson Street.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

Several walking trails and paths are located at parks and on the campus of Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus.

# Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities



## Section V – Proposed Facilities

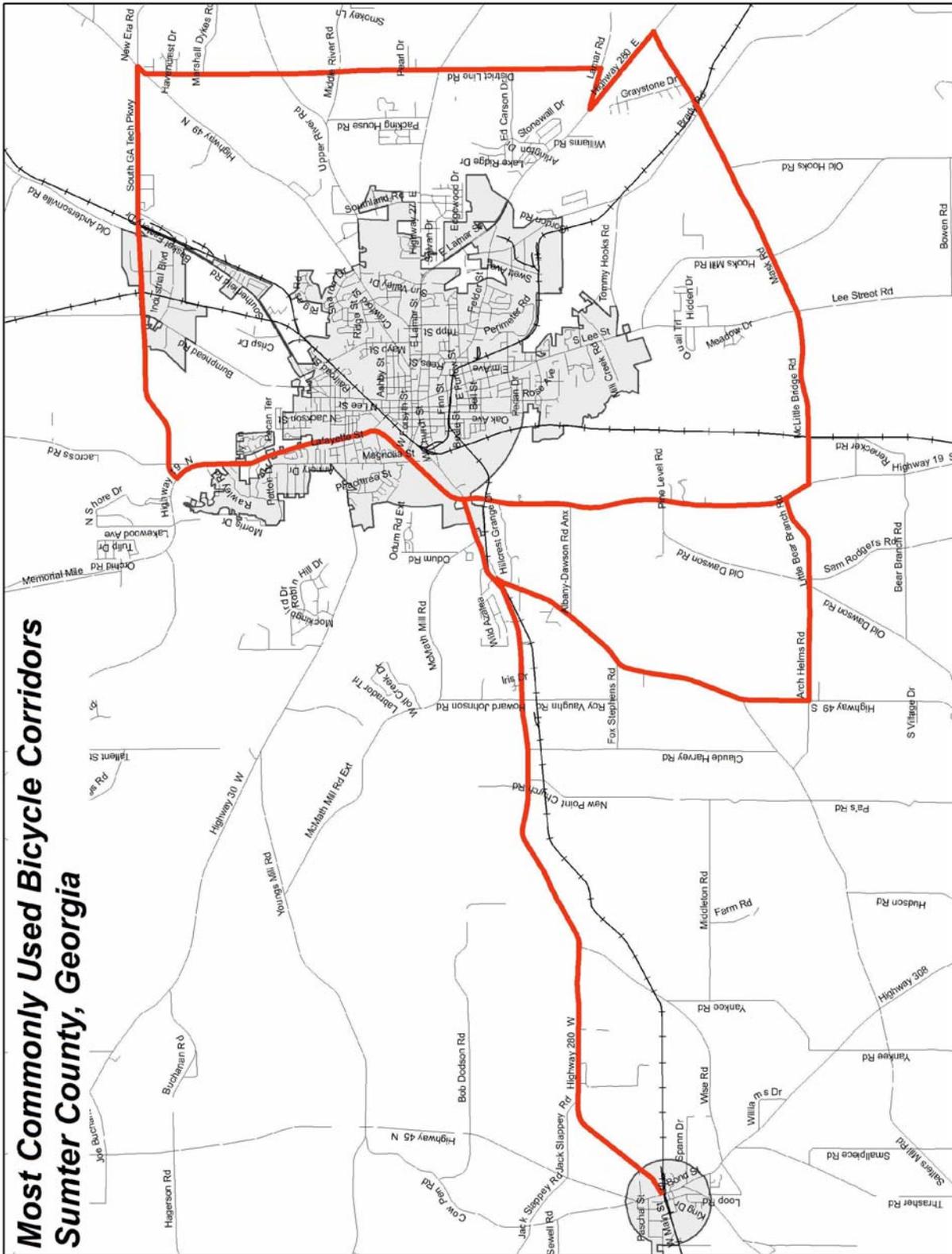
Americus wants to attract and retain more residents. Creating streets and public spaces that support more public life which is reflective of everyone who lives in the city is increasingly seen as a good place to start. From residents to local businesses to city agencies, there is a growing desire to connect people and places, and to create a vibrant community that utilizes streets as public spaces - to walk, bike, wait for transit, drive, or spend time.

Creating invitations to attract and retain more residents can start now. With pilot and demonstration projects, city and civic leaders can test how to make context sensitive designs and programs that reflect the local climate and the local desires and behaviors of Americus' residents.

Below, are routes that were proposed by residents of Americus and Sumter County, local cyclists, members of Sumter Cycling and River Valley Regional Commission Staff. Sumter Cycling board members discussed and reviewed these routes in great detail during their annual board retreat in the fall of 2016.



# Proposed Bicycle Corridors – Sumter County





## Local Plans Proposing Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

**The City of Americus Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan:** The Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership, which includes the Georgia Municipal Association, The Georgia Cities Foundation, The Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs, The Archway Partnership, and the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government, assisted the city of Americus to create its own strategic vision, plan, and short term work program. By working with government leaders, Chambers of Commerce, downtown merchants, property owners, lending institutions, and citizens, the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership helps insure that all cities in Georgia have access to what they need in order to realize their vision and maximize their potential.

Under this plan, there are several bicycle and pedestrian projects including:

- Rails to Trails
- Golf Cart Ordinances
- Connecting Georgia Southwestern State University (GWS) to Downtown Americus
- Bicycle Lanes
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Improved look of gateways and corridors
- Complete streets conversions

For a complete list of projects and strategies, refer to the May, 2015 City of Americus Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan.

## Section VI – Safe Routes to School



Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a program created by the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU. The Program's goal is to increase the number of children in grades K-8 who bicycle and walk to school. The Program's enabling legislation guides how this will be implemented: 1) by increasing awareness; 2) developing locally-driven and supported programs; 3) by improving bicycling and walking conditions near qualifying schools; and 4) by evaluating the project and program

levels. The program has many benefits including reduced congestion and increased safety near participating schools, reduced air pollution in route to and near participating schools, and increased physical activity of children.

The River Valley Regional Commission has been able to develop a strong partnership within schools in the region and State Safe Routes to School Program. These efforts have resulted in two projects being funded for infrastructure improvements including new and improved sidewalks, road crossings, refuge islands and adequate signage. Promoting bike-ability and walk-ability is a top priority of the program as well as of the River Valley Regional Commission, we look to achieve this, by continuing to work with schools in urban and rural areas, helping plan for International Walk to School Day, providing safety related workshops and bicycle rodeos at no cost to the schools and providing all the tools necessary for school officials, parents, teachers and students to thrive in developing their programs.

Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive program that includes the **5 Es**:

1. **Evaluation** - Monitoring and researching outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection mode share (the percentage of travelers using a particular type of transportation or number of trips using said type) before and after the program intervention(s)
2. **Encouragement** - Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling
3. **Education** - Teaching the school community about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing schools the importance of life-long safety skills and offering school-bound and school area driver safety campaigns
4. **Engineering** - Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and establishing safer crosswalks, walkways, trails and bikeways
5. **Enforcement** - Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure drivers obey traffic laws, initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs and ensuring that policies are enforced.

### **RVRC Safe Routes to School Walk Audits in Americus:**

- FY 2016 – Furlow Charter School, Americus, GA (Walk Audit only).

## Section VII – Complete Streets

**Complete Streets are streets for everyone.** They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

Creating Complete Streets means transportation agencies must change their approach to community roads. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists—making Americus a better place to live. Complete Streets help create livable communities for various types of users, including children, people with disabilities, and older adults. Complete Streets improve equity, safety, and public health, while reducing transportation costs and traffic woes.

There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to its community context. A complete street may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more.

A Complete Street in a rural area will look quite different from a Complete Street in a highly urban area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

On April, 2016, the Americus City Council unanimously passed a Complete Streets resolution, making Americus, the second Complete Streets city within the River Valley region. As stated in this plan's goals and objectives, Americus will begin to work on developing a Complete Streets Policy that will provide design guidelines and a creative approach towards striving to accommodate all road users safely.

Complete Street Resolution City of Americus

RESOLUTION

COMPLETE STREETS

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AND ADOPTING A "COMPLETE STREETS" POLICY AND INCORPORATING SAME AS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF ALL OF THE CITY'S FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS; "Complete Streets" is a national initiative intended to extend full benefits of the public transportation system and services beyond the motorist to include all users; bicyclists, riders of public transit, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and

WHEREAS; the U. S. Department of Transportation, in 2010, and the Georgia Department of Transportation, in 2012, have subscribed to the "Complete Streets" initiative and have incorporated "Complete Streets" precepts into their respective transportation planning and development , and

WHEREAS; it is the desire of Mayor and Council of the City of Americus to incorporate "Complete Streets" precepts into all of the city's future transportation planning and development, and

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved by the Mayor and Council of the City of Americus, that "Complete Streets" precepts be institutionalized into all transportation planning and development of the City, and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that facilities, features and structures of the City of Americus affecting the transportation needs of all motorists, bicyclists, riders of public transit, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities be planned and developed as integral elements of all future improvements of Americus city streets, and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Georgia Department of Transportation be requested to incorporate "Complete Streets" into all proposed road and street improvements along state routes in the City of Americus.

This 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2016.



Barry Blount, Mayor



Paula Martin, City Clerk

## Section VII - Implementation

One of the main objective of this plan is to educate and encourage the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. To achieve this objective, many different entities will be called upon to implement the programs and actions that are necessary to achieve the plan's vision, goals, and objectives which are described in the context below.

In discussing the implementation strategy of this plan, The city of Americus, alongside GDOT, RVRC, local businesses, and advocates of bicycle and pedestrian usage can implement the plan through collaboration with the right resources. Successful implementation requires a systematic approach by transportation agencies and affected parties. Additionally, it will take a number of years of implementation and additional investments to create a transportation system that fosters increased safe bicycle and pedestrian use.

The Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides the foundation for a successful network of alternative transportation facilities. The most important purpose is to develop a supportive environment for bicycling and walking throughout the city and into the county.

### Roles and Responsibilities

This section identifies strategies for implementing the bicycle and pedestrian plan in Americus. The list identifies the most prominent participants called upon to assist with implementing the plan. Following this section are strategies that discuss how these responsibilities can be put into action.

#### **GDOT:**

- 🚲 Design the State Highway system with a strong consideration for Complete Streets.
- 🚲 Incorporate proposed improvements from local and regional bicycle and pedestrian plans in the state's long range plans and construction work program.
- 🚲 Provide funding opportunities for local infrastructure and educational programs.
- 🚲 Develop a strategy for funding safety initiatives (education and enforcement).
- 🚲 Provide technical assistance on the planning and design of bikeways to the local government, as well as local-and regional- groups seeking to develop bikeways.
- 🚲 Encourage local public transit systems to provide bicycle accommodations on buses and in bus stations (e.g., bicycle racks and storage).
- 🚲 Continue to assist in the development of state, regional and local bicycle maps.
- 🚲 Develop enforcement strategies and programs aimed at decreasing bicycle and pedestrian crashes.
- 🚲 Develop maintenance policies and guidelines for bikeways.
- 🚲 Provide user friendly signage on roadways to increase motorist and bicyclist awareness.

- 🚲 Make additions to driver's education materials that emphasize bicycle and pedestrians as non-motorized transportation.
- 🚲 Assist with promoting and supporting National Bike and Pedestrian Days (e.g., bike-to-work).
- 🚲 Assist with the partnership and development of Safe Routes to School Programs within the City of Americus.

### **River Valley Regional Commission**

- 🚲 Continue to train and educate local governments, advocacy groups and others interested in Complete Streets and provide technical assistance in developing a Complete Streets policy.
- 🚲 Establish partnerships with community organizations, local governments, school districts, law enforcement, recreation organizations, and other interested parties on educating the local community about bicycle and pedestrian transportation.
- 🚲 Identify funding sources for implementation and continuation of the plan.
- 🚲 In collaboration with local agencies, host a minimum of one elementary level Traffic Safety Instructor Course annually to train teachers, law enforcement officers and community volunteers how to teach children bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- 🚲 Continue to host and provide technical assistance to the Americus Planning Advisory Committee (Sumter Cycling).

### **City of Americus**

- 🚲 Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to consider the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians in all road projects and building facilities.
- 🚲 Promote land use policies that are bicycle and pedestrian friendly.
- 🚲 Educate local law enforcement on share-the-road safety techniques and enforcement strategies for specific high-risk bicyclist and motorist infractions of the law.
- 🚲 Partnership and collaboration with local community organizations, school district, law enforcement, recreation, and private companies to emphasize the importance of safe and ADA compliant walking and bicycling facilities.
- 🚲 Promote bicyclist and pedestrian friendly oriented developments through Comprehensive Plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations.
- 🚲 Provide bicycle racks at most public, educational, and commercial areas.
- 🚲 Integrate existing pathways, walkways, trails, local attractions, and parks in local plans.
- 🚲 Develop facilities to encourage bicycle and pedestrian activities.

- 🚲 Consider adopting a shoulder paving policy in addition to creating user friendly shoulders and sidewalks that are accessible to bicyclist and pedestrians.
- 🚲 Continue to promote and support National Bicycle and Pedestrian days.
- 🚲 Cultivate interest and participation from more local schools, as well as the board of educations to participate and adopt Safe Routes to School Program practices for local elementary and middle schools.
- 🚲 Develop partnerships with local Visitor’s Bureau or local Chambers of Commerce to promote local and regional festivals, attractions, races, and tours by developing visitors guide and maps linking all activities and attractions.

