

PART 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

WALK. BIKE. THRIVE!

A regional vision for a more walkable, bikeable,
and livable metropolitan Atlanta



ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Atlanta Regional Commission and project staff would like to thank the elected officials, professional staffs, and citizens of the region who supported this effort. In particular we are indebted to the Walk. Bike. Thrive! Equity Advisory Committee and ARC's Bicycle & Pedestrian Taskforce for lending their time and expertise, as well as the attendees of our public forums for sharing their visions of the region.

PREPARED BY:



WITH SUPPORT FROM:



This document is written to support and should be considered part of the Atlanta Regional Commission's The Atlanta Region's Plan. Walk. Bike. Thrive! has been adopted by the Atlanta Regional Commission's board and represents official policy for that agency. This document does not constitute a standard specification or regulation.



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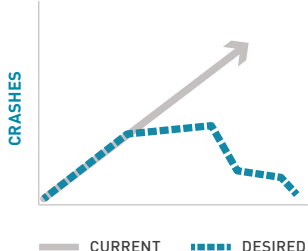
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THE NEED

Walking and bicycling are critical pieces of the region’s transportation system. Though overall numbers are low regionally - 5% of residents currently walk, bike, or ride transit for daily trips - communities and residents benefit from

increased choice, especially for modes that improve health and save money while reducing congestion. The region as a whole benefits from improved quality of life, attraction of businesses and employees, and equitable opportunities

provided by each walking- and bicycling-friendly community. This plan seeks to increase active transportation within the Atlanta region and reduce the risks and barriers that currently inhibit walking and bicycling.

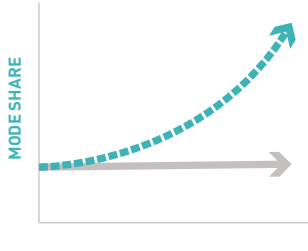


— CURRENT - - - - DESIRED

Safety

Walking and biking should be safe and enjoyable activities everywhere in the Atlanta region. Currently they are often dangerous, particularly in certain areas.

By implementing this plan, the region will be safer to walk and bike by creating a trend towards zero for the number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes and fatalities.



— CURRENT - - - - DESIRED

Mobility

People in the region should be able to walk and bike throughout the day, week, and year as part of daily life. Currently this is an option for some but not all.

By implementing this plan, the opportunity to walk and bike for daily activities will be more frequent, convenient, and normal.



JOBS HEALTH
EQUITY QUALITY OF LIFE

Economic Competitiveness

The economic success of the region is tied to its ability to improve job opportunities, support healthy lifestyles and social mobility, and create thriving communities. Creating great places, with safe opportunities to walk and bike, is key to winning the quality of life competition. Currently the areas that are most walkable and bikeable in the region are also the drivers of the regional economy.

By implementing this plan, places where people want to invest their time and money to walk and bike will be created and expanded.

ACTION





REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR WALKING AND BIKING

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency composed of local governments in the Atlanta region by legislation passed by the Georgia General Assembly.

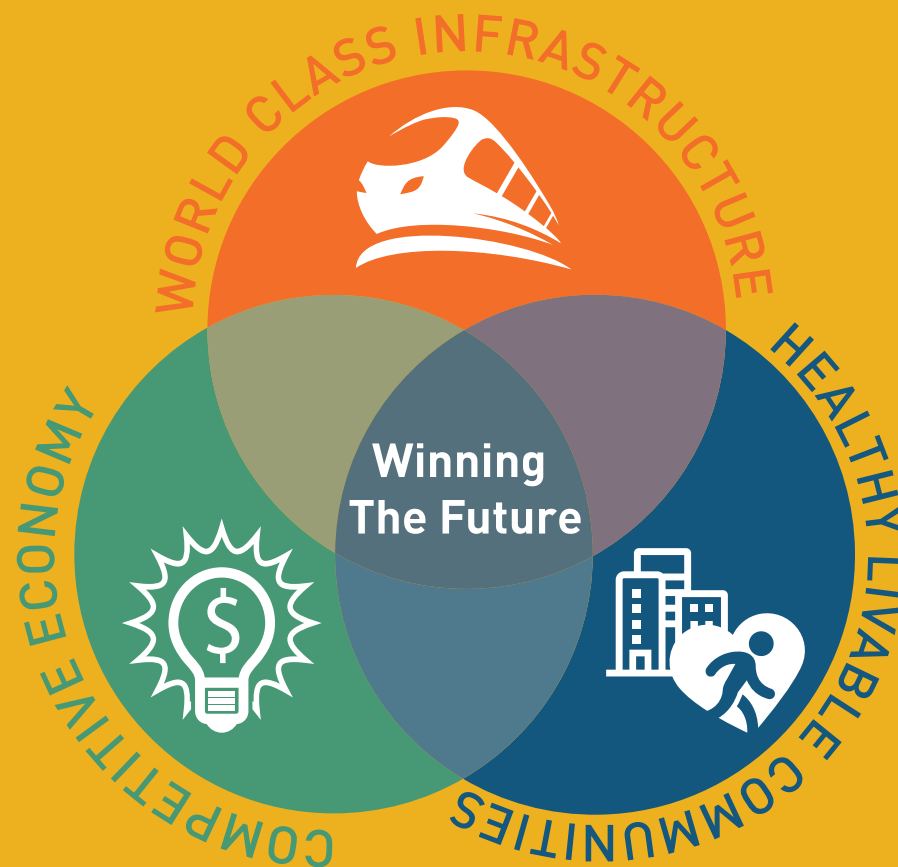
Additionally, ARC is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the 20-county Atlanta region. ARC as an organization is governed by a board of directors, made up of elected officials from member jurisdictions and regional and state agency leadership. As an organization, ARC sets policy to allocate federal transportation dollars for the region and provides technical assistance to local governments, among other state and federally required responsibilities.

The Atlanta Region's Plan is the official plan for the MPO that will guide policy and decision-making for the Atlanta Regional Commission. By reference and adoption, Walk. Bike. Thrive! is the active transportation component of the Atlanta Region's Plan transportation element and can and will be used to develop regional policy and technical assistance for local governments in the areas of active and sustainable transportation options.

The Atlanta Region's Plan establishes a policy framework focused on three topics:

- World Class Infrastructure
- Healthy Livable Communities
- Competitive Economy

THE ATLANTA REGION'S PLAN VISION



Atlanta is one of the world's most dynamic metropolitan areas, competing globally on the strength of our diverse population, robust economy, myriad cultural assets and attractive lifestyles. We will 'win the future' through intensive collaboration that honors and leverages the uniqueness of our communities.

WALK. BIKE. THRIVE! SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THE ATLANTA REGION'S PLAN:



1 Ensure a comprehensive transportation network, incorporating regional transit and 21st century technology

- Improve transit and non-single occupant vehicle options
- Promote an accessible and equitable transportation system
- Expand the transportation system while supporting local land use plans
- Provide for a safe transportation network
- Foster the application of advanced technologies to the transportation system



2 Develop additional walkable, vibrant centers that support people of all ages and abilities:

- Improve quality of life at the neighborhood, city, county and regional levels
- In partnership with local communities, focus resources in areas of need
- Promote sustainable land use development

3 Promote health, art, and other aspects of a high quality of life:

- Improve public health through the built environment
- Integrate sound environmental management principles
- Promote creative placemaking to build and maintain community character



4 Build the region as a globally recognized hub of innovation and prosperity

- Ensure that our existing and emerging employment centers support innovation and balance job growth and economic development in the region
- Maintain the region's current successes in existing and emerging employment sectors

5 Develop a highly educated and skilled workforce, able to meet the needs of 21st century employers

- Work with local communities to implement a regional approach to workforce development

WALK, BIKE, THRIVE!

PLAN VISION

The Atlanta Region will be one of the most connected and safest regions in the United States for walking and bicycling and use active transportation to improve the mobility, safety, and economic competitiveness for residents and communities.

WALK, BIKE, THRIVE!

PLAN GOALS

In addition to The Atlanta Region's Plan goals and objectives, this plan looks to further the following goals related to walking and biking in the region:

Create walking and bicycling options for everyone in every community

Ensure safer and more accessible bicycling and walking in the region

Tie walking and biking improvements to quality of life, economic competitiveness, and health

Establish a vision for a Regional Trail Network

Build a strategy based on compounding growth and relentless incrementalism—*i.e. where do we start and what do we do next?*

Use the region's pivoting growth and fresh momentum so that in 5 years Atlanta can market itself as one of the most walk-friendly and bike-friendly regions in the nation

WALK, BIKE, THRIVE!
POLICY FOCUS



Plan Objectives and Organization

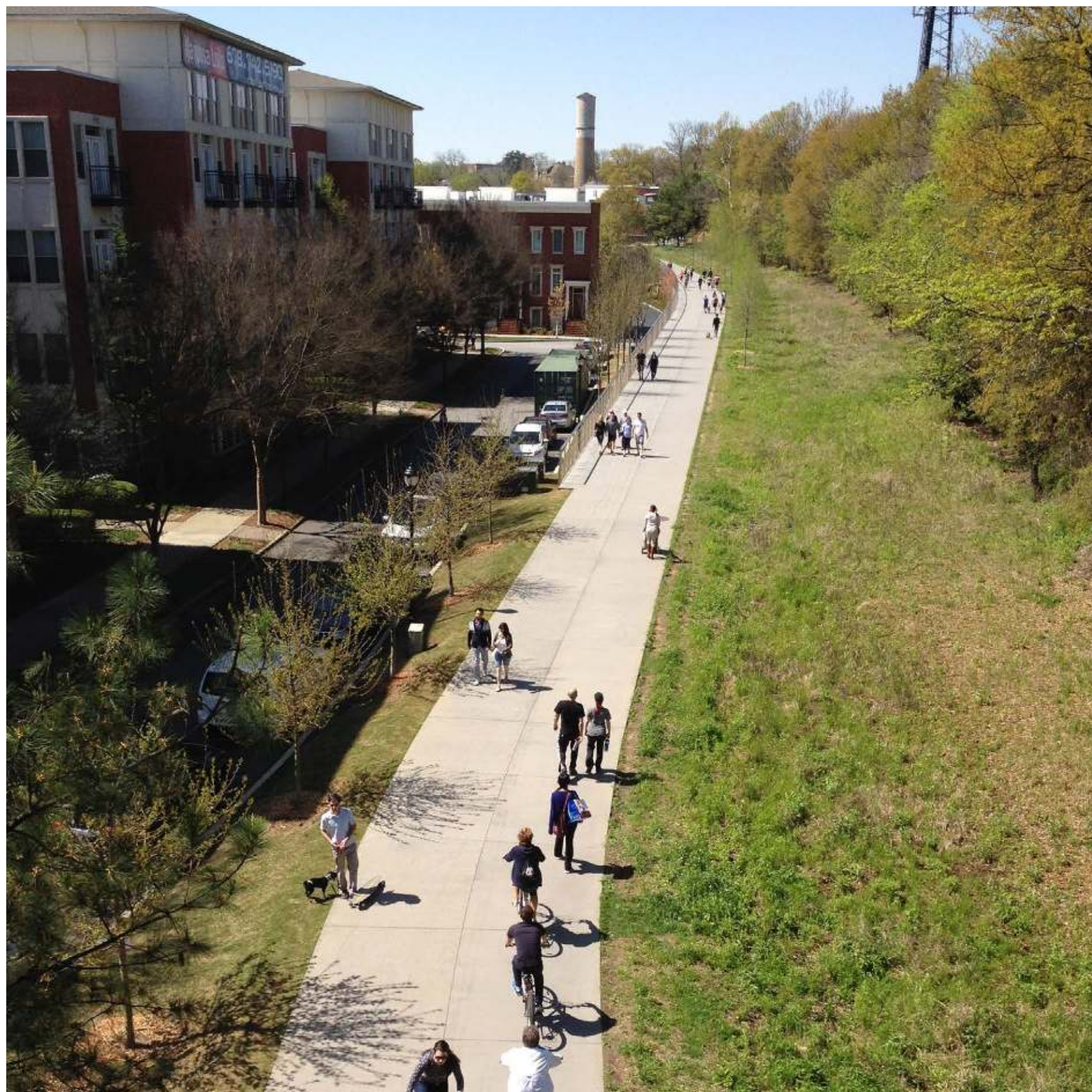
The purpose of this plan is to meet two primary objectives:

- Describe a **regional framework for walking and biking** to guide the Atlanta Regional Commission's decision making
- Describe **how local jurisdictions and regional partners** can build high-quality, low-stress walking and biking networks and supporting policies and programs

As the region grows, the role of the MPO and the Atlanta Regional Commission has increasingly shifted to prioritizing federal transportation dollars, providing technical assistance for regional partners, and convening regional leaders around regionally significant policy issues. With this shift, much of the policymaking, identification, and implementation, of projects and programs impacting walking and biking is done at the local level.

The recommendations for this plan are organized to fit with the varied roles and responsibilities of ARC and local governments.

- **Regional Framework** – Establish regional priorities and policy related to walking and biking to guide funding and technical assistance investments.
- **Local Framework**– Focus on how local partners can enhance and expand policy, programs, and infrastructure that support walking and biking



Regional Framework:

ACTIVE TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE ARC

This section outlines a set of key policy recommendations and action steps for the Atlanta Regional Commission.

While the responsibility for developing and implementing detailed plans, policies, and programs lies largely with local governments, the recommendations in this section establish clear roles for ARC to play as a coordinating agency, provider of technical assistance, distributor of federal transportation funds, and convener around regionally-significant issues.

ARC can develop a focused approach to investments in active transportation, partner with state and regional government agencies to improve regional access to high quality walking and biking facilities, establish high-priority focus areas to prioritize federal investments in walking and biking, lead the development of a regional trail system, support local communities' efforts to increase walkability and bikeability, and work to ensure that everyone in the region has an equal opportunity to walk, bike, and thrive.