## Implementing (A)

This plan contains many recommendations that will require substantial effort on the part of GDOT and other partners to implement. Clearly, with the resources now at hand and those available in the near future, all of the recommended action steps cannot be tackled at once. Therefore, it is necessary to set priorities regarding which aspects of the plan to implement first. Some recommendations are easily identified as distinct actions which can be taken to implement the plan, independent of the slow process of institutional and societal change. Many of these actions are already ongoing and should be continued, while others should have a high priority for immediate implementation. Some of the recommendations, however, will require the integration of bicycle and pedestrian initiatives into a complex array of ongoing plans, policies, and programs. To become a reality, many of these recommendations will also need to be part of a larger, overall process of change.

The following implementation goals and objectives have been divided into short, medium, and long range.

### Priorities for Immediate Implementation (A)

There are a number of discrete actions which can be taken within a relatively short time frame toward implementing the bicycle and pedestrian plan. However, it is not realistic to expect that all of these actions will take place immediately and simultaneously. Therefore, they are listed here in recommended order of priority.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Goal A.1:</b>    | <b><u>Planning</u></b>   |
| Objective A.1.a:    | Establish Bike and Pedestrian Committee and Advocacy group. (COMPLETED)  |
| Objective A.1.b:    | Meet with local agencies and organization to discuss the plan (ONGOING).   |
| Objective A.1.c:    | Provide opportunities for public involvement by continuing to host public meets to identify needs. (ONGOING)   |
| Objective A.1.d:    | Now that a Complete Streets resolution has been passed, develop and adopt a Complete Streets Policy that will embrace a complete road use/access approach for all users. |
| <br><b>Goal A.2</b> | <br><b><u>Education and Enforcement</u></b>  |
| Objective A.2.a:    | Develop a city and county-wide promotion program for bicycling routes and attractions.   |

- Objective A.2.b: Work with regional planning entities to develop a regional and statewide route system and map for bicycling interest.
- Objective A.2.c: Establish and implement pedestrian safety education and training programs for children, teens, adults, seniors, and motorists through partnerships with local schools and local law enforcement.
- Objective A.2.d: Educate local law enforcement on “Share-The-Road” safety techniques and enforcement strategies for specific high-risk bicyclists and motorists infractions of the law.
- Objective A.2.e: Publicize the Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan within your community to raise awareness of its availability.

**Goal A.3: Funding Sources**

- Objective A.3.a: River Valley Regional Commission will assist in identifying funding sources and research national programs promoting bicycle and pedestrian awareness, safety and developing infrastructure.

**Goal A.4: Tourism and Marketing**

- Objective A.4.a: Promote and support National Bike and Pedestrian Days.
- Objective A.4.b: Promote Americus as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community through attractive bicycle tourism events and programs.
- Objective A.4.c: Develop maps (bicycle/walking facilities) identifying tourist attractions.
- Objective A.4.d: Partner with regional Visitor Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, and other organizations to promote local and regional festivals, races, and tours by using visitor’s guides for map linking attractions.

**Goal A.5: Health Benefits**

- Objective A.5.a: Encourage participation from local schools to promote bicycle and pedestrian activities and the health benefits associated with these activities.
- Objective A.5.b: Encourage partnership and participation from the local school district and board of education on Safe Routes to School Program practices for elementary and middle schools.

## **Priorities for Medium-Range Implementation (B)**

Once the immediate priorities are in place, efforts should begin on the following tasks. These are considerably more complex than the immediate tasks and will require significant effort. They are also listed in order of priority.

**Goal B.1: Planning**

- Objective B.1.a: Provide bicycle and pedestrian signage and pavement markings for user friendly roads.
- Objective B.1.b: Prepare a pedestrian facility and infrastructure improvement plan for the city of Americus.
- Objective B.1.c: Integrate existing pathways, walkways, trails, local attractions, and parks with city plans.
- Objective B.1.d: Encourage developers to incorporate sidewalks into their developments both residential and commercial.

Objective B.1.e: Encourage the local government to amend ordinances and codes to require sidewalks in new developments.

**Goal B.2: Education and Enforcement**

Objective B.2.a: Make additions to driver's education products that emphasize safe motorist techniques when encountering bicyclists and pedestrians on the road.

**Goal B.3: Funding Sources**

Objective B.3.a: Initiate a small grant research program along with researching private foundations for the development and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Objective B.3.b: Incorporate bicycle improvements in conjunction to new construction and reconstruction projects which may use state and/or federal funding (e.g., paved shoulders, bike lanes, sidewalks, or wide curb lanes).

Objective B.3.c: When available, apply for grants from the state and federal governments for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and/or initiatives.

**Goal B.4: Tourism and Marketing**

Objective B.4.a: Establish (annual) local events for cycling and walking incorporating outdoor recreational resources.

Objective B.4.b: Promote and establish bicycle and walking tours, races, festivals, and fundraisers.

**Goal B.5: Health Benefits**

Objective B.5.a: Establish programs that encourage family-oriented activities and an active lifestyle.

Objective B.5.b: Establish and implement health and fitness programs utilizing walking as well as stationary and non-stationary bicycles.

## **Priorities for Long-Range Implementation (C)**

Once the immediate and medium-range tasks are implemented, the following should be considered.

**Goal C.1: Planning**

Objective C.1.a: Develop a program for improving road shoulders along broad stretches of major state highways.

Objective C.1.b: Develop a program of traffic calming to enhance user-friendliness for pedestrians and bicyclists along major state highways which pass through town and residential areas.

Objective C.1.c: Establish user friendly shoulders and sidewalks for bicycle and pedestrian activity.

Objective C.1.d: Establish residential and commercial developments to encourage bicycle and pedestrian activity.

Objective C.1.e: Require all bike and pedestrian facilities to be ADA accessible.

## **Funding Sources**

The Americus bicycle and pedestrian system will be improved and in some areas established in conjunction with current roadway construction and roadway improvement projects. Overall, there will not be a cost to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian friendly facilities into road improvement projects and new roadway construction; however, with these facilities there must be posted signage for motorist, cyclists, and pedestrians to make them aware of users of the system. In funding signage for a local bicycle and pedestrian system, there are opportunities provided by the Georgia Department of Transportation and the private sector. There are also several sections within the Multimodal Safety and Access Program from GDOT which specifically incorporates bicycle and pedestrian activities and related programs.

### **Section 1202-National Highway System Funds (NHS)**

The NHS provides flexible funding that may be used by State and local municipalities for projects on any National Highway System. NHS funds may be used to construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System. In the River Valley region, Section 1202 could benefit Interstate I-185 in providing bicycle facilities from Muscogee County to Harris County.

### **Section 1108-Surface Transportation Program Funds (STP)**

Bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible for STP funding. This program can be used to improve and establish sidewalks throughout the River Valley region to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### **Section 1115-Federal Lands Highway Funds**

These funds may be used to construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities in conjunction with roads, highways, and pathways.