Regional Organizing Principle #1:

A focus on short trips will allow the region to maximize the benefits associated with more walking and biking

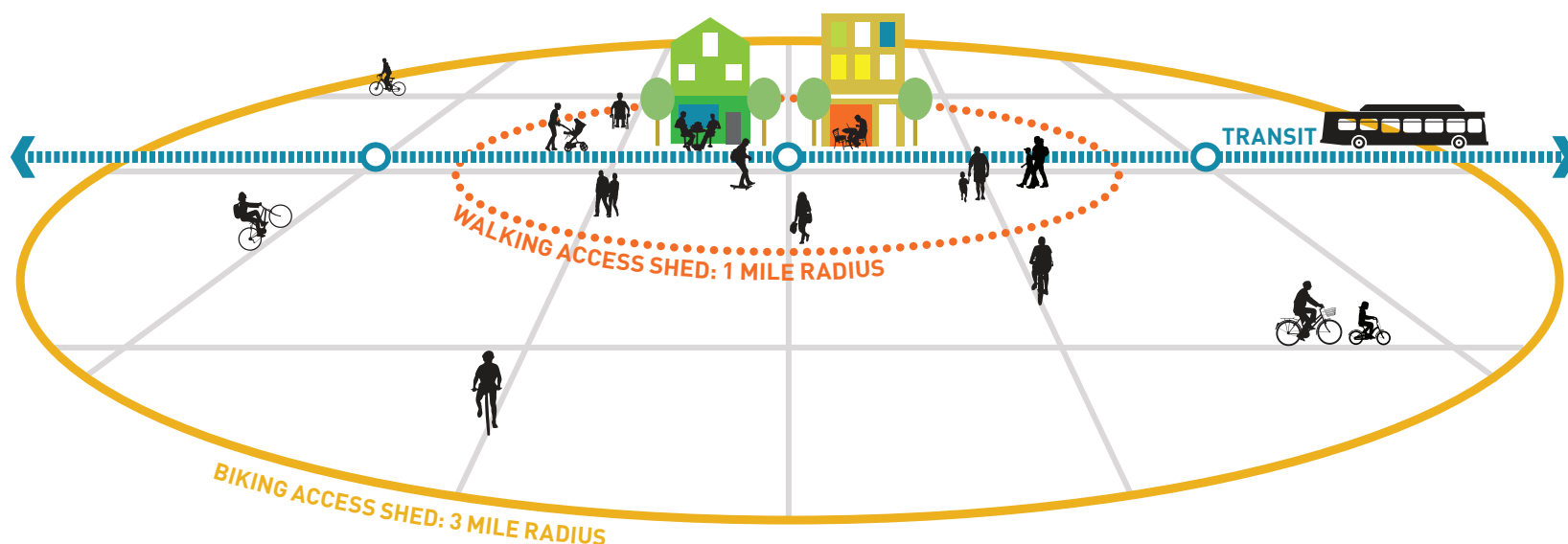
Walking and biking are fun, healthy, convenient forms of transportation that are ideally suited to making short trips. Trip distance is such an important factor in predicting the choice to walk or bike for utilitarian trips that ARC uses “access sheds” as an organizing principal for the recommendations contained in this plan.

The strategic approach of Walk Bike Thrive is to focus investments in areas that enable short trips for walking or bicycling to work, transit, or daily needs.

According to ARC’s PLAN 2040 travel demand model, 50% of all waking trips in the region are less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, and 75% of walking trips are less than 1.2 miles. Bike trips tend to be slightly longer on average, although 50% of bike trips in the region are less than 2.4 miles, and more than 75% of bike trips are less than 4 miles. Considering these travel patterns, the largest opportunity to increase rates of active transportation in the region lies in making walking and bicycling attractive alternatives to driving for trips of 3 miles or less.

At the regional scale, leveraging the benefits associated with higher walking and bicycling mode share means 1) prioritizing active transportation investments in parts of the region where land use and transportation networks naturally support options for short trips; and 2) ensuring that the regional system facilitates seamless transitions between active transportation and other modes, such as transit and driving, which are better suited to longer trips.

TRAVEL SHEDS: AN ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE



Regional Organizing Principle #2:

An opportunistic approach to Complete Streets improvements on major streets will enable the region to make the most of limited resources

Complete Streets are roadways designed and operated to enable safe access for all users – including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders – and all ages and abilities.

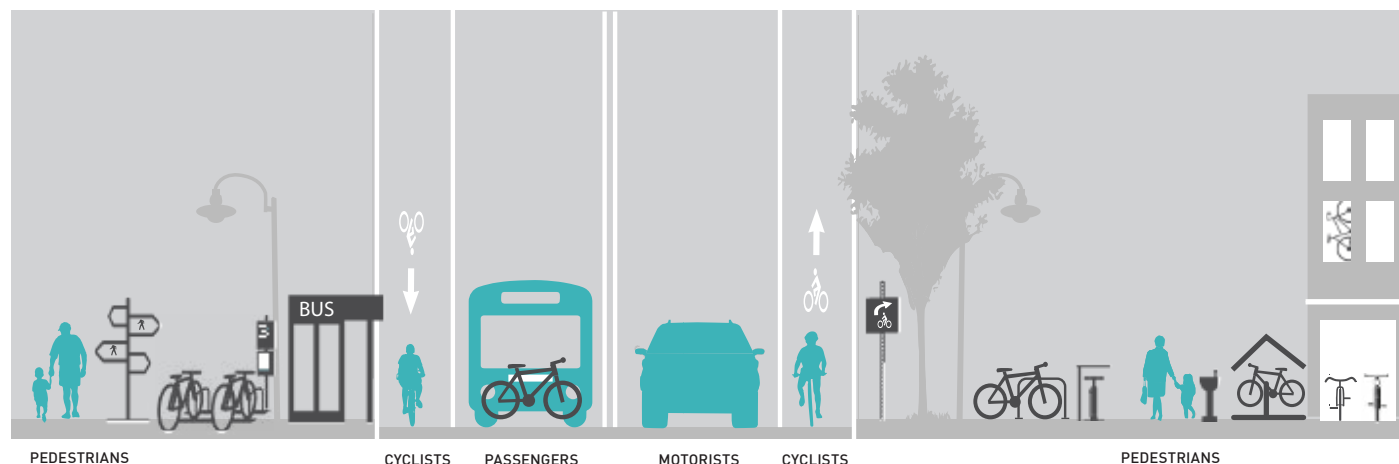
Major streets – roadways with high car speeds and volumes, multiple lanes, and infrequent crossings – comprise a large number of road miles in the region and pose significant barriers for walking, bicycling, and connecting to and from transit. These arterials are consistently the most dangerous for walking and

bicycling even as they provide the only access to a large portion of the region's retail, commercial, and residential areas as well as most regional transit routes.

It is important to accommodate walking and bicycling trips along every road in the region. People often rely on arterials for longer trips between centers or may live or work a short walk from regional transit stops. As the region continues to grow, every roadway or routine maintenance project offers an opportunity to provide safe walkways,

bikeways, and street crossings. **ARC supports the implementation of Complete Street principles on every roadway and with any project receiving federal funds.**

Many major streets in the region are managed by GDOT. Regional Partners, including ARC and local jurisdictions, should actively work with GDOT to identify opportunities to make state-owned roadways within ARC's boundaries Complete Streets.



Develop a Focused Approach to Regional Investments in Walking and Biking

Demand for walking and biking is growing and regional travel options are increasingly multi-modal. For example, many people who work in Downtown Atlanta have the option to drive to a park-and-ride lot or transit station, travel to Downtown Atlanta on a bus or a train, and walk from the transit stop to their workplace. On a day off, many people choose to go for a bike ride or stroll with their family to a nearby park or one of several regional trails that span multiple cities, counties and natural areas.

The graphic on the following page illustrates the important role that walking and biking play in a regional travel patterns.

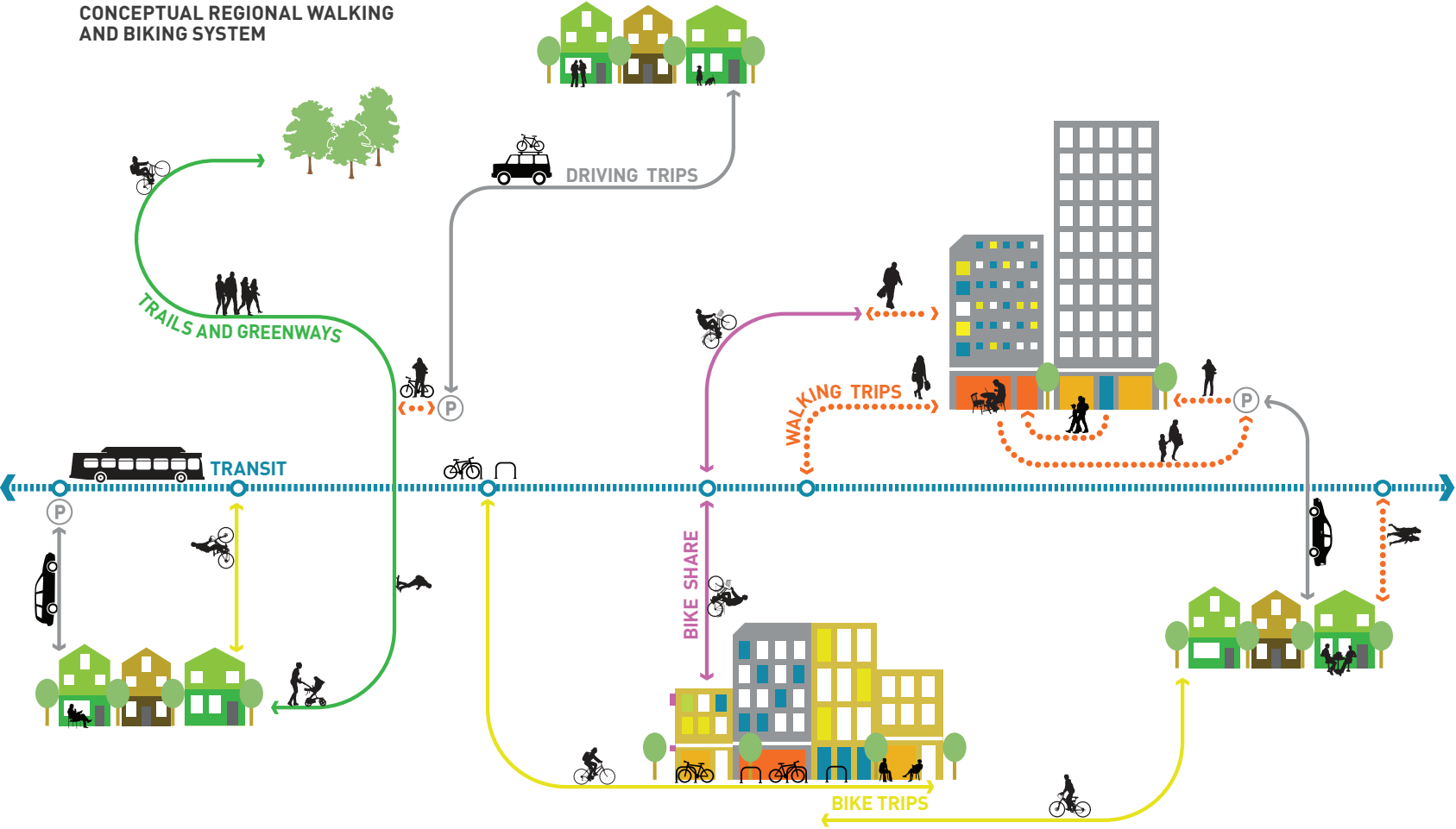
While demand for walking and biking is increasing, active modes currently make up a relatively small share of all trips in the region – just 5% of all trips. Part of the reason for this is that 50% of all trips by any mode in the Atlanta region are longer than 4.5 miles, and 95% of trips 4.5 miles or longer are made by car. While there is increasing demand for more and better active transportation facilities throughout the region, the fact is that many rural and suburban areas are unlikely to support high levels of walking and biking activity in their current form due to the distances between destinations.

Considering these travel patterns, making walking and biking attractive and convenient for more people in the region will require a focused approach.

ARC WILL EMPLOY FIVE KEY STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE SHARE OF TRIPS MADE ON FOOT OR BY BIKE:

- 1 Focus investments in “mode shift opportunity zones”** where the built environment already supports walking and biking for short trips. These are generally places with a variety of destinations such as parks, schools, and commercial areas; a connected street grid; transit service; and a mix of housing types. These areas include the region’s existing and emerging WalkUPs, LCIs, CIDs, and activity centers.
- 2 Address safety and equity issues** Importantly, some parts of the region that are not particularly conducive to walking or biking also have urgent safety and equity needs that ARC can help address immediately. These improvements should focus on decreasing pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries as well as providing sidewalks and bikeways for populations that rely on walking and biking out of necessity rather than choice.
- 3 Work closely with transit providers to a) improve access to transit stops and b) improve the quality and quantity of transit service** between mode shift opportunity zones so that walking and bicycling can be easily combined with transit for longer regional trips.
- 4 Pursue a strategy of relentless incrementalism** to increase the walkability and bikeability of the region’s lower-density residential neighborhoods and auto-oriented corridors. This means identifying barriers to walking and biking one at a time and working to address them as opportunities arise.
- 5 Lead the development of the regional trail system** in partnership with state and local government agencies and non-profit organizations focused on trails such as PATH Foundation.

CONCEPTUAL REGIONAL WALKING
AND BIKING SYSTEM



Establish Regional Focus Areas for Active Transportation Investment

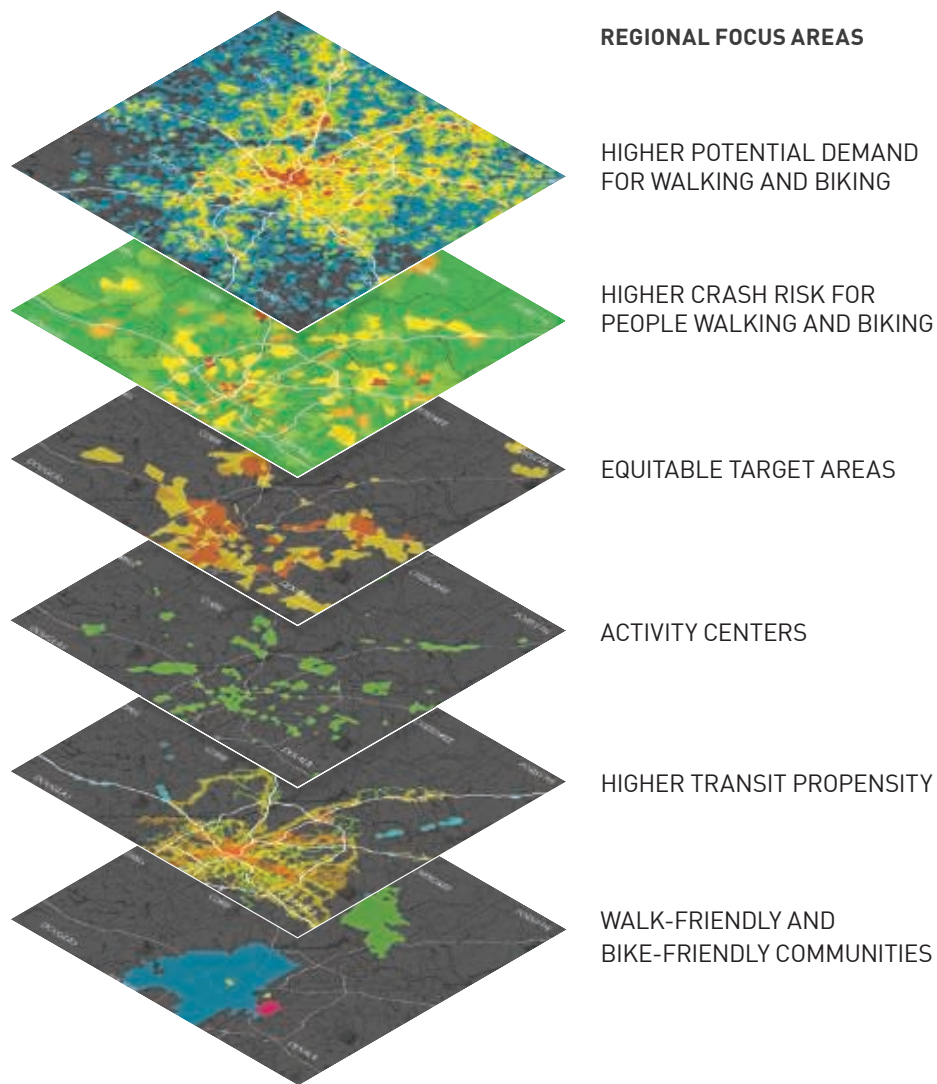
Making the most of limited transportation funds requires balancing needs and opportunities in a way that reflects ARC's established policy goals. Historically, ARC has not used clear metrics used to evaluate and award federal funding to potential active transportation projects proposed by local jurisdictions. A data-driven "Regional Focus Area" framework tied to desired safety, mobility, economic development, and equity outcomes is a tool that ARC could and should employ to help align investments with stated policy goals.

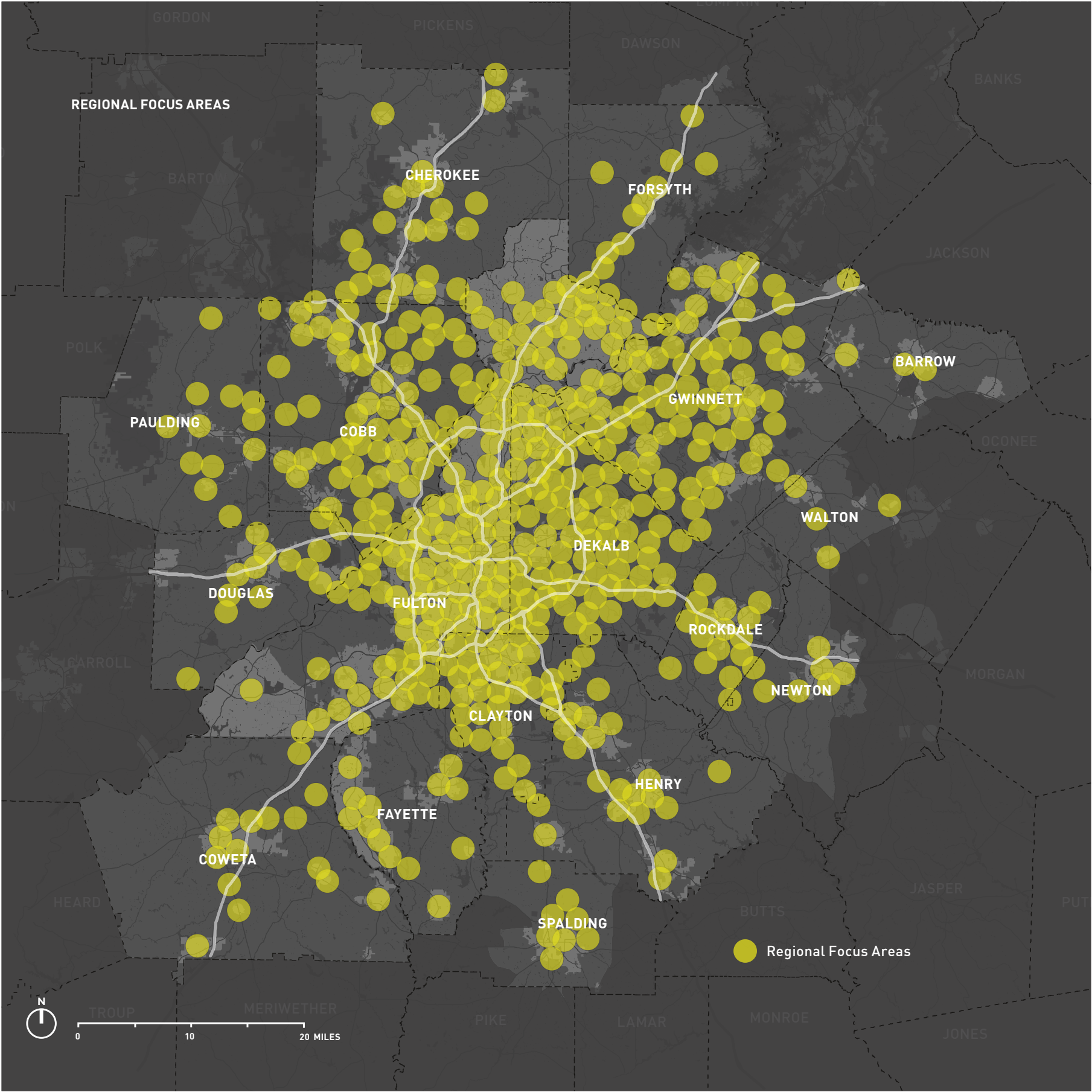
ARC will **develop a location-based project scoring card** for submitted active transportation projects that includes the following factors:

- ❑ Is the project located in an area where there is high demand and propensity for walking and bicycling?
- ❑ Is the project located in an area with historically high crash rates for people walking and biking? If so, does the project address an identified safety issue? These areas include "hot spot areas" with concentrated walking and biking safety issues as well as systemic safety issues, such as along major commercial corridors.
- ❑ Is the project located in an equitable target area? And if so, does it serve the mobility needs of the populations that rely on walking, bicycling, and transit most?
- ❑ Is the project located in a designated Activity Center?
- ❑ Is the project located in an area with high propensity for transit use?
- ❑ Is the proposed project located in an established Walk Friendly Community or Bike Friendly Community with adopted local strategies for successful implementation?



The diagram and map to the right illustrate the concept of Regional Focus Areas, using the demand, safety, equity, activity center, transit propensity, and walk- and bike-friendly community map layers used during the *Assessment of Regional Travel Patterns* phase of this project. Regional Focus Areas are loosely represented by bubbles with a 1 mile radius to reflect the organizing principle that most walking trips are less than one mile, and to be consistent with the “20 Minute Neighborhood” concept used in the *Local Framework* section of the recommendations chapter. The precise boundaries of each bubble should not be taken literally – the purpose of this diagram is simply to illustrate the concept of Regional Focus Areas as a decision-making tool. For actual decision-making, ARC will use the most current GIS datasets.





Implement the Regional Trail Network Strategy

For the purposes of this plan, a trail is defined as a paved multi-use path that is physically separated from high-speed motor vehicle traffic by open space or a landscaped buffer. This includes multi-use paths parallel to roadways (sometimes called “sidepaths”) and paths within an independent right-of-way (sometimes called “greenways”). Trails can accommodate a range of users in addition to people walking and bicycling, including runners, skaters, equestrians, and even low-speed electric vehicles.

ARC’s regional trail network strategy should be focused on two primary objectives:

1. **Closing identified network gaps** in the trails of regional significance system, and
2. **Expanding the network** of regionally significant trails

Trails in the Atlanta region can be classified as Local Trails or Trails of Regional Significance. Local Trails facilitate short recreational or utilitarian trips within and between neighborhoods, and are primarily used by people that live or work within a few miles. Local trail systems are largely the responsibility of local partners to develop.

Trails of Regional Significance, by contrast:

- May cross jurisdictional boundaries to connect cities, regional activity centers, parks, and other trails
- Can be a destination in their own right such as the scenic Arabia Mountain Trail or a heavily-traveled commuter corridor like the Atlanta Beltline
- Have the potential to be a key link connecting the regional trail network
- Connect to regional transit systems

ARC will focus on increasing the connectivity of the regional trail system by filling identified network gaps. Trails of Regional Significance form a regional hub-and-spoke type of system that, when completed, will connect all four quadrants of the region to the core and form a “walking and biking highway system” for active transportation.

As noted in the Assessment, filling about 70 miles of key gaps would create an approximately 225 mile connected regional trail network. Additionally, closing these key gaps would represent a 46% increase in the mileage for the network of regionally significant trails. Many of these trail gaps are in various stages of planning, with the PATH Foundation leading and supporting many of the efforts to build and close these key regional gaps. Continued investment and coordination from public and private partners will help the region work towards closing these gaps and having a truly regional trail network.

Secondly, ARC will be opportunistic and strategic with respect to expanding the existing system beyond gap closure. ARC is uniquely positioned to facilitate inter-jurisdictional trail planning and implementation through convening and technical assistance. If the opportunity to develop additional regionally significant trails arises along a particular corridor or in a specific part of the region, ARC will work to support implementation of the proposed trail. This is particularly true if the proposed trail connects to or within an Activity Center, connects to another regionally significant trail, or if the project serves one or more Equitable Target Areas.

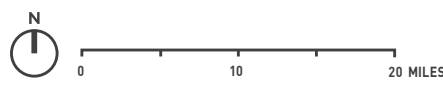
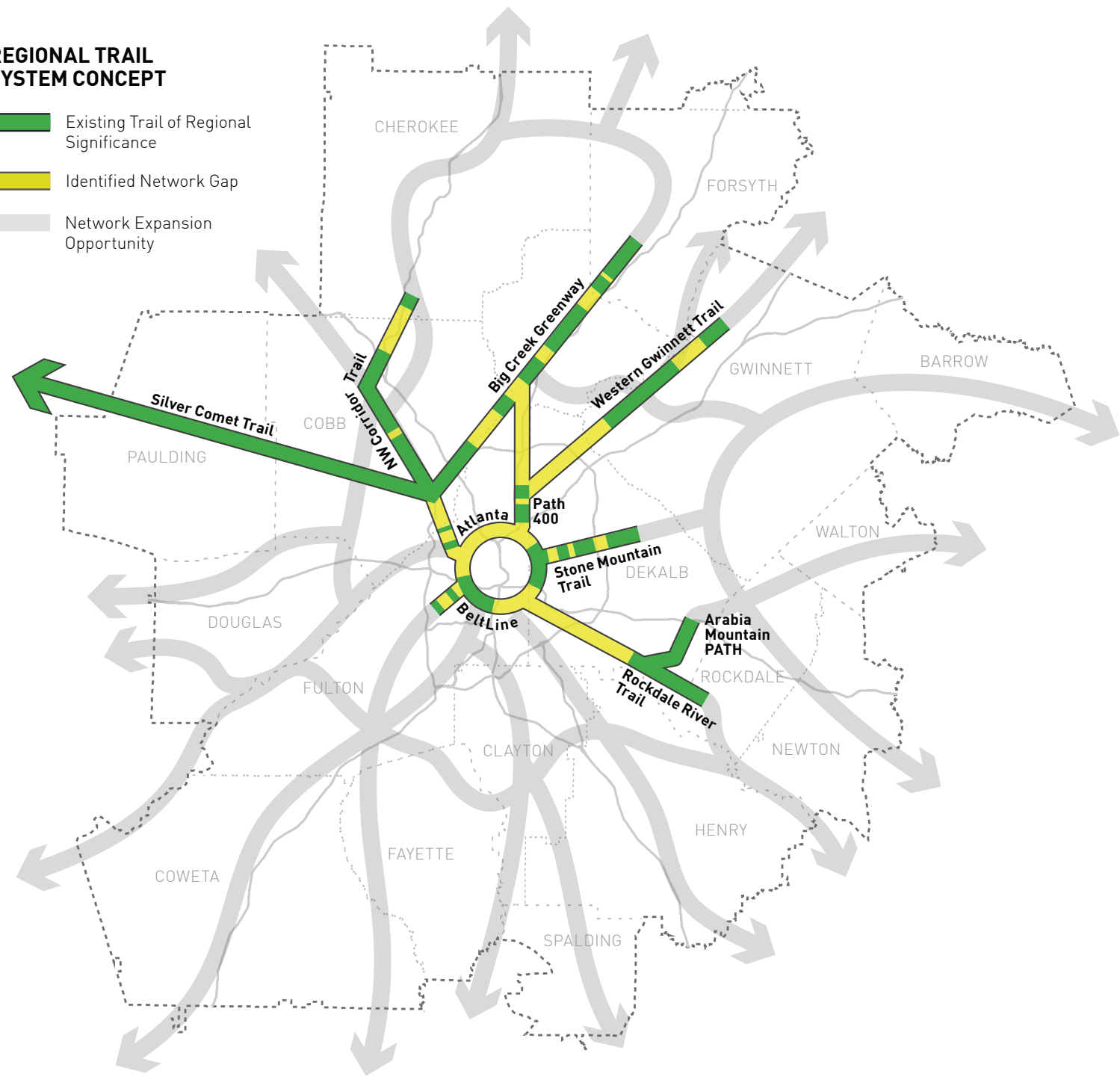
To support regionally significant trail development, ARC will:

- Work with local partners to maintain a map to track existing, planned, programmed, and envisioned regionally significant trail corridors
- Develop a regionally significant trail corridor scoping program to evaluate and assist with trail corridor visioning and regional coordination

The diagram to the right illustrates existing trails of regional significance, identified network gaps, and network expansion opportunities.

**REGIONAL TRAIL
SYSTEM CONCEPT**

- Existing Trail of Regional Significance
- Identified Network Gap
- Network Expansion Opportunity



The following **trail network expansion criteria** were used to develop the network expansion opportunities:

- Assists with meeting the goal of having at least one regional trail in every county in the region
- Improves trail access to or within an Equitable Target Area
- Connects to an existing Trail of Regional Significance
- Connects to an Activity Center or High Demand Area
- Connects to a federal, state, or local park
- Met a minimum standard for initial feasibility (runs along a riparian, greenspace, railroad, or utility corridor)



Among the many benefits of trails, they provide opportunities for people to connect with nature.