### **Section 1219- Scenic Byways Program Funds**

These funds may be used to construct facilities along scenic highways for the use of bicyclists and pedestrians. Currently, I-185 has been designated a Scenic Byway by GDOT. With the diverse scenic beauty and history within each unique community, scenic byways could significantly attract new opportunities for economic growth and tourism to the region.

### **Section 1112- National Recreational Trails Funds**

The Recreational Trails Program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users.

### **Section 3003- Transit Enhancement Activity Funding**

This funding program clarifies ISTEA's transit funding allowances for pedestrian and bicycle access to transit facilities. This funding source may be used for bicycle and pedestrian access to mass transportation, including facilities to store bicycles and installing equipment for transporting bicycles on public transportation vehicles.

### **Section 5304- Transportation Planning**

The River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) proposes to develop a multi-modal transportation plan (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and motor vehicle) by examining how and where to connect different modes of transportation in the Americus area. The Bicycle-Pedestrian plan will research and identify how to provide better connectivity for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit with points of interest within the Americus area. It will also provide educational efforts, as well as the link of high tourist areas via bicycle friendly routes.

### **Transportation Investment Act (TIA) of 2010**

The Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Referendum was passed by Georgia voters in the regions of Central Savannah River Area, Heart of Georgia-Altamaha and River Valley. These three regions will implement a 1% regional sales tax over a ten year period to fund transportation improvements. GDOT is responsible for the management of the budget, schedule, execution, and delivery of all projects contained in the improved investment list.

### **Other Funding Sources**

As stated before, there are other possible funding sources for providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in local municipalities. Local municipalities can incorporate funding allocated with city (or county) transportation budgets, general operating budgets, and the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) initiatives.

The private sector provides another source of revenue for the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Civic and advocacy groups may also be willing to donate monetary contributions, materials, and labor to help construct and maintain facilities. Also civic and advocacy groups could play another role in the overall implementation program as well (see Appendix II).

### **Maintenance**

During the study for the Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, there were several concerns about the possible construction of existing and proposed facilities. Unless these facilities are maintained, they can quickly become unsafe. Before bicycle and pedestrian facilities are constructed, maintenance procedures and responsibilities must be considered. A maintenance policy should be in place before any portion of the system is marked, signed, or improved.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

With any expenditure of public funds, it is desirable to monitor how efficient funding is being used and the actual use of local bicycle and pedestrian facilities. To identify bicycle and pedestrian activities in Americus, potential high volume road segments should be identified and targeted for counts during peak bicycling season. The rural areas are different from urban areas. In rural areas, distances between destinations are quite lengthy leaving prolonged periods of time with no activity. With this idea in mind, a data collection technique in rural areas can be self-reports along the travel route to identify user activities. This could provide insight into general travel patterns, relative volumes and characteristics of the system users.

Another approach in collecting data is to establish information stations along state routes and in local municipalities. This station could be constructed with materials usually found on an all-weather bulletin board. The information stations would provide a supply of questionnaire post cards to allow users to record their activities along the route. For strategic positioning of the stations, the RVRC, PAC, and local municipality can continue to develop partnerships with other civic and advocacy groups in providing input and information to be placed at the stations. The system users could benefit greatly from easy access to brochures and pamphlets on hotels, camping, local events, bicycle shops and local points of interest which could be placed at an information station along the system.

## Section VIII - Future and Continuing Activities

At the present, there has been little talk about the future activities for a local system. However, with the growing interest of bicyclists and pedestrians, RVRC staff recognized the need to continue the steps to transform concepts into physical reality. Efforts that must be undertaken by RVRC staff include the following:

1. Work closely with Americus' planning commission to encourage the development and adoption of a Complete Streets policy.
2. Ensure that connectivity with the bicycle and pedestrian systems is reviewed as a routine matter during both the planning and engineering phases of every new development.
3. The Planning Advisory Committee should review current and proposed routes and suggest any necessary improvements needed in the system.
4. Work closely with GDOT to facilitate execution and implementation strategy of the Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
5. Continue to build partnerships with civic and advocacy groups to implement ways to promote Americus as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly city as well as a bicycle tourism destination.
6. Develop bicycle and pedestrian safety campaigns and information packages to be distributed in Americus and its surrounding communities.
7. Continue to work with Sumter Cycling in developing local cycling routes, coordinate cycling and pedestrian events, and promote alternative means of transportation to apply for Bicycle Friendly Community designation.
8. Continue to work with the GDOT's Safe Routes to School Program and Safe Routes Resource Center in developing school partnerships and participation in the program.
9. Lastly, promote the local system through a public information campaign involving newspapers, television, and public service announcements. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can provide an economic boost to cities by demonstrating that their communities are safe and family oriented. Ecotourism is growing swiftly in the River Valley region. With Americus' diverse scenic beauty, favorable weather and interesting history, everyone stands to capitalize significantly if a local bicycle and pedestrian system can be implemented and promoted in the present and the near future.

## Section IX - Federal and State Policies and Legislation

### State of Georgia Legislation

*40-6-292.*

(a) A person propelling a bicycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereto and shall allow no person to ride upon the handlebars.

(b) No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped.

(c) No person shall transport a child under the age of one year as a passenger on a bicycle on a highway, roadway, bicycle path, or sidewalk; provided, however, that a child under the age of one year may be transported on a bicycle trailer or in an infant sling so long as such child is seated in the bicycle trailer or carried in an infant sling according to the bicycle trailer's or infant sling's manufacturer's instructions, and the bicycle trailer is properly affixed to the bicycle according to the bicycle trailer's manufacturer's instructions or the infant sling is properly worn by the rider of the bicycle according to the infant sling's manufacturer's instructions and such child transported in a bicycle trailer or infant sling is wearing a bicycle helmet as required under paragraph (1) of subsection (e) of Code Section 40-6-296.

(d) No child between the ages of one year and four years shall ride as a passenger on a bicycle or bicycle trailer or be transported in an infant sling unless the child is securely seated in a child passenger bicycle seat, bicycle trailer, or infant sling according to the child passenger bicycle seat's, bicycle trailer's, or infant sling's manufacturer's instructions and the child passenger seat or bicycle trailer is properly affixed to the bicycle according to the child passenger bicycle seat's or bicycle trailer's manufacturer's instructions or the infant sling is worn according to the infant sling's manufacturer's instructions.

(e) Violation of subsections (c) and (d) of this Code section shall not constitute negligence per se nor contributory negligence per se or be considered evidence of negligence or liability.

(f) No person under the age of 16 years failing to comply with subsections (c) and (d) of this Code section may be fined or imprisoned.

*40-6-293.*

No person riding upon any bicycle, coaster, roller skates, sled, or toy vehicle shall attach the same or himself to any vehicle upon a roadway.