ESTABLISH DESIGN STANDARDS FOR REGIONAL TRAILS

Regional trails receiving funding from ARC will be built to a high standard. They should:

- Be at least 12 feet wide to allow for comfortable passing even when users in the opposite direction are walking or biking two-abreast, and wider in dense areas where demand is likely to be high.
- Meet or exceed guidance put forth in AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities for physical separation from the roadway if built as a "sidepath".
- Include wayfinding signage that provides information about popular destinations.
- Provide safe, convenient crossings that minimize delay and out-of-direction travel for people walking and bicycling.
- Include support facilities at trailheads and along the route including seating, trash cans, water fountains, bathrooms, bike parking, and/or public art
- Accomodate the full range of bicycle types, including cargo bikes, tandems, recumbants, tag-along/trailerbikes, and bicycle trailers

Similar to the high priority focus areas, ARC will **develop a location-based project scoring card for submitted trail projects** that includes the following factors to prioritize and identify trails of regional significance:

- ☐ Does the project assist with meeting the goal of having at least one regionally significant trail in every county in the region?
- ☐ Does the project improve trail access to or within at Equitable Target Area?
- ☐ Does the project connect to an existing Trail of Regional Significance?
- ☐ Does the project connect to an Activity Center or High Demand Area?
- ☐ Does the project connect to a federal, state, or local park?



The Silver Comet Trail is a regionally significant trail that provides opportunities for recreation and transportation, as well as generating economic activity too.

Support Local Efforts to Become Walking and Bicycling Friendly Communities

The Atlanta Regional Commission has established a goal of helping the Atlanta region become one of the most walk-friendly and bike-friendly regions in the US. This goal is consistent with The Atlanta Region's Plan policy framework of world class infrastructure, healthy livable communities, and a competitive economy.

ARC will actively support the efforts of cities and counties who desire to achieve Walk Friendly Community (WFC) or Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) status. WFC and BFC designations are part of national programs to recognize communities who are currently leading in active transportation or who are interested in becoming more walking- and bicycling-friendly. Currently, the region has two Walk Friendly Communities and three Bicycle Friendly Communities as well as two Bicycle Friendly Universities and three Bicycle Friendly Businesses.

ARC is using the Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Community framework, commonly referred to as the "5Es", as well as a sixth E for equity:

- Education
- Encouragement
- Engineering
- Enforcement
- Evaluation and Planning
- Equity

In order to achieve the Walk-Friendly or Bicycle Friendly designation, communities need to develop efforts in each of these areas. This comprehensive approach ensures that communities are creating a culture of decision-making and investment that positively supports walking and biking. Equity is a particularly critical issue for the Atlanta region and is discussed in more detail in the following section.

The recommendations in this plans are heavily influenced by this framework and will be used to guide regional policy for walking and biking investments as well as supporting local priorities for walking and biking in the region.

By aligning with these national programs, the region can compare itself with peer regions and communities and promote the region at a national level. The processes built into these designations also provides a platform for ARC to provide technical guidance for local jurisdictions and partners, track policy changes at the local level across a diverse region, and flexibility for local partners to establish a "6E's" approach that is relevant to their particular community.

ARC's aim is to increase the number of Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Communities in the region. This can be accomplished in part by providing funding and technical assistance for cities and counties.

As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Atlanta region, ARC makes important determinations about how flexible federal transportation funds are used. Considering the region's historic under-investment in walking and bicycling, ARC should work to maximize the use of these flexible funds for walking and biking to bring the regional transportation system back into balance.

In 2016, ARC will launch a regional Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Resource Center that will make a variety of research, training materials, and other tools related to supporting walking and bicycling easily accessible for local jurisdictions. Periodic trainings, community audits, and research conducted by ARC can also help increase the number of Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Communities region-wide.

ARC can also use walk- and bike-friendly designations to prioritize investment in walkable and bikeable areas as those areas adopt local plan, strategies, visions, and ordinances necessary to sustain successful active transportation programs.

For more information on WFC/BFC action steps, see the "Become a Walk Friendly, Bike Friendly Community" section in the Local Framework of this plan.

Make the Connection between Walking, Biking, and Equity

One of the key findings of the Assessment is that the people who rely on walking, bicycling, and transit to access jobs and meet their everyday needs tend to live in locations that are least supportive of active modes. Findings also show that lower income people of color are overrepresented in bicycle and pedestrian crashes. Conversely, rents and home prices tend to be higher in areas where walking, biking and taking transit is relatively safe and more convenient. This pattern reflects demand for vibrant walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, the influx of higher wage earners moving to these

selected areas, and the (related) trend of the suburbanization of poverty.

The uneven distribution of high-quality walking, bicycling, and transit provision results in health, safety, mobility, and economic benefits accruing to those who are more fortunate while increasing hardships for the populations in the region that are most vulnerable and disadvantaged. For this reason, equity issues related to active transportation are not be considered a side note but a central theme for ARC as the region works to become more walkable and bikeable.

The recommendations in the plan rely heavily on the use of the ARC Equitable Target Area index to guide and track investments. ARC will continue to use this tool when making investment decisions. Ultimately, much larger investments will be required to ensure that everyone in the region has equal opportunity to walk, bike, and thrive. This includes not only investing in sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and crossing treatments in the areas that lack them, but also increasing the supply of affordable housing in the most walkable and bikeable parts of the region.



Atlanta Streets Alive, an open streets event, has created temporary space for people to re-image streets as places for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds - a key need for the Atlanta Region's transportation system.

Traffic Safety: Moving Towards Zero Deaths

The concept of “Vision Zero” is emerging around the world as a policy-driven and action-based response to decreasing preventable traffic deaths. Vision Zero states simply that **no loss of life is acceptable** and that government bodies, road designers, and road users should work together to eliminate roadway dangers.

Vision Zero policies view traffic and roadway safety through four lenses:

- **Ethics:** human life takes priority over mobility;
- **Responsibility:** providers and regulators share responsibility with users;
- **Safety:** humans are fallible and road design should minimize the opportunity for error and the severity of damage;
- **Mechanisms for change:** providers, regulators, and users all must work together.

Vision Zero actions routinely include roadway design elements that reduce traffic speeds and protect vulnerable road users, enforcement actions that increase automatic recording and normalize enforcement actions, and marketing or outreach strategies that focus on reducing driver inattention and improve user behaviors.

ARC will lead the region on moving towards Vision Zero policies for all roadways and encourage incorporation of safety elements into both roadway design and marketing efforts.



Safety improvements that reduce injuries and fatalities for people walking and biking are important to improve quality of life in the region.

Lead on Emerging Policy Issues

The Atlanta Regional Commission often serves as a convener to build consensus amongst regional leadership and local governments and to work towards better outcomes for residents across the region. The results of these efforts can be seen in many regional efforts, including the “Winning the Future” vision of The Atlanta Region’s Plan.

As transportation needs, funding structures, and community priorities shift in the 21st Century, the ARC can serve a valuable role in identifying, researching, and building discourse around emerging, but often difficult, public policy areas.



Trails prove opportunities for people to be active, socialize, and connect with nature.

Health Policy & Connections to Active Transportation

In 2011 and 2015 ARC worked with the Georgia Tech Center for Quality Growth & Regional Development (CQGRD) to review the region’s 2012 Long-Range Transportation Plan, titled *PLAN2040*. The subsequent *Health Impact Assessment of Atlanta Regional PLAN 2040* identifies five key elements of regional transportation policies that foster better public health outcomes.

A transportation policy that supports positive public health outcomes addresses:

- Safety and Security
- Access, Equity and Economy
- Active Living
- Ecology and Environmental Quality
- Civic Life, Social Connections

The recommendations in the HIA broadly support this plan’s elements of walkable and bikeable communities, transit-oriented developments and improving transit system access, focusing on regional equity, and using a broad set of transportation, land use, development, and program tools for increasing walking and bicycling opportunities. For specific details on how to connection transportation decision-making to public health outcomes, see the PLAN 2040 HIA document.

ARC will prioritize projects that have a positive impact on public health outcomes.

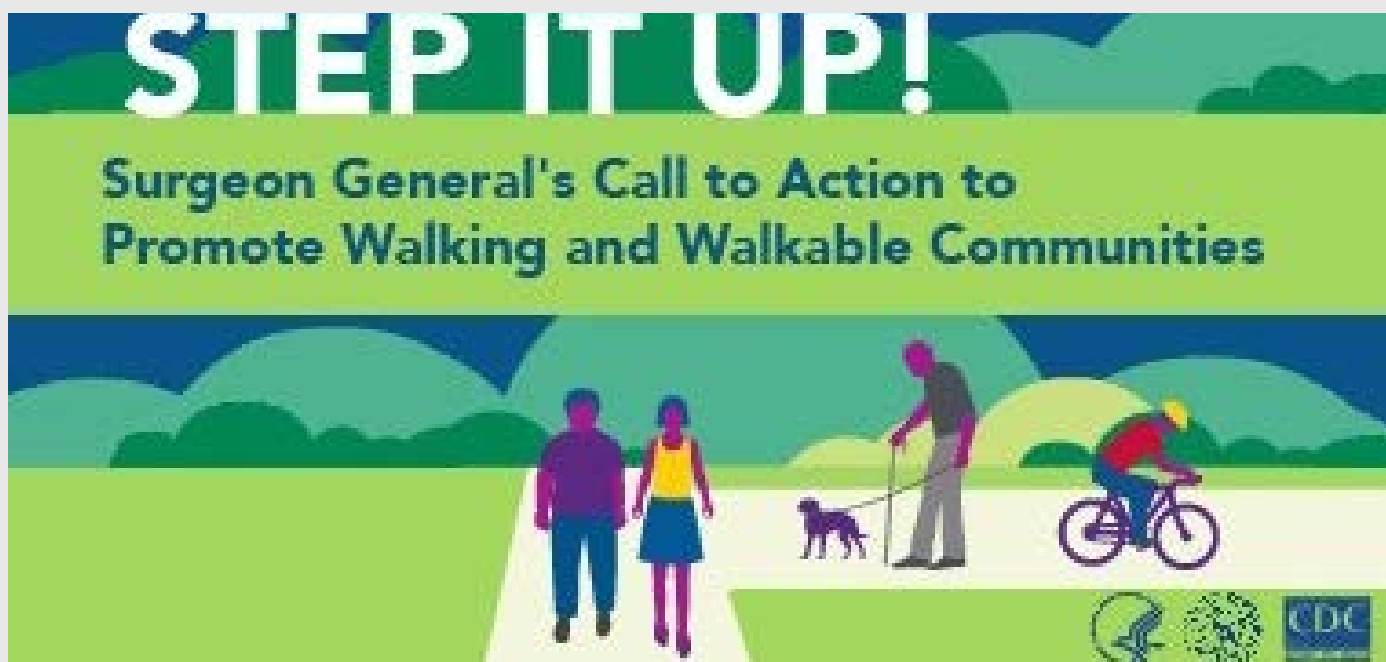
Health

The Atlanta region is home to large government organizations like the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), non-profits like the Task Force for Global Health, and a number of local public health clinics. This makes metro Atlanta a major hub for the intersection of public health and planning – a growing field with overlapping work on injury prevention and health outcomes related to the built environment. The CDC's Built Environment and Health Initiative supports local communities' efforts to reduce health costs by integrating health benchmarks into transportation planning projects. Examples include:

- Funding and supporting Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) – which use scientific data and health expertise to identify the health effects associated with proposed projects and policies.
- Helping health departments build relationships with local governments and planning departments.
- Providing online courses to local governments that explain how and why to conduct an HIA.
- By tracking environmental indicators like active transportation metrics.

A focus on walkable communities is also being touted by the federal government as a solution to the U.S. obesity epidemic. In 2015 the U.S. Public Health Service announced "Step It Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities", which includes strategies all communities can use to increase walking and recognizes the need for spaces and places that make enjoyable walking possible. As the Surgeon General states, "Walkable communities are good for social connectedness, good for business, good for the environment, and, most importantly, good for personal health."¹

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Step It Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities*. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General; 2015.



Air Quality, Emission Reductions, and Climate Change

The air quality in metropolitan Atlanta is improving. However, the region still does not meet the current federal standards for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter, two of the six pollutants regulated under the Clean Air Act. Since active transportation modes produce no harmful emissions, improving active-mode accessibility should be a key goal to ensure a sustainable and healthy future.

Though often contentious, policy decisions around greenhouse gas emissions and climate change outcomes are likely to become increasingly important over the coming decades. ARC's expertise in modeling transportation emissions, evaluating air quality trends, quantifying emissions reductions strategies, and assessing potential environmental outcomes will be invaluable in future debates related to climate change.

Technical challenges remain for both forecasting active transportation mode shift and quantifying emissions outcomes from investment scenarios. As state and federal regulatory frameworks evolve,

ARC will continue to provide technical- and policy-driven insight into the role of active transportation for addressing environmental concerns.

Support Research and Innovation

Few agencies in the Atlanta region have the breadth and diversity of expertise as ARC for developing creative policy and technical solutions for regional problems. ARC has supported academic research efforts including the CycleAtlanta phone app, OneBusAway, Health Impact Assessments, and other innovative efforts that point towards new

technologies or policies for improving transportation access, safety, or mobility.

As digital tools and national best practices evolve, ARC should develop funding and technical resources for supporting research and innovation. These efforts may occasionally involve risk or unknown outcomes, but for relatively small investments the region can test ideas that could produce dramatic improvements.



Technology advances have enabled bike share systems, an emerging public transportation option in the US and internationally, to operate effectively and provide biking as a transportation option to a wider range of travelers.

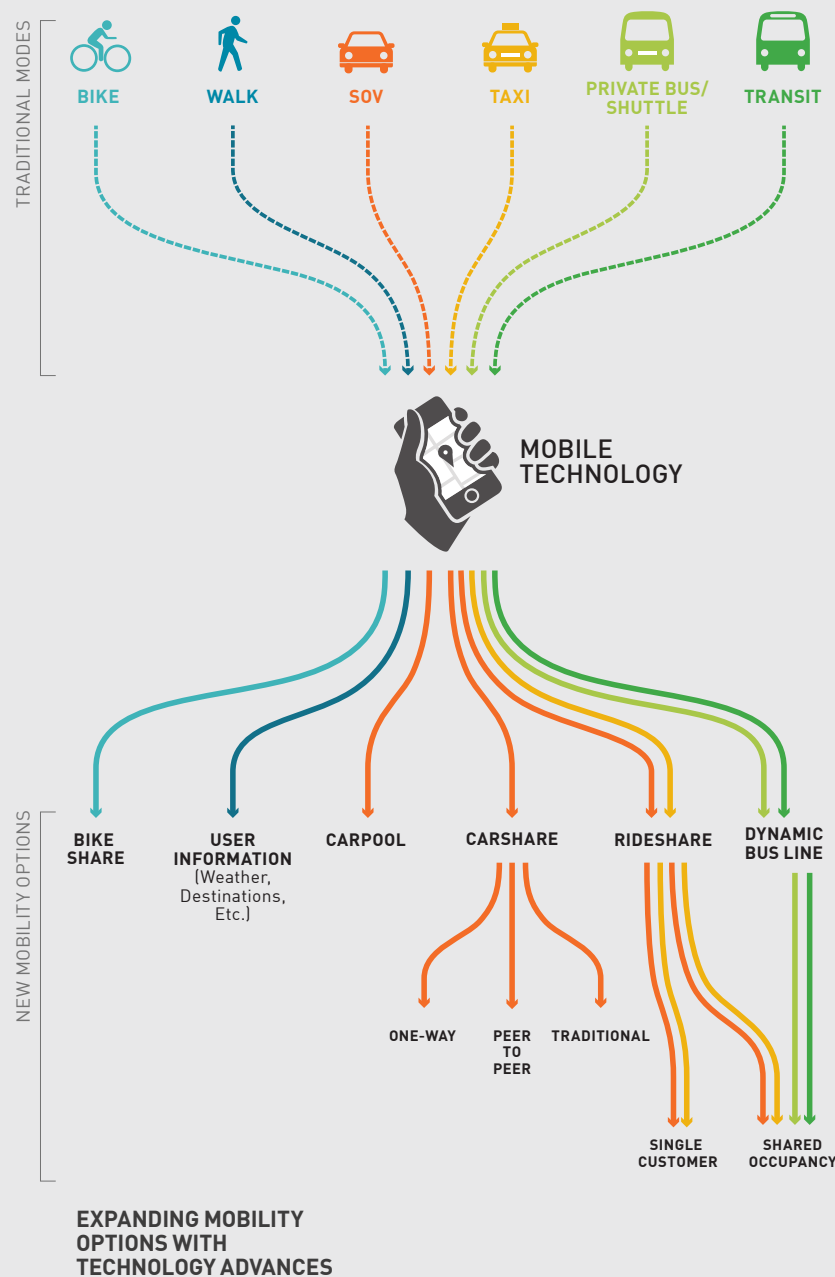
Emerging Technology

Information technology has changed the landscape of transportation options almost as quickly as it has evolved. Mobile computing apps are increasingly at the center of people's transportation decision-making, providing information about weather, destinations, navigation, real-time transit arrival times, multi-modal trip planning, and more. Perhaps the most notable transportation-related technology innovation has been the rise of transportation network companies (TNCs) that connect drivers of personal vehicles with ride-seeking passengers, led by well-known examples Uber and Lyft. Mobile apps that allow users to track the locations and availability of public bicycles are also a key force behind the rapid expansion and evolution of bike share services that can now be found in most major US cities. The intersection of new technology with transportation demand is also poised to offer yet even more travel options into the future, with self-driving vehicles in development in 2015.

The Atlanta Region's Plan is exploring potential impacts of driverless cars in more depth. There is a great deal of uncertainty about how driverless cars will impact our transportation systems and urban form, although some of the ways they might impact walking and biking include:

- Demand for vehicle parking and vehicle ownership could dwindle. Driverless cars can independently seek parking, and at the tap of an app can return the car for the ride home. A fleet of driverless taxis summoned by mobile apps is likely to reduce demand for personal vehicles as well, allowing parking to be converted to other uses.
- Congestion may be reduced, freeing up travel space for biking and walking. If driverless cars are well coordinated, than traffic may flow more smoothly, and less space will be needed for single occupancy vehicles.
- Signal timing will have a different meaning. If people are free to do other tasks while in a car, travel time may become less important, and traffic signals can favor pedestrian and bike traffic. This may also affect people's choices about where to live and travel, if long distances become more accessible.
- Safety will likely improve. Driverless cars may be able to detect and prevent crashes with people on foot or bike. This can dramatically improve safety for everyone, but as always, will require oversight and regulations to ensure high safety standards.

Even with the advent of new technology in travel options, travel by foot remains a fundamental beginning and end of every trip. A complete bicycle and pedestrian system will continue to be a foundation of a broader set of travel options throughout the Atlanta region and should be considered as a means of harnessing the potential of technology-based transportation resources.



Immediate Action Steps for ARC



Establish a Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Communities Resource Center

A regional Active Transportation Resource Center can provide an online portal that provides communities with an overview of steps necessary to become more walking- and bicycling friendly, information on developing projects and plans, and resources for applying for national WFC or BFC designations. The Resource Center can help those communities that have already achieved a Walk or Bike Friendly Community designation reach the next award level or focus on specific areas of interest.



Develop a Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Technical Assistance Program for ARC Region

A Technical Assistance Program can help ARC staff work directly with jurisdictions interested in becoming Walk Friendly or Bicycle Friendly Communities. Technical assistance, based on national Walk Friendly Community and Bike Friendly Community models, may be onsite assessments of needs and a list of recommendations that account for local conditions. In conjunction with the Resource Center, assistance will incorporate national best practices, position communities for national recognition programs, and collaborate with nationally-recognized groups and peers.



Convene an Annual Walk and Bike Friendly Forum

An annual Forum would create an opportunity for communities that are seeking to become walk- and bike-friendly the chance to come together and share information about challenges, ideas, and best practices. Sessions can align communities with peer cities that are a similar size and facing similar challenges. The forum may include classes led by experts on topics such as Safe Routes to School, pedestrian safety countermeasures, and bike infrastructure. Additionally, breakout sessions can improve understanding of steps to reach bronze, silver, gold, and platinum status.

Immediate Action Steps for ARC *(continued)*



Create a High Crash Corridor Safety Program

A safety program focused on high crash corridors can bridge the divide between

- Areas that are not able to compete for federal funding, and have small municipal budgets
- Areas with state routes that have a high number of pedestrian or bike crashes

The ARC will work with the Georgia Department of Transportation to identify high crash corridors, perform pedestrian-focused Road Safety Audits, and assist with constructing proven safety countermeasures using Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds and other resources.



Develop a Strategy to Maximize the Use of Federal Transportation Funds for Walking and Bicycling

Federal transportation dollars are a key source of funding for the planning and implementation of active transportation projects and programs. ARC distributes a portion of these funds to local governments through a competitive selection process. In order to make the most of these funds, ARC should:

- Work to maximize the share of flexible federal transportation funds that flow to walking and bicycling infrastructure and initiatives
- Develop a quantitative scoring criteria for submitted walking and bicycling projects based on the Regional Focus Areas factors identified on page 15 of this plan chapter



Produce a Regional Walking and Biking Safety Action Plan

Dangerous corridors and broad safety issues that affect pedestrians and cyclists cross jurisdiction boundaries, so a regional approach is required to reduce the number of serious and fatal crashes in metro Atlanta. A regional walking and biking safety action plan would set a framework for addressing broad policy measures and specific safety improvements at dangerous locations.



Provide Evaluation and Measuring Assistance

The Atlanta Regional Commission provides a number of evaluation services that can be specifically applied to pedestrian and bike projects. ARC can analyze crash data trends, loan pedestrian and bike counters, and maintain a database of pedestrian and bike performance measures that align with regional transportation benchmarks. A one-stop service should be created that offers local jurisdictions a quick snapshot of how they are doing according to various metrics.



Create Leadership Training for Board Members and Member Jurisdiction Leadership

The ARC board consists of 39 members – 23 elected officials, 15 private citizens, and a representative from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Each official represents an area of roughly equal population across the 10 county region. In addition the region has mayors, county commissioners, and hundreds of influential community leaders.

Regional leaders should have a solid understanding of the elements of pedestrian and bike-friendly networks in order to make knowledgeable funding and planning decisions. A Ped-Bike Leadership Training Course will expand board members, mayors, and county officials' knowledge on issues affecting their districts and create better dialogue on issues of a regional scope. The Leadership Training Course could be followed by presentations from participating board members to local stakeholders and community members.



Offer Regional Trail Coordination Assistance

Trails in metro Atlanta have historically been developed in short fragments without consideration for connecting to the larger region. Trails of regional significance, such as the Beltline and Silver Comet, have changed the focus of dialogue to filling in the gaps.

Creating a cohesive trail system will require communication between many agencies, city officials, and property owners to identify gaps and acquire right of way. The Atlanta Regional Commission can host regional conversations and provide assistance to local municipalities interested in developing or expanding an existing trail within a regional framework. Convening stakeholders, facilitating meetings, coordinating site visits, preparing research and planning materials, and documenting ongoing efforts and regional gaps can all help advance a regional trail system.



Local Framework:

AN ACTIVE TRANSPORT TOOLKIT FOR CITIES AND COUNTIES IN THE ATLANTA REGION

This section provides guidance for cities and counties in the Atlanta Region on a wide variety of topics related to walking and bicycling. It includes guidance on the elements of high quality walking and bicycling systems, recommendation on decision-making and process, an overview of the Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Communities programs,

and the elements of local bicycle and pedestrian master plans. It also includes characteristics of good active transportation projects, policies that support walking and bicycling, programs and marketing ideas, funding resources, and suggestions for ongoing evaluation and monitoring.

Elements of a High Quality Walking and Biking System

This section provides a set of organizing principles for creating walkable, bikeable places. It describes a concept called the “20 minute neighborhood” and includes:

- guidance for local jurisdictions on walking networks
- biking networks
- access to transit
- local trail networks
- places and public spaces
- support infrastructure for walking and biking
- universal access



The ARC Sweet Auburn Living Beyond Expectations demonstration project created the conditions that are part of a high quality walking and biking system - one that is safe, convenient, and connected for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.



The “20 minute neighborhood”: An Organizing Principle

The regional active transportation system is appropriately conceptualized as a series of walkable, bikeable neighborhoods connected by regional trails and transit. Because walking and biking trips tend to be relatively short, the neighborhood is a practical scale for bicycle and pedestrian planning. The “20 minute neighborhood” is a concept used here to help illustrate how a set of land use and transportation planning principles can result in a built environment where the majority of residents’ needs are within a 20 minute walk.

Key features of the 20 Minute Neighborhood are:

- A fine-grained mix of land uses including destinations such as parks, schools, commercial areas, and a variety of housing types
- A connected street grid, ideally with 300-600 foot block lengths
- A connected bicycle network featuring bikeways at least every half mile
- Convenient connections to trails and transit



Farmers markets, such as this one in Sandy Springs, create opportunities for people to walk and bike to shop from nearby neighborhoods or jobs.

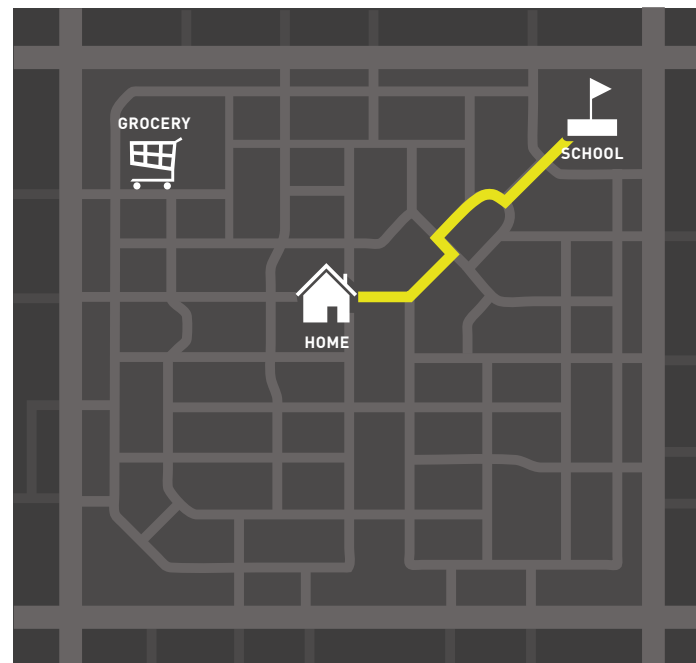


Walking Network

Sidewalks and trails make up the core of local walkway systems. Parks, public squares, informal pathways, alleys, and parking lots should also be considered part of the pedestrian network. And because people walking prefer direct travel, every segment of every street should be considered part of the pedestrian circulation system even if no sidewalk is present.

Characteristics of a high-quality local walking system:

- Connectivity:** The system should form a connected network of sidewalks, paths, and public spaces that serves key destinations and districts including schools, commercial areas, and transit stops.
- Directness and Efficiency:** Sidewalks and pathways should provide direct links between destinations, minimizing unnecessary out-of-direction travel. Crossings should be frequent and signalized crossings should minimize delay for people walking.
- Safety and Comfort:** Attention to design and maintenance details that impact safety and comfort such as adequate walkway width based on context and demand, landscaped buffers, pedestrian-friendly curb radii, highly visible and intuitive crossing treatments, street tree types and placement, street lamp designs, and building façade standards.
- Universal Access:** Smooth, stable, barrier-free design that is compatible with wheelchairs, walkers, mobility canes, and other devices used by the people with disabilities or visual impairments.
- Social Space:** The walkway system should include spaces for standing, visiting, and sitting. The sidewalk area should be a place where adults and children can participate in public life.



Connected street networks provide direct connections to destinations for walking and biking trips.

Biking Network

Bikeways come in multiple forms, including on-street bike lanes and bicycle boulevards in addition to off-street facilities such as trails and greenways. Bikeways should form a logical hierarchy of facility types that serve different functions (i.e. higher speed commuter routes vs. low stress family-friendly routes) and appeal to the full range of users.