*40-6-294.*

(a) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, except when turning left or avoiding hazards to safe cycling, when the lane is too narrow to share safely with a motor vehicle, when traveling at the same speed as traffic, or while exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction; provided, however, that every person operating a bicycle away from the right side of the roadway shall exercise reasonable care and shall give due consideration to the other applicable rules of the road. As used in this subsection, the term "hazards to safe cycling" includes, but is not limited to, surface debris, rough pavement, drain grates which are parallel to the side of the roadway, parked or stopped vehicles, potentially opening car doors, or any other objects which threaten the safety of a person operating a bicycle.

(b) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

(c) Whenever a usable path has been provided adjacent to a roadway and designated for the exclusive use of bicycle riders, then the appropriate governing authority may require that bicycle riders use such path and not use those sections of the roadway so specified by such local governing authority. The governing authority may be petitioned to remove restrictions upon demonstration that the path has become inadequate due to capacity, maintenance, or other causes.

(d) Paths subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this Code section shall at a minimum be required to meet accepted guidelines, recommendations, and criteria with respect to planning, design, operation, and maintenance as set forth by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and such paths shall provide accessibility to destinations equivalent to the use of the roadway.

(e) Electric assisted bicycles as defined in Code Section 40-1-1 may be operated on bicycle paths.

*40-6-295.*

No person operating a bicycle shall carry any package, bundle, or other article which prevents him from keeping at least one hand upon the handlebars.

*40-6-296.*

(a) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with a light on the front which shall emit a white light visible from a distance of 300 feet to the front and with a red reflector on the rear of a type approved by the Department of Public Safety which shall be visible from a distance of 300 feet to the rear when directly in front of lawful upper beams of headlights on a motor vehicle. A light emitting a red light visible from a distance of 300 feet to the rear may be used in addition to the red reflector.

(b) Every bicycle sold or operated shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level pavement.

(c) No bicycle shall be equipped or operated while equipped with a set of handlebars so raised that the operator must elevate his hands above his shoulders in order to grasp the normal steering grip area.

(d) No bicycle shall be equipped, modified, or altered in such a way as to cause the pedal in its lowermost position to be more than 12 inches above the ground, nor shall any bicycle be operated if so equipped.

(e)(1) No person under the age of 16 years shall operate or be a passenger on a bicycle on a highway, bicycle path, or sidewalk under the jurisdiction or control of this state or any local political subdivision thereof without wearing a bicycle helmet. (2) For the purposes of this subsection, the term "bicycle helmet" means a piece of protective headgear which meets or exceeds the impact standards for bicycle helmets set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the Snell Memorial Foundation. (3) For the purposes of this subsection, a person shall be deemed to wear a helmet only if a helmet of good fit is fastened securely upon the head with the straps of the helmet. (4) No bicycle without an accompanying protective bicycle helmet shall be rented or leased to or for the use of any person under the age of 16 years unless that person is in possession of a bicycle helmet at the time of the rental or lease. (5) Violation of any provision of this subsection shall not constitute negligence per se nor contributory negligence per se or be considered evidence of negligence or liability. (6) No person under the age of 16 failing to comply with any provision of this subsection may be fined or imprisoned.

*40-6-297.*

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell a new bicycle or a pedal for use on a bicycle unless the pedals on such bicycle or such pedals are equipped with reflectors of a type approved by the Department of Public Safety. The reflector on each pedal shall be so designed and situated as to be visible from the front and rear of the bicycle during darkness from a distance of 200 feet. The commissioner of public safety is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations and establish standards for such reflectors.

(b) This Code section shall not apply to any bicycle purchased prior to July 1, 1972, by a retailer for the purpose of resale.

*40-6-298.*

(a) It is a misdemeanor for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required in this part.

(b) The parent of any child and the guardian of any ward shall not authorize or knowingly permit such child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this part.

*40-6-299.*

The Board of Public Safety is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to carry this part into effect and is authorized to establish regulations for any additional safety equipment or standards it shall require for bicycles.

*40-6-144*

The driver of a vehicle emerging from an alley, building, private road, or driveway within a business or residential district shall stop such vehicle immediately prior to driving onto a sidewalk or onto the sidewalk area extending across such alley, building entrance, road, or driveway or, in the event there is no sidewalk area, shall stop at the point nearest the street to be entered where the driver has a view of approaching traffic thereon. The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right of way to any pedestrian on a sidewalk. Except as provided by resolution or ordinance of a local government for sidewalks within the jurisdiction of such local government authorizing the operation of bicycles on sidewalks by persons 12 years of age or younger, no person shall drive any vehicle upon a sidewalk or sidewalk area except upon a permanent or duly authorized driveway.

**Federal Legislation**

Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-159)

Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-21)

Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-41)

Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-73)

Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015, Part II (P.L. 114-87)

*Statewide Initiatives*

Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety

Increase trips made by bicycles and on foot

Increase funding for bicycle and pedestrian programs and infrastructure improvements

Improve bicycle and pedestrian data collection

Bicycle and Pedestrian safety and education campaign

- Modeled after GOHS's successful "Click it or Ticket" and "Zero Tolerance" programs.

Messages should be tailored for each target audience (motorists, pedestrians & cyclists). Campaign to include the following:

- Drive-time radio PSAs, including some Spanish language messages
- Messages placed inside transit vehicles, stations and stops, to reach cyclists and pedestrians; and on bus-backs and bus "wraps" to reach motorists.
- Use new communication tools such as Facebook, Podcasts, etc.
- Below are some general concepts for safety messages:
  - o Motorist oriented: Cyclists belong on road, pass with care, look for bike/peds at intersections, peds have right of way in crosswalk, don't speed, etc.
  - o Cyclist oriented: wear helmet, use lights, ride with traffic, make eye contact/watch for cars at intersections, obey traffic rules
  - o Pedestrian: Cross with signal not against it, look for turning cars even when you have the right-of-way, etc.

6. Bike to work day

7. Educate drivers on how to share the road with bikes/peds

- Develop curriculum to be included in driver's education trainings, conduct bus driver's education trainings for transit agencies, and produce materials for schools, transit agencies, and Department of Driver Services.

8. Educate transportation professionals and civil engineering students on bike/pedestrian design and safety throughout the state.

- Partner with professional organizations to develop and host trainings (such as ITE, GPA, ASCE, WTS, MPOs, TMAs, etc). • Educate GDOT staff through GDOT Trainee program, incorporate this into Plan Development Process (possibly part of ADA Compliance Officers duties...). • Incorporate bike/ped design into curricula of State engineering and planning schools (GA Tech, GA Southern, Southern Polytech, Savannah State, etc)

9. Partner with PEDS and Georgia Bikes

## **Federal Planning Requirements**

Planning Requirements The State and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning regulations describe how walking and bicycling are to be accommodated throughout the planning process (e.g., see 23 CFR 450.200, 23 CFR 450.300, 23 U.S.C. 134(h), and 135(d)). Non-motorists must be allowed to participate in the planning process and transportation agencies are required to integrate walking and bicycling facilities and programs in their transportation plans to ensure the operability of an intermodal transportation system: • The scope of the metropolitan planning process "will address the following factors... (2) Increase the safety for motorized and non-motorized users; (3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; (4) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life..." 23 CFR 450.306(a). See 23 CFR 450.206 for similar State requirements. • Metropolitan transportation plans "...shall, at a minimum, include...existing and proposed transportation facilities (including major roadways, transit, multimodal and intermodal facilities, pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and intermodal connectors that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system..." 23 CFR 450.322(f). See 23 CFR 450.216(g) for similar State requirements. • The plans and transportation improvement programs (TIPs) of all metropolitan areas "shall provide for the development and integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities)." 23 U.S.C. 134(c)(2) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(c)(2). 23 CFR 450.324(c) states that the TIP "shall include ...trails projects, pedestrian walkways; and bicycle facilities..." • 23 CFR 450.316(a) states that "The MPOs shall develop and use a documented participation plan

that defines a process for providing...representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, and representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process." 23 CFR 450.210(a) contains similar language for States. See also 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5), 135(f)(3), 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)(5), and 5304(f)(3) for additional information about participation by interested parties. The Secretary has the authority to withhold approval for projects that would negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists under certain circumstances:

- "The Secretary shall not approve any project or take any regulatory action under this title that will result in the severance of an existing major route or have significant adverse impact on the safety for nonmotorized transportation traffic and light motorcycles, unless such project or regulatory action provides for a reasonable alternate route or such a route exists." 23 U.S.C. 109(m).
- "In any case where a highway bridge deck being replaced or rehabilitated with Federal financial participation is located on a highway on which bicycles are permitted to operate at each end of such bridge, and the Secretary determines that the safe accommodation of bicycles can be provided at reasonable cost as part of such replacement or rehabilitation, then such bridge shall be so replaced or rehabilitated as to provide such safe accommodations." 23 U.S.C. 217(e).

Although this statutory requirement only mentions bicycles, DOT encourages States and local governments to apply this same policy to pedestrian facilities as well.

- 23 CFR 652 provides "procedures relating to the provision of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on Federal-aid projects, and Federal participation in the cost of these accommodations and projects." Project Documentation
- "In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year." 23 CFR 332(a).

**Accessibility for All Pedestrians**

- Public rights-of-way and facilities are required to be accessible to persons with disabilities through the following statutes: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) (29 U.S.C. §794) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12164).
- The DOT Section 504 regulation requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to monitor the compliance of the self-evaluation and transition plans of Federal-aid recipients (49 CFR §27.11). The FHWA Division offices review pedestrian access compliance with the ADA and Section 504 as part of their routine oversight activities as defined in their stewardship plans.
- FHWA posted its Clarification of FHWA's Oversight Role in Accessibility to explain how to accommodate accessibility in policy, planning, and projects. The USDOT summarized laws relating to federal funding allowed for bicycle and pedestrian transportation and related activities in table format: FHWA and FTA Funds that may be used for Bicycle and Pedestrian Activities. Many funding programs allow funding for bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

# Appendices

## Appendix I -

### Local Events Promoting Bicycle Tourism Utilizing



Sumter Cycling, River Valley Regional Commission, Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, and Andersonville National Historic Site have partnered since 2012 to plan, develop and execute the Prison to Peanuts Bicycle Adventure.

We encourage riders of all levels and skills to join us on this amazing opportunity to visit beautiful sites in Sumter County, Georgia, and visit Americus, Andersonville and Plains by bicycle

The ride begins at Rees Park (409 Elm Avenue) in Americus. The ride is coordinated around the annual Arts in the Park event allowing participants the opportunity to see local artists at work and enjoy live entertainment. Food is available at the event and participants receive a meal voucher as part of their bicycle ride registration along with an event t-shirt, Bicycle Pocket Guide and a helmet fitting guidebook.

#### **Route Information**

Four route options are available: 12, 34, 65 and 105 miles. Jimmy Carter National Historic Site will be a rest stop on all the routes except the 12-mile Americus loop. Andersonville National Historic Site will be on the 65- and 105-mile routes.

#### **Ride and Community Information**

Participants are asked to sign an event waiver on the morning of the ride. There are SAG stops (Support and Gear) with water, fruit, and snacks. There is also a support vehicle with a limited supply of water and snacks for emergencies and gear for basic mechanical issues and first aid needs.

This is a family-friendly event. Whether fast or slow, everyone is welcome to ride at their own pace. All participants are required to wear a helmet.

## Prison to Peanuts | Event Photos



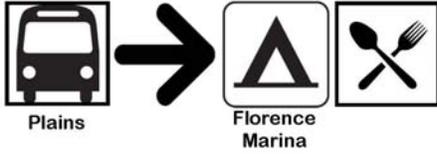
September 23-25 | 2016

# FIND YOUR PARK

Centennial Bicycle Ride

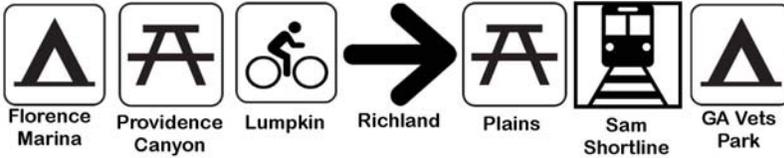
Register online at  
[www.findyourparkride.org](http://www.findyourparkride.org)

DAY 1



DAY 2

51 miles



DAY 3

54 miles



## Ride Options:

### Cyclists

\$75 - Camping, meals, train ticket, T-shirt

\$60 - Meals, train ticket, T-shirt  
 (lodging on your own)

### Friend of Cyclists (not cycling)

\$50 - Camping, meals, train ticket, T-shirt

\$30 - Meals, train ticket (lodging on your own)