Characteristics of a high-quality biking network

- **Connectivity:** An interconnected network of bikeways that serves key destinations and districts including schools, parks, commercial areas, and transit stops. East-west and north-south bikeways should be spaced roughly a half-mile apart, forming a minimum grid.
- **Convenience:** The bicycle transportation system should minimize delay for all users, minimize out-of-direction travel, allow for bicyclists to pass each other, and provide wayfinding guidance to other bikeway connections and popular destinations.
- **Safety:** The design and maintenance of bikeways should minimize the potential for bodily harm. This includes maintaining a smooth and stable surface, providing adequate operating space, ensuring bicyclist visibility at intersections and roadway crossings, and creating a predictable environment for all path and/or road users.
- **Comfort:** The bikeway network should not induce stress for any mode of transportation – not for people bicycling, walking or driving. On-street bikeways should enhance comfort either through the provision of dedicated space for bicyclists, or by creating a traffic-calmed bicycle priority environment. Off-street bikeways should be adequately buffered from fast-moving vehicles and include enhanced crossing treatments at roadway intersections.
- **Inclusion:** The network should accommodate people of all ages and abilities, and transportation as well as recreational trip types. Route and facility selection should be informed by topography, traffic speeds and volumes, and the frequency of driveways and access points.



A well connected bikeway network provides easy access to daily destinations and other forms of transportation.

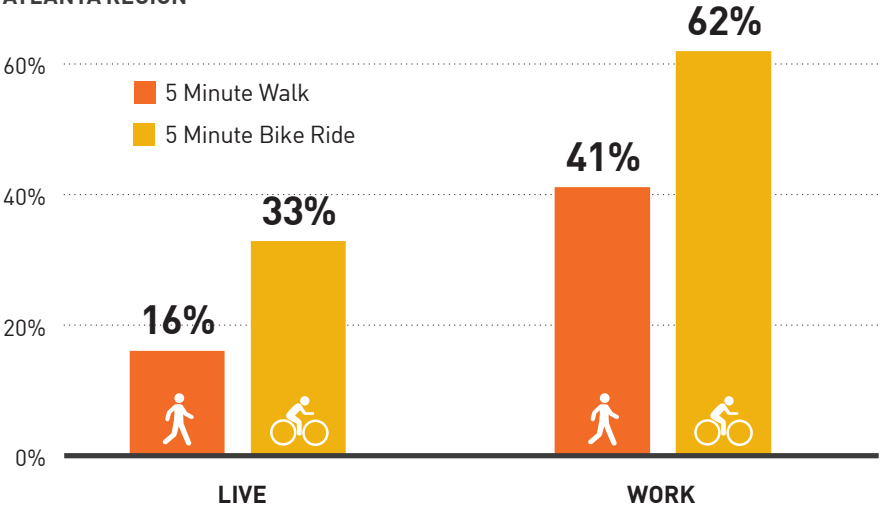
Access to Transit

In a large, polycentric region such as metropolitan Atlanta, transit service is a key resource in expanding mobility options and serving a full range of travel needs while reducing reliance on driving. Bicycle and pedestrian planning decisions in communities served by transit or looking to a future with transit service should be made with facilitating transit service in mind.

Key considerations include:

- **Coordination with the thoroughfare system.** Several counties in the region do not currently have transit or have plans to introduce transit service. However, planning for bicycle and pedestrian networks can be done in a way that is compatible with transit in the future by focusing connections on key corridors and thoroughfares. These are likely to be the locations of commercial and employment-generating land uses.
- **Access to premium and priority routes,** or to corridors with greater transit propensity. Not all transit service is equal in providing regional mobility—some services, such as MARTA’s rail network and GRTA’s express route system, operate rapid, limited-stop connections across long distances, where others focus on a greater level of neighborhood coverage and make many more stops.
- **End-of-trip facilities and information for users.** Among the greatest barriers to greater levels of transit use that most riders perceive is a lack of information and amenities. Stops should include schedule and route information, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities should include appropriate wayfinding to guide users to the location of transit facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian projects should also integrate storage for bicycles at transit stops.

PROXIMITY TO TRANSIT IN THE ATLANTA REGION



Source: 2010 US Census and ARC

Connections in Communities with Existing Transit Service

Nearly three quarters of transit trips in metro Atlanta begin with a walk to a bus stop or MARTA station.¹ Improving walking conditions along the streets used to access these stops is a key opportunity to increase pedestrian safety and make transit more attractive and convenient for more people.

According to a 2010 on-board survey conducted by ARC, about 80% of all walking trips to transit took five or fewer minutes. This is consistent with the use of a catchment area of about a quarter mile from transit stops. While it makes sense to prioritize pedestrian access-to-transit improvements in this limited catchment area, it is worth noting that many factors influence the distance people will walk. Frequency of the transit service is one major factor. See pages 32-34 of the Assessment for more on transit propensity.

¹ *Regional On-Board Transit Survey Final Report (2010)*

Catchment areas are expanded when:

- Stations are integrated into the surrounding community, with direct and easy access
- The street network is connected with short block lengths and direct routes
- The infrastructure supports and respects people who walk, with active streetscapes, interesting architecture, adequate lighting, wide sidewalks, frequent and safe crossings
- Wayfinding is clear and oriented towards people walking (i.e. signage that shows walking distance to transit stops in minutes)
- There is a perception of safety
- Vehicle parking is limited

Only 16% of people in the Atlanta region live within a five minute walk of a transit stop. More than double that amount – a full third of all households – live within a 5 minute bike ride of a transit stop. Improving bikeway connections to transit stops and providing related support infrastructure like bike parking helps expand the range of travel options when bicycling alone is impractical.

Bikeway network planning and development should take transit stop spacing into account to facilitate seamless connections, and wayfinding signage should include information about transit stop locations and travel times. Finally, bike parking should be considered at transit stops so that people have the option to store their bike at the bus stop or transit station.

Connections in Communities with No Existing Transit Service

Not currently having transit service in a community does not mean the community will never have this service. Even in communities with no current plans or desires for public transit, defining bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs that connect to high-walking and biking propensity corridors is likely to connect residential areas with employment and commercial corridors and nodes, and in so doing satisfy some of the community's travel demand (especially on shorter distances).

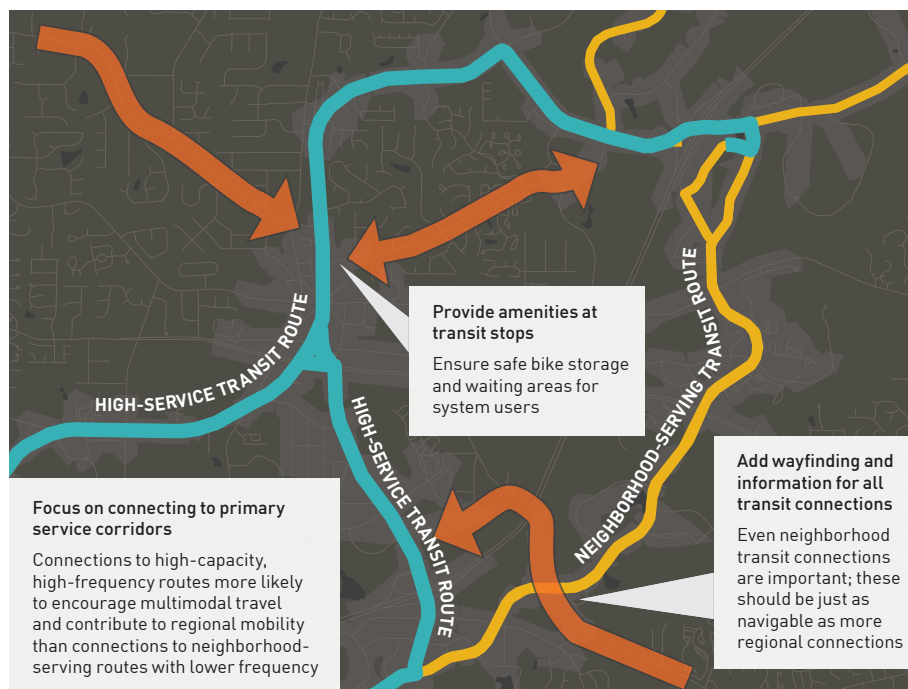
ONLY 16% OF PEOPLE IN THE ATLANTA REGION LIVE WITHIN A FIVE MINUTE WALK OF A TRANSIT STOP.

MORE THAN DOUBLE THAT AMOUNT—A FULL THIRD OF ALL HOUSEHOLDS—LIVE WITHIN A FIVE MINUTE BIKE RIDE OF A TRANSIT STOP.

Connections in Communities with Existing Transit Service

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

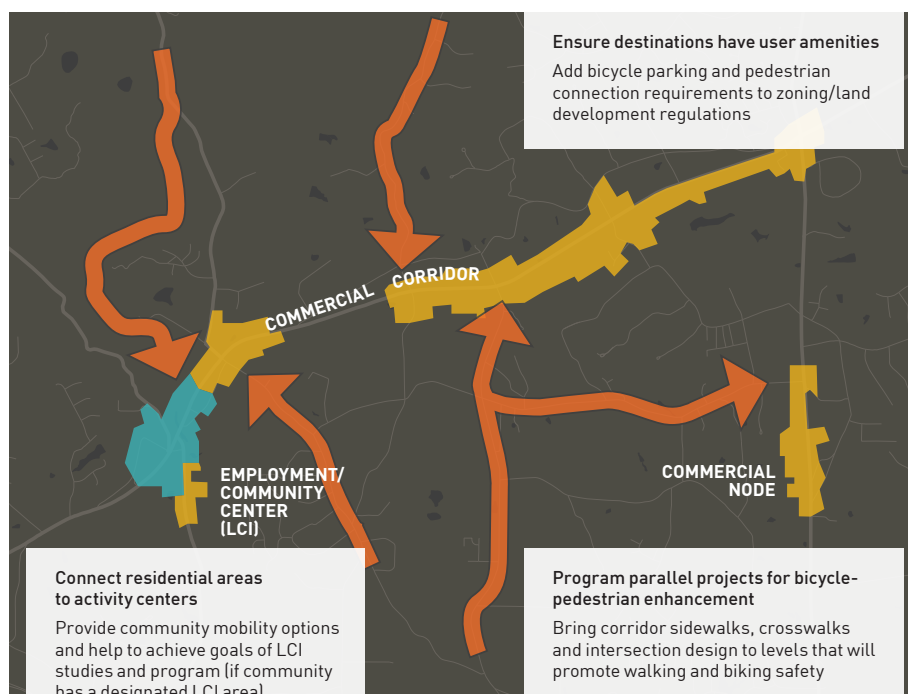
- Transit service frequency and capacity: coordinate with transit provider
- Transit dependency in community/ area population
- Available right-of-way or potential for easement/acquisition along transit route's intersection with project
- Transit agency plans for service expansion, relocation or elimination
- Potential for transit to serve regional employment areas
- Current condition of transit stops and stations



Connections in Communities with No Existing Transit Service

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Needs for multimodal connection as defined in county CTP
- Land use balance in the area and potential for short trip connections
- Availability of right of-way or other potential corridors for walking and biking activity
- Public interest in transit or past studies of transit feasibility
- Corridor land use characteristics and presence of neighborhood serving uses
- Corridor constraints for parking or access that may suggest non-motorized access as a key strategy





Local Access Trail Network

Local access trail networks provide low stress, off-street walking and bicycling connections between local destinations. While regional trails facilitate long-distance travel across jurisdictional boundaries and between regional destinations, the focus of local trail networks is improving connectivity between neighborhoods, parks, schools, libraries, main streets, and commercial nodes. Even short segments of trails can make a big impact on connectivity when they provide direct connections between destinations that the roadway network does not facilitate. Short trail segments like these are sometimes called neighborhood accessways.

Local trail networks that serve a transportation purpose in addition to providing recreational opportunities generate the greatest benefits. They should complement the on-street bicycling network and connect to the regional trail system when possible.

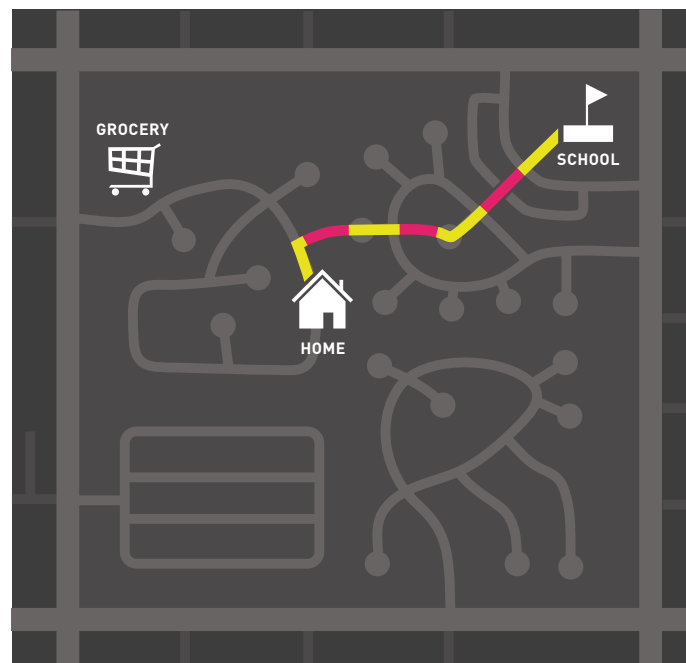
Peachtree City's 90 mile network of multi-use paths for pedestrians, bicyclists, and golf carts is the best example of a mature local access trail network in the region. The network allows residents and visitors to access many everyday destinations without the use of a car and supports healthy, active lifestyles.



Local trails provide neighborhood connections to parks, schools, businesses, and other local destinations



Short trail segments or "Neighborhood Accessways" can have a dramatic effect on the connectivity of the network for people walking and biking.



Most direct route along roadway

Neighborhood Accessway

Places and Public Spaces

Investing in high quality active transportation infrastructure is a critical part of achieving the convenience of the 20 Minute Neighborhood concept. Yet without destinations like grocery stores, schools, parks, restaurants, places of worship, barber shops, post offices, coffee shops, laundromats, doctors' offices, and banks within walking or biking distance, the system will not function well for people on foot or traveling by bike. Particularly in parts of the region dominated by large-lot residential areas, land use policy and development incentives that encourage a fine-grained mix of land uses may be better tool for improving walkability and bikeability than transportation improvements.

For centuries (and not that long ago) streets served as the basis for public life in cities. Streets are still the most basic and ubiquitous public spaces in our towns and cities, but they are often overlooked as places devoted to vehicle movement and parking. Streets have been and can be much more than this, serving multiple purposes and contributing to the social, economic, and political life of towns and cities. Reimagining streets as places is a great starting point when thinking about opportunities to expand public spaces and create vibrant people-friendly places. This can take a variety of forms, including complete streets projects, sidewalk cafes, pedestrian-oriented streetscape design, open streets events, block parties, public markets, neighborhood greenways, and the conversion of on-street parking to parklets.

Parks and public squares and plazas are also commonly-found public spaces in the Atlanta region. Parks and public squares and plazas increase livability by providing spaces for social interaction and recreation in addition to catalyzing private investment and fostering grassroots entrepreneurial activities.

The design of public spaces should:

- **Encourage social interaction.** The design should make people want to linger and chat, and provide spaces for conversation and people-watching.
- **Support specific activities based on the target users.** For example, you might provide a playground and splash pad for children in a residential park but outdoor chess boards or places for pop-up vendors may be more appropriate in an urban square.
- **Increase connections between adjacent buildings, roadways, and paths.** The design should provide pathways and vistas that promote connectivity for people traveling through the space, and make it easy to access.
- **Draw people in.** Distinctive features such as fountains, public art, and landscape design should alert residents and visitors to the fact that they have arrived at a significant gathering place that is a landmark in the community.
- **Contribute to a sense of place.** Drawing on local culture, history,



High quality public spaces provide a sense of place and encourage social interaction.

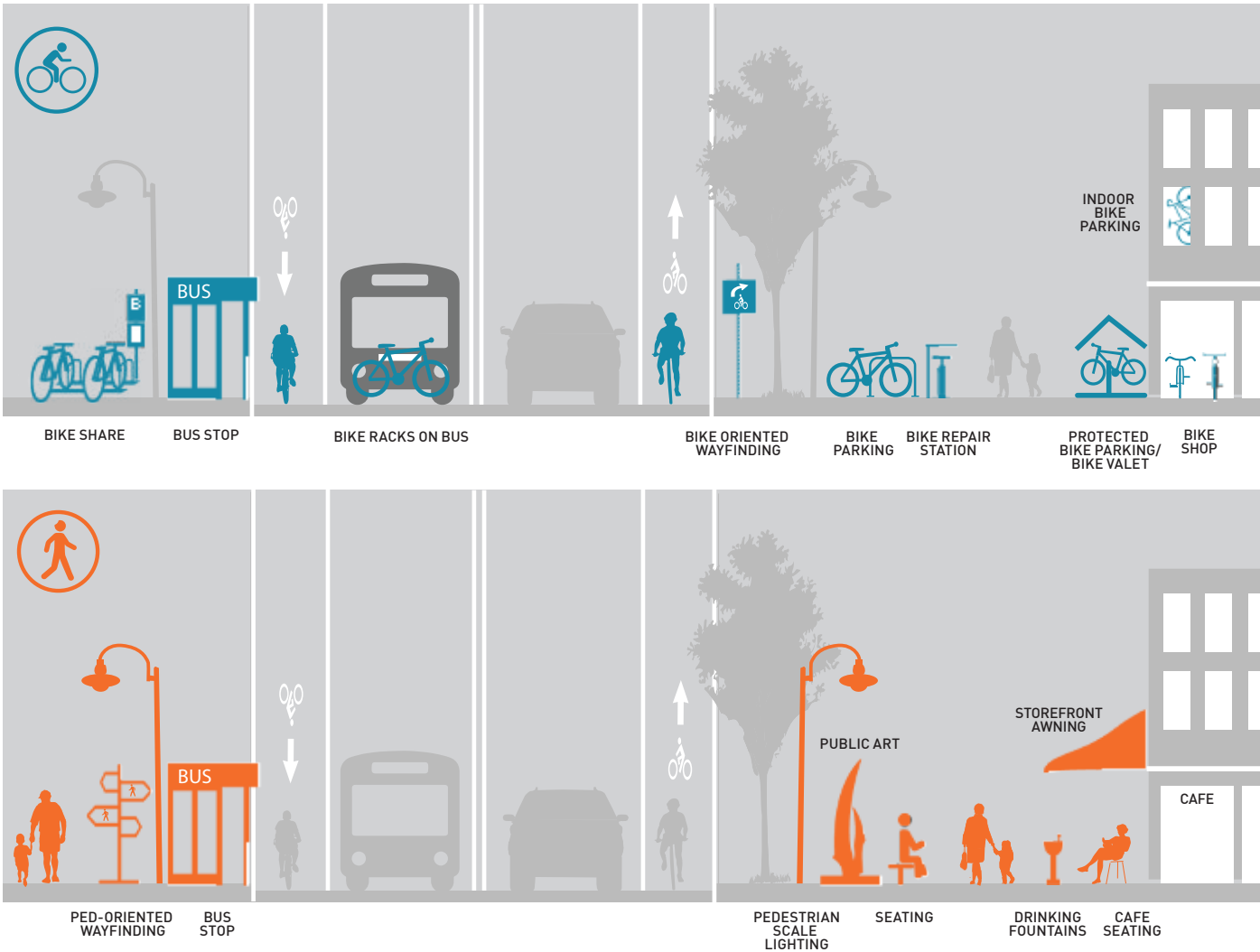
Support Infrastructure for Walking and Biking

Shade trees, street furniture, trash receptacles, water fountains, human-scale wayfinding, public art, public restrooms, and pedestrian scale lighting are sometimes referred to as “pedestrian amenities.” Thinking of these features as extras, however, underestimates the importance of providing relatively basic elements that make walking pleasant,

comfortable, convenient, and interesting. Therefore, it’s better to think of these “amenities” as practical and necessary support infrastructure for walking.

Similarly, supporting bicycling means going beyond developing a safe, comfortable, and connected bikeway network. The good news is that the key support infrastructure for bicycling – such as wayfinding and bike parking – is relatively inexpensive and easy to

provide. Wayfinding elements include signage and/or pavement markings that direct users to popular destinations and other bikeways. Short term bike parking includes bicycle racks and corrals, which are clusters of racks that can be installed in on-street parking spaces. Long term, secure bike parking is typically provided by developers and employers, and local development codes should either require or incentivize its provision.



Universal Access

The walking network must be accessible to people of all ages and abilities, including people who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs and walkers, or who have visual or hearing impairments. An inclusive active transportation system supports the mobility of people with disabilities and removes barriers to access. This includes things like providing ADA compliant curb ramps with tactile warning strips at every intersection, ensuring the cross-slope of sidewalks does not exceed 2%, and installing accessible pedestrian signals. The Americans with Disabilities Act provides the legal imperative for universal access, and The United States Access Board's 2013 *Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way and Shared Use Paths* provides detailed guidance on universal access design.



Accessible push buttons, textured curb ramps, signalized crossings, and high visibility cross walks improve crossing safety for all users.



Streets should be easily navigable by all users, particularly those with special mobility needs such as those in wheelchairs.

Become a Walk Friendly, Bike Friendly Community

Walking and bicycling trips are generally short and local. The organizing principles of this plan – 1-3 mile travelsheds and “20-minute” neighborhoods – highlight the importance of community-scale planning to improve active transportation trips.

While transportation infrastructure – roads, sidewalks, crossings, bikeways – are critical for improving walking and bicycling, other pieces – local policies, ordinances, and programs – must also

be used to make communities that are truly walking- and bicycling-friendly.

This plan’s Walk-Friendly and Bike-Friendly Community framework incorporates the many pieces that must be used to make walking and bicycling safe, comfortable, and normal forms of transportation. The elements of a WFC/BFC are detailed below along with how to use local planning efforts to participate in national programs for recognizing outstanding local places.

Cities and Counties in the region should use the Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Community framework for:

- Self-evaluation and comparison with other regional communities
- Developing master plans and implementation/capital plans
- Marketing to businesses, visitors, and potential residents
- Increasing programming in the weak areas noted in the WFC/BFC survey
- Grant applications



Becoming a Walk Friendly and Bicycle Friendly Community means building infrastructure, adopting supportive policy, and implementing programs, such as Safe Routes to Schools, to make it regular, safe, and convenient to walk and bike to daily destinations.

The 6 Es

This plan uses “6E’s” to build Walk-Friendly and Bike-Friendly Communities: engineering, education, evaluation, enforcement, encouragement, and Equity. Comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle plans should address all six elements to effectively advance pedestrian and bicycling activities in a community. Communities seeking status as WFC and BFC must be able to demonstrate activities in each of the first Five E’s. Many communities are now adding Equity as the sixth element.



ENGINEERING refers to infrastructure-related elements such as:

- » Bikeways and crossings for bicyclists
- » Sidewalks and pedestrian crossing treatments
- » ADA accommodations



EDUCATION refers to non-infrastructure efforts aimed at teaching people how to bike and walk safely, such as:

- » Safe Routes to School Programs
- » Bicycle education programs for adults
- » Education and training programs related to walking and biking safety, design and education for municipal staff
- » Driver education related to speeding and crosswalk laws



ENCOURAGEMENT refers to programs that make walking and biking visible and normal activities, such as:

- » Georgia Commute Option Bike Challenge
- » Bike to Work Day
- » Walking or biking advocacy groups
- » Walking or biking maps



ENFORCEMENT refers to how the law enforcement system treats walking and biking, for example:

- » Law enforcement officials on foot or bike patrols
- » Local ordinances that address walking and biking safety and accessibility
- » Collaboration between police and traffic engineers to review problematic sites that need walking or biking enhancements
- » Specific training for public safety officials on bicycle and walking traffic laws



EVALUATION AND PLANNING refers to studying, planning, and measuring the walking and biking environment, including:

- » Transit service
- » Walking, biking and trails master plans
- » Policies that require new development to have a street network that is conducive to walking and biking
- » Collection of walking and biking data



EQUITY refers to making safe, healthy, affordable, and convenient transportation options available to everyone in every community of the region.

- » See the “Walking, Biking, and Equity: Making the Connection” section in the Regional Framework section of this chapter, and “How to Talk about Equity” later in this section.

How to Apply for National Designation

The Walk Friendly Community (WFC) program, led by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), and Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC), led by the League of American Bicyclists, are national initiatives intended to encourage communities to improve their local active transportation systems.

Both programs incorporate assessments that are useful for discovering where a community stands with respect to pedestrian and bicycling facilities and activities. The WFC and BFC assessments recognize existing success in communities that already promote walking and biking as well as provide a framework for those areas trying to achieve higher walking and bicycling rates.

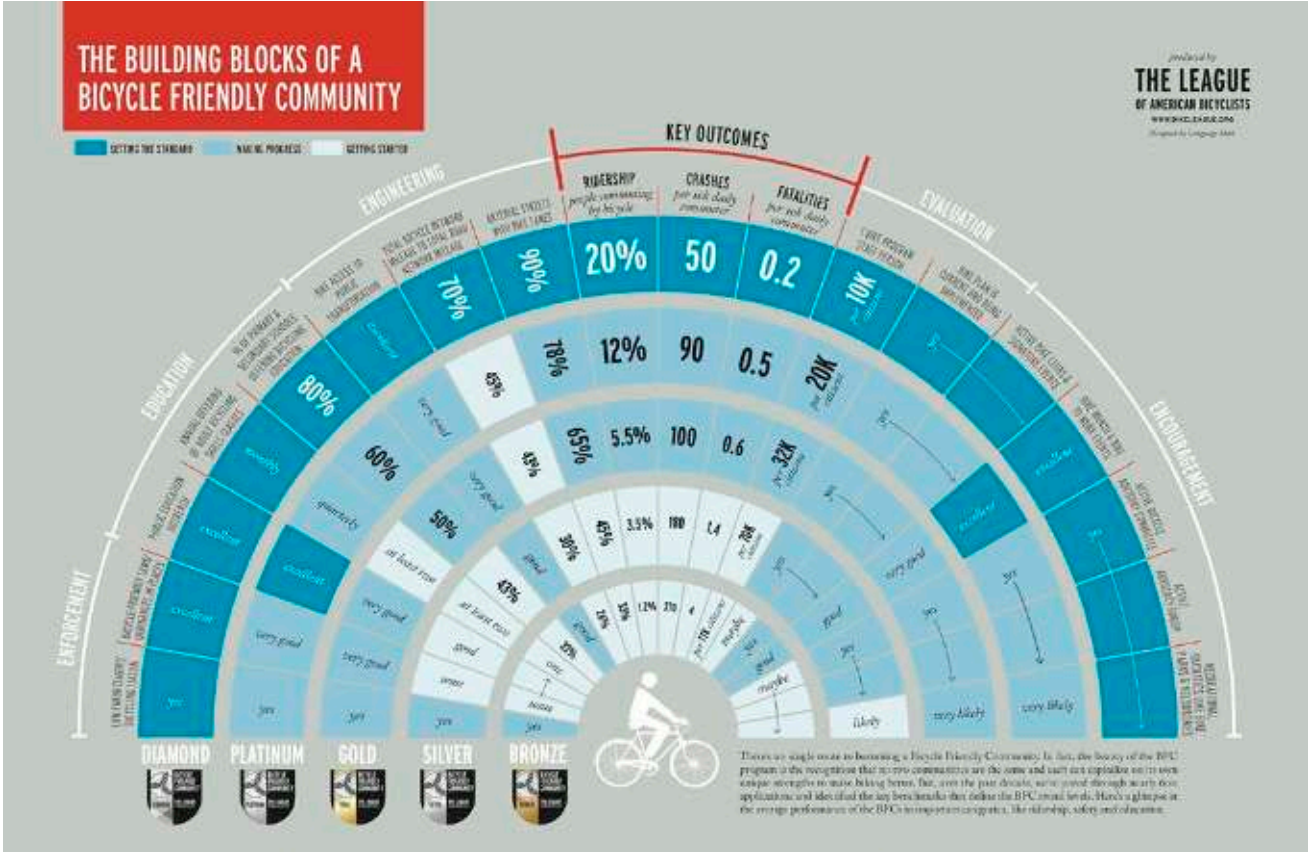
The applications for BFC and WFC begin with questions about the community itself, followed by sections for each of the 5 Es, which ask about the existence and characteristics of infrastructure, plans, and programs related to walking and biking. Both programs publish previews of their applications, which can be used to help the community prepare before it submits the final application online.