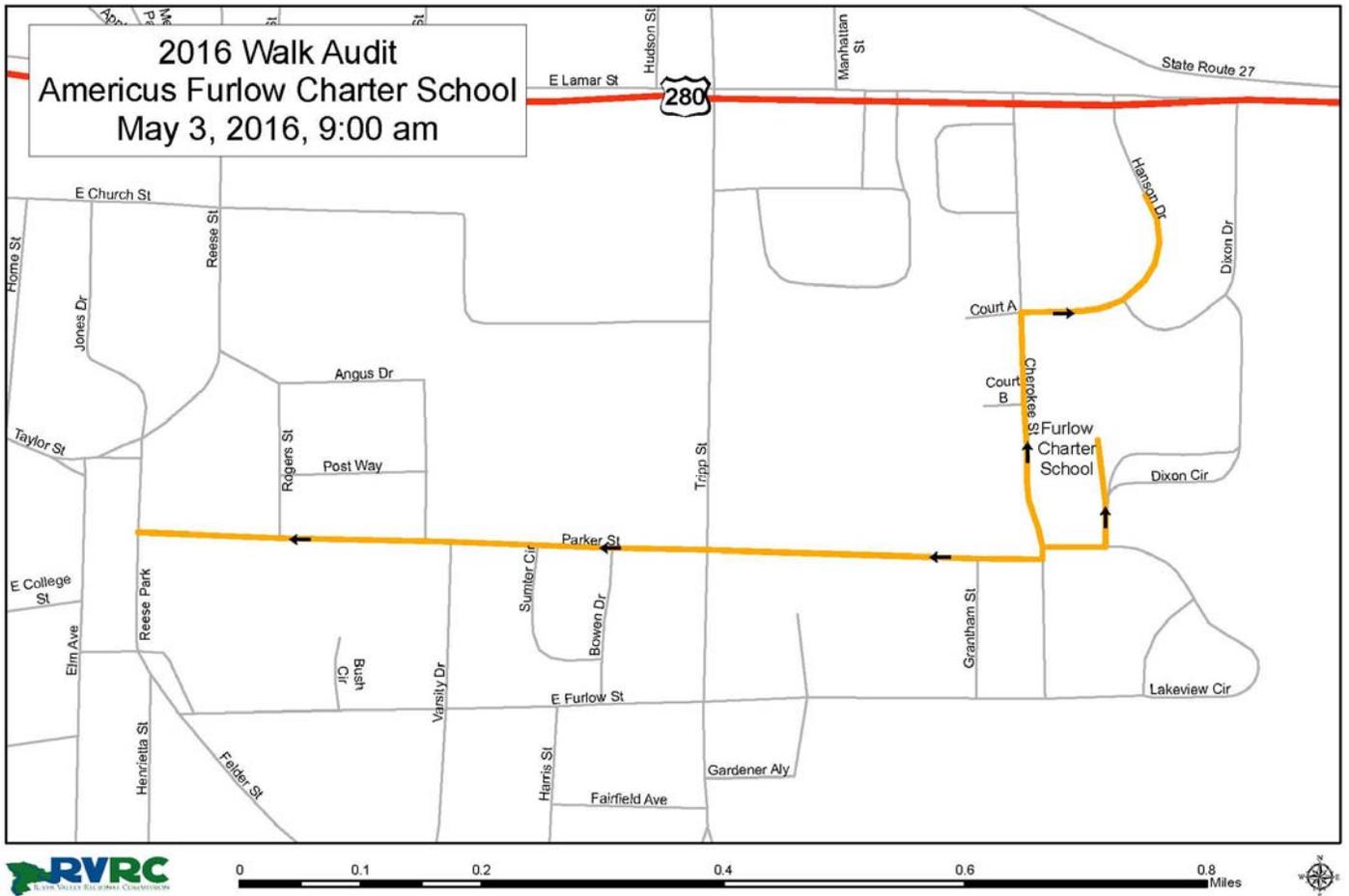
Support and Gear Vehicle  
 Rest Stops with Drinks and Snacks  
 Access to National and State Parks



Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service, this two-day ride will take you to Jimmy Carter National Historic Site, Andersonville National Historic Site, Florence Marina State Park, Providence Canyon State Park, Georgia Veterans State Park, and includes a ride on the SAM Shortline Excursion Train.



# Appendix II - Safe Routes to School Program Furlow Charter School International Walk to School Day | Bicycle Rodeo | Walk Audit



## Appendix III - National Bicycle Week Participation Bike to Work Day and Ride with the Mayor Events



Bicycle Week in Americus has been celebrated for 7 consecutive years. During this week, the River Valley Regional Commission, Sumter Cycling and the City of Americus host the Annual Ride to Lunch with the Mayor event as well as Bike to Work Day.

## Appendix IV - Local Bicycle Advocacy Sumter Cycling

Sumter Cycling's mission is to promote cycling for enjoyment, transportation, fitness, and the environment. They accomplish this through:

1. Advocating
2. Planning Events
3. Promoting bicycle tourism
4. Leading group rides
5. Educating

Advocacy Efforts:

**Bike Safety Month:** Ride to Work Day and campaigns to increase public awareness of cycling in our community.

**Three Foot Rule:** currently working to get the word out about Georgia's three foot rule. Check out our newest t-shirts with the featured graphic.

**Complete Streets Efforts:** They envision a Sumter County that is safe and encouraging of transportation alternatives. We are working with local government to address our interests for infrastructure improvements.

**Downtown Bike Racks:** The Americus Downtown is a beautiful place to experience the culture of the town. In order to make it more bike friendly, we are working to purchase and install bike racks throughout the area.



Sumter Cycling Board Members alongside Americus Mayor-Barry Blount, RVRC Bicycle-Pedestrian Staff-Julio Portillo, RVRC Executive Director-Patti Cullen, Americus Downtown and Main Street Program Director-Patrick Kay and Americus City Manager-Steve Kennedy during Bike to Work Day and Ride with the Mayor event.

## **Appendix V - Visual Survey Bicyclist and Pedestrian Behavior at Specific Intersections in Americus**

### **Survey Summary**

According to the survey, a majority of pedestrians used the intersection to cross the street. The survey also indicates that a majority of people used the sidewalk or a marked crosswalk, when they are available. The survey also looked at bicycles and how they interacted with the intersections and results varied. Some bicyclist behaved like pedestrians waiting for the crosswalk indicator to change, while some acted like vehicles and road with the flow of traffic. On the same note, most vehicles treated bicyclist with caution and drove around them.

The survey also shows that many pedestrians and bicyclist do not use the crosswalk activators, they just walk across the intersection when they think they can make it, rather than waiting. Many also jaywalk, or walk across the street with no crosswalk. Many bicyclists do not follow normal traffic laws and run red lights and stop signs.

**Survey results below:**

**City of Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan FY2017  
Bicyclists, Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior Survey**

**Please circle your location:**

Jackson and Lamar Street | Jackson and Forsyth | Wheatly and Glessner |  
Church and Lee Street | Felder and GSW Drive

Date and Time: 22FEB2017 – 25FEB2017 | 7:40 AM – 6 PM

Visual Counts:

Pedestrians: \_\_\_120\_\_\_ Bicyclists: \_\_\_3\_\_\_

1. Is there an electronic crossing signal at this intersection? YES  NO \_\_\_  
If YES:  
Did pedestrians use the traffic signal to cross: YES  NO   
Were vehicles respectful of pedestrians and the traffic signal: YES  NO
2. Did pedestrian use the following:  
A) Sidewalk: YES  NO   
B) Marked Crosswalk: YES  NO
3. How did bicyclists cross the intersection: NA  
A) Using the pedestrian traffic signal (if signal was available): YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
B) With the flow of traffic using a traffic lane: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
4. How did vehicles interact with bicyclists on the road at this intersection: NA  
A) vehicles treated bicyclists like vehicles but with caution  
B) vehicles were hostile towards bicyclists  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How did bicyclists interact with vehicles at this intersection: NA  
A) bicyclists used travel lane in a safe manner with traffic  
B) bicyclists used sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities to travel  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Was there a transit stop at this intersection? YES \_\_\_ NO
7. Please note any other behavior you may have witnessed at the time of this survey:
  1. sidewalks on all four sides of the intersection
  2. marked pedestrian crossing on all four sides
  3. discontinue use of crosswalks when heading to a destination.
  4. did not use crosswalk
  5. several cars cut through parking lot to avoid light
  6. one turned against light and almost hit pedestrian in crosswalk
  7. cars were as respectful as could be with congested traffic