- BFC application preview: www.bikeleague.org/community.
- Walk Friendly Assessment Tool: www.walkfriendly.org/WFC_Assessment_Tool_Sept2012.pdf

Current Designations and Additional Information

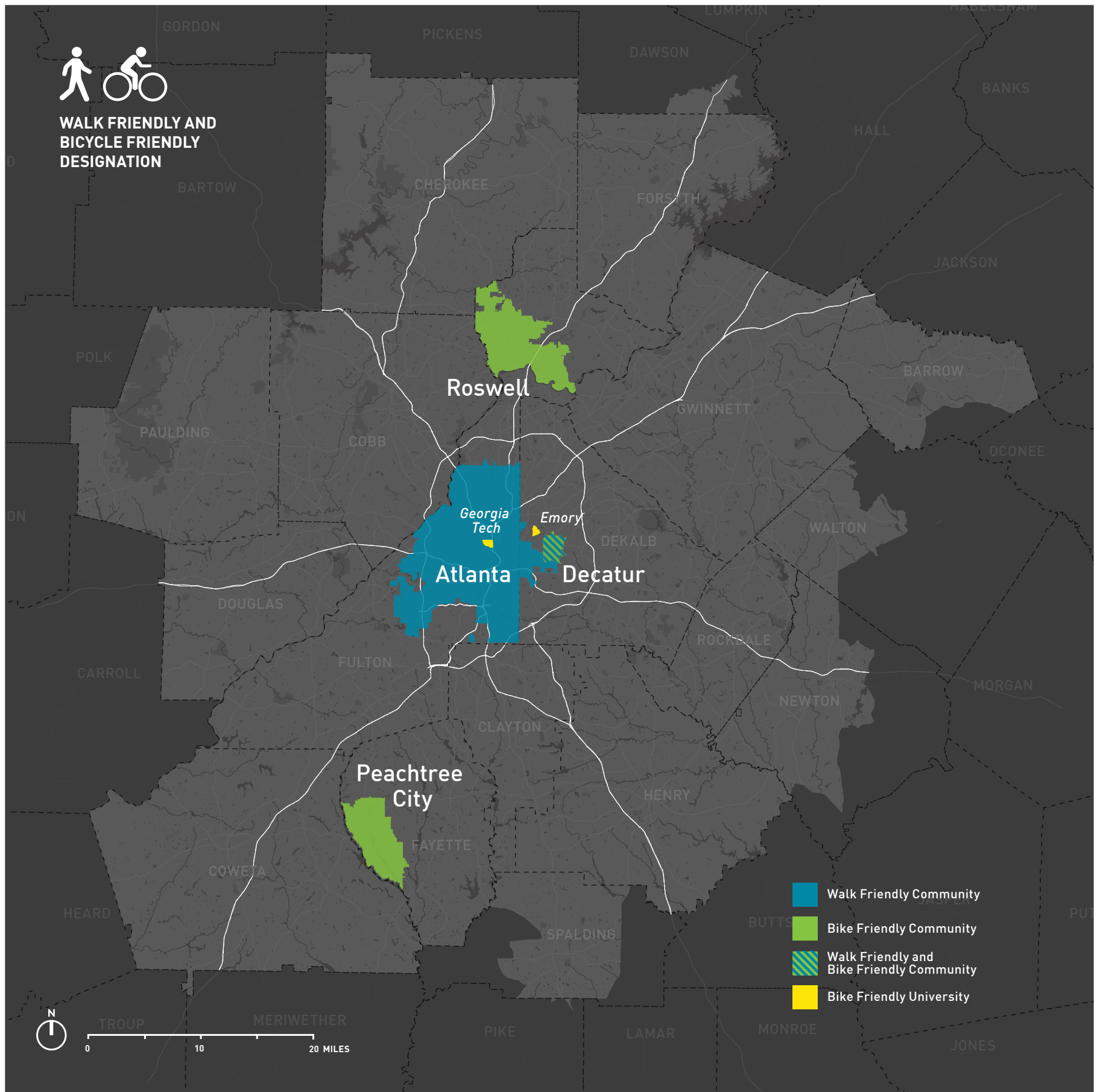
There are currently two WFCs and three BFCs in the region. WFCs include Atlanta and Decatur and BFCs include Decatur, Roswell and Peachtree City. For both walking and biking, other cities and counties within the Atlanta Region have infrastructure, policies, or programs in place to become a WFC or BFC.

However, there are significant gaps related to these topics too. Based on responses to the Walk-Friendly and Bike-Friendly Communities Survey, **Atlanta communities are strongest in the area of engineering, with most room for improvement around education.** For a regional perspective on the 6Es, see the "Walk Friendly and Bike Friendly Community Survey" section of *Part 3: Public Input and Priority Topics*.





WALK FRIENDLY AND BICYCLE FRIENDLY DESIGNATION



Develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan or Plans

Bicycle and pedestrian master plans document a community's vision and action steps for improving the attractiveness of bicycling and walking. Active transportation plans leverage the benefits of overall livability to everyone, regardless of whether people choose not to walk or ride.

When preparing for the planning process, keep in mind that the needs of pedestrians differ from those of bicyclists, and therefore should be considered independently. While this does not necessarily require the production of separate plans for each mode, doing so tends to produce more detailed mode-specific recommendations.

Available funding and the level of political support for walking and bicycling, however, may make it more practical to produce one integrated plan that covers both modes.



A Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The vision and goals create the framework and guide all policy, project, and program recommendations. A clear vision expresses the community's aspirations for a bicycling and walking network. It should be bold and achievable. Goals are broad statements that reflect the larger vision but describe more explicitly the end results a community wants to achieve. Objectives are a group of tasks or initiatives that, if completed, will result in (or at least move toward) the accomplishment of a particular goal. While goals can be somewhat general, objectives should be more specific and measurable.



Existing Conditions

Creating a clear image of where the community is now enables a comparison with where the community wants to be in the future. Analysis of existing conditions uses a combination of data, maps, photos, and words.



Needs Assessment

A needs assessment builds on the existing conditions report by summarizing the likely changes required in order to move towards the desired outcomes stated in the vision and goals. The content of the needs assessment will come from two main sources: 1) an analysis of existing conditions and projected trends, and 2) the results of the public engagement process.



Recommendations

Crafting recommendations involves prioritizing new infrastructure for people who walk or bike, supportive programs, and policies. Any approach will depend on previously identified needs, opportunities and constraints, the size and complexity of the geographic area, and budget. In all cases, the vision, goals, and objectives should drive the process.



Projects

Developing pedestrian networks at a scale larger than a neighborhood can be challenging. A common approach to enhancing the pedestrian network is to focus on smaller opportunity areas within a city or county, such as corridors with identified pedestrian safety issues and areas within a half-mile of schools, transit, parks, and libraries.



Programs

The cities with the highest non-motorized mode shares not only have well connected sidewalk and bikeway infrastructure and supportive policies, but have also funded extensive educational, encouragement, and enforcement programs. Safe Routes to School is a good example of a program that includes all three of these elements and is almost universally well-received because of its focus on supporting the health and safety of children.



Policies

Policy recommendations are intended to guide future actions. It is not uncommon for plans to include multiple objectives or strategies aimed at increasing the pedestrian and bicycle friendliness of policy in specific areas such as road maintenance, transportation planning/engineering, land use planning, and law enforcement.



Implementation Strategy

Creating an implementation plan is a critical but often overlooked step. It should be detailed, yet easy to use. At a minimum, the implementation plan should include 1) a prioritized list of actions 2) an annual work plan calendar 3) a budget, and 4) agencies or persons responsible for realization.



Performance Measures

Performance measures (also sometimes called performance indicators or metrics) are a way to evaluate progress. Depending on the goal or objective, the performance measure may be general (i.e. mode share) or specific (i.e. percent of youth receiving bicycle safety education).

Adopt Local Policies and Ordinances Supportive of Walking and Bicycling

Local jurisdictions create a framework for long-term success by developing clear policies that focus on implementing infrastructure for people who walk and bike. This section includes a variety of policy recommendations that support walking and biking.



Update Land use and Development Codes

Building design and land use planning impact the efficiency and viability of active transportation. For many decades, land use patterns in metro Atlanta favored car travel. More recently, the Atlanta region has shifted towards compact communities that prioritize walkability. Local codes that allow for short block lengths, mixed use developments with street-fronting retail, and a connected network of streets form the bedrock of livable communities.

To enact walkable land use regulations:

- Update zoning regulations to encourage a mix of land uses.
- Require that large developments maintain or improve existing street connections.

- Prohibit walls or other barriers between developments.
- Adopt an ordinance requiring bike racks and bike parking in new commercial and residential buildings.
- Encourage compact development near transit and areas with walkable connectivity.
- Require review of development proposals by bike and pedestrian coordinators, local active transportation experts, or advocates.
- Discourage cul-de-sacs – may prohibit in some areas, or require special permit or variance.
- Require sidewalks in all new developments.
- If trail master plan exists, require that developers incorporate trails into

their developments in accordance with master plan

- Consider density bonuses or Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) where consistent with comprehensive plans and LCI plans in order to enhance walkable centers, especially near transit stations
- Require showers and indoor/secure bike parking in new office developments
- Set parking maximums or reduce parking requirements, especially near transit.
- Adopt design standards or overlay zoning prohibiting parking in the front yard/setback, that entrances to businesses and residential buildings front the street, etc.

Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

The Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI), created in 2000, provides grants and technical assistance to help communities update local codes, develop plans, and implement active transportation projects and walkable developments. The ARC Board, through resolutions and adoption of regional plans, has committed \$500 Million through the year 2040 for LCI projects and studies. To date, the LCI program has awarded \$172 million in transportation projects to 5963 communities, and 12.68 million to create 114 Master Plans and supplemental studies.



Development and transportation infrastructure can create great places and enhance quality of life, such as along Canton Street in Roswell, GA.

Rethink Parking Requirements

Parking policy reform is an important tool to reduce congestion, use land more efficiently, and encourage people to walk or bike for short trips. This includes better management of existing parking, pricing that reflects demand, and lowering requirements for parking with new commercial and housing developments.

Reducing minimum parking requirements can benefit communities in many ways:

- Affordability increases for housing and commercial properties with fewer parking spaces
- Fewer “dead” spaces and more vibrant streets
- Amenities are concentrated in compact areas, further improving walkability
- Accessing storefronts is safer and more enjoyable without excessive off street parking

Effective parking reform is based on context. In urban areas and parts of the Atlanta region that are well served by transit, reducing the amount of parking can encourage walking and biking.

Recommendations for urban areas, university districts, town centers, and transit-oriented developments:

- Establish parking maximums
- Create parking benefit districts
- Restrict new surface parking
- Unbundle the cost of parking from housing
- Encourage conversion of surface lots to active uses
- Require active street-level uses in structured parking

- Encourage/allow shared parking
- If building new parking, reserve some spaces for bicycles and shared cars

In suburban parts of the region, parking needs can be balanced through land use retrofits and development design that includes parking but respects people that arrive by foot or bike.

Recommendations for suburban areas not served by transit:

- Require that buildings front the street, with parking behind
- Encourage conversion of surface lots to active uses
- Require pedestrian entrances from the sidewalk
- Limit the number of driveways leading to parking lots through access management policy

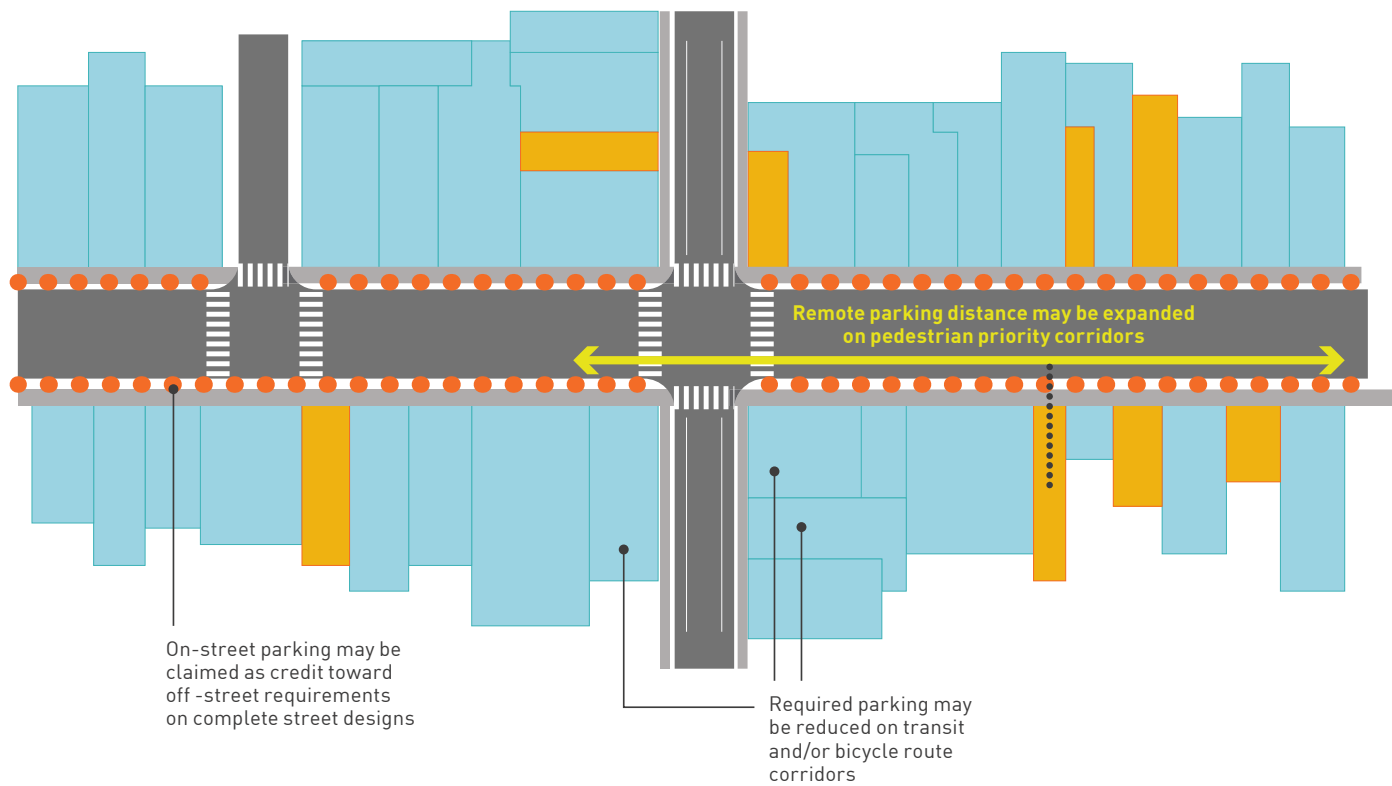