**City of Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan FY2017  
Bicyclists, Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior Survey**

**Please circle your location:**

Jackson and Lamar Street | Jackson and Forsyth | **Wheatly and Glessner** |  
Church and Lee Street | Felder and GSW Drive

Date and Time: 22FEB2017 – 25FEB2017 | 7:45 AM – 9 AM

Visual Counts:

Pedestrians:     41     Bicyclists:     1    

8. Is there an electronic crossing signal at this intersection? YES      NO   x  

If YES:

Did pedestrians use the traffic signal to cross: N/A

Were vehicles respectful of pedestrians and the traffic signal: YES   x   NO     

9. Did pedestrian use the following:

A) Sidewalk: YES   3   NO   2  

B) Marked Crosswalk: YES   2   NO   2  

10. How did bicyclists cross the intersection:

A) Using the pedestrian traffic signal (if signal was available): YES      NO     

**B)** With the flow of traffic using a traffic lane: YES      NO     

11. How did vehicles interact with bicyclists on the road at this intersection:

**A)** vehicles treated bicyclists like vehicles but with caution

B) vehicles were hostile towards bicyclists

**C)** Other:   some drove around cyclist  

12. How did bicyclists interact with vehicles at this intersection:

**A)** bicyclists used travel lane in a safe manner with traffic

B) bicyclists used sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities to travel

C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Was there a transit stop at this intersection? YES      NO   x  

14. Please note any other behavior you may have witnessed at the time of this survey:

1. many vehicles did not slow down or stop at stopsign

2. very sunny out

**City of Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan FY2017  
Bicyclists, Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior Survey**

**Please circle your location:**

Jackson and Lamar Street | Jackson and Forsyth | Wheatly and Glessner |  
Church and Lee Street | **Felder and GSW Drive**

Date and Time: 22feb2017 – 24feb2017 | 7:45 AM – 6 PM

Visual Counts:

Pedestrians: \_\_\_\_11\_\_\_\_ Bicyclists: \_\_2\_\_\_\_

15. Is there an electronic crossing signal at this intersection? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_x\_  
If YES:  
Did pedestrians use the traffic signal to cross: YES \_2\_ NO \_x\_  
Were vehicles respectful of pedestrians and the traffic signal: YES\_x\_ NO\_\_\_
16. Did pedestrian use the following:  
A) Sidewalk: YES \_13\_ NO \_1\_  
B) Marked Crosswalk: N/A
17. How did bicyclists cross the intersection: N  
A) Using the pedestrian traffic signal (if signal was available): YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_x\_  
B) With the flow of traffic using a traffic lane: YES\_\_\_ NO\_x\_\_
18. How did vehicles interact with bicyclists on the road at this intersection:  
**A)** vehicles treated bicyclists like vehicles but with caution  
B) vehicles were hostile towards bicyclists  
C) Other: \_ \_\_\_\_\_
19. How did bicyclists interact with vehicles at this intersection:  
A) bicyclists used travel lane in a safe manner with traffic  
B) bicyclists used sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities to travel  
C) Other: \_\_\_ bikes went against traffic \_\_\_
20. Was there a transit stop at this intersection? YES \_\_\_ NO\_x\_\_
21. Please note any other behavior you may have witnessed at the time of this survey:  
1. bikes did not stop at redlights  
2. very light traffic due to rain  
3. no marked crosswalks – only one sidewalk on GSW side

**City of Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan FY2017  
Bicyclists, Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior Survey**

**Please circle your location:**

Jackson and Lamar Street | **Jackson and Forsyth** | Wheatly and Glessner |  
Church and Lee Street | Felder and GSW Drive

Date and Time: 22FEB2017 – 25FEB2017 | 7 AM – 12:38 PM

Visual Counts:

Pedestrians: 329 Bicyclists: 1

22. Is there an electronic crossing signal at this intersection? YES x NO \_\_\_  
If YES:  
Did pedestrians use the traffic signal to cross: YES 48 NO 11  
Were vehicles respectful of pedestrians and the traffic signal: YES 21 NO 3
23. Did pedestrian use the following:  
A) Sidewalk: YES 21 NO 3  
B) Marked Crosswalk: YES 21 NO 8
24. How did bicyclists cross the intersection:  
**A)** Using the pedestrian traffic signal (if signal was available): YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
B) With the flow of traffic using a traffic lane: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
25. How did vehicles interact with bicyclists on the road at this intersection:  
**A)** vehicles treated bicyclists like vehicles but with caution  
B) vehicles were hostile towards bicyclists  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
26. How did bicyclists interact with vehicles at this intersection:  
A) bicyclists used travel lane in a safe manner with traffic  
**B)** bicyclists used sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities to travel  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
27. Was there a transit stop at this intersection? YES \_\_\_ NO x
28. Please note any other behavior you may have witnessed at the time of this survey:  
1. most traffic due to lunch hour  
2. heavy semi-truck traffic  
3. not many crossed street  
4. nice weather

**City of Americus Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan FY2017  
Bicyclists, Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior Survey**

**Please circle your location:**

Jackson and Lamar Street | Jackson and Forsyth | Wheatly and Glessner |  
Church and Lee Street | Felder and GSW Drive

Date and Time: 22FEB2017 – 25FEB2017 | 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Visual Counts:

Pedestrians: \_\_299\_\_ Bicyclists: \_\_9\_\_

29. Is there an electronic crossing signal at this intersection? YES x NO \_\_\_  
If YES:  
Did pedestrians use the traffic signal to cross: YES 67 NO 59  
Were vehicles respectful of pedestrians and the traffic signal: YES x NO \_\_\_
30. Did pedestrian use the following:  
A) Sidewalk: YES 28 NO 2  
B) Marked Crosswalk: YES 81 NO 17
31. How did bicyclists cross the intersection:  
A) Using the pedestrian traffic signal (if signal was available): YES 2 NO \_\_\_  
B) With the flow of traffic using a traffic lane: YES 4 NO \_\_\_
32. How did vehicles interact with bicyclists on the road at this intersection:  
A) vehicles treated bicyclists like vehicles but with caution  
B) vehicles were hostile towards bicyclists  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
33. How did bicyclists interact with vehicles at this intersection:  
A) bicyclists used travel lane in a safe manner with traffic  
B) bicyclists used sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities to travel  
C) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_
34. Was there a transit stop at this intersection? YES \_\_\_ NO x
35. Please note any other behavior you may have witnessed at the time of this survey:  
1. a lot of traffic due to lunch hour  
2. many jaywalked  
3. only 2 used crosswalk activator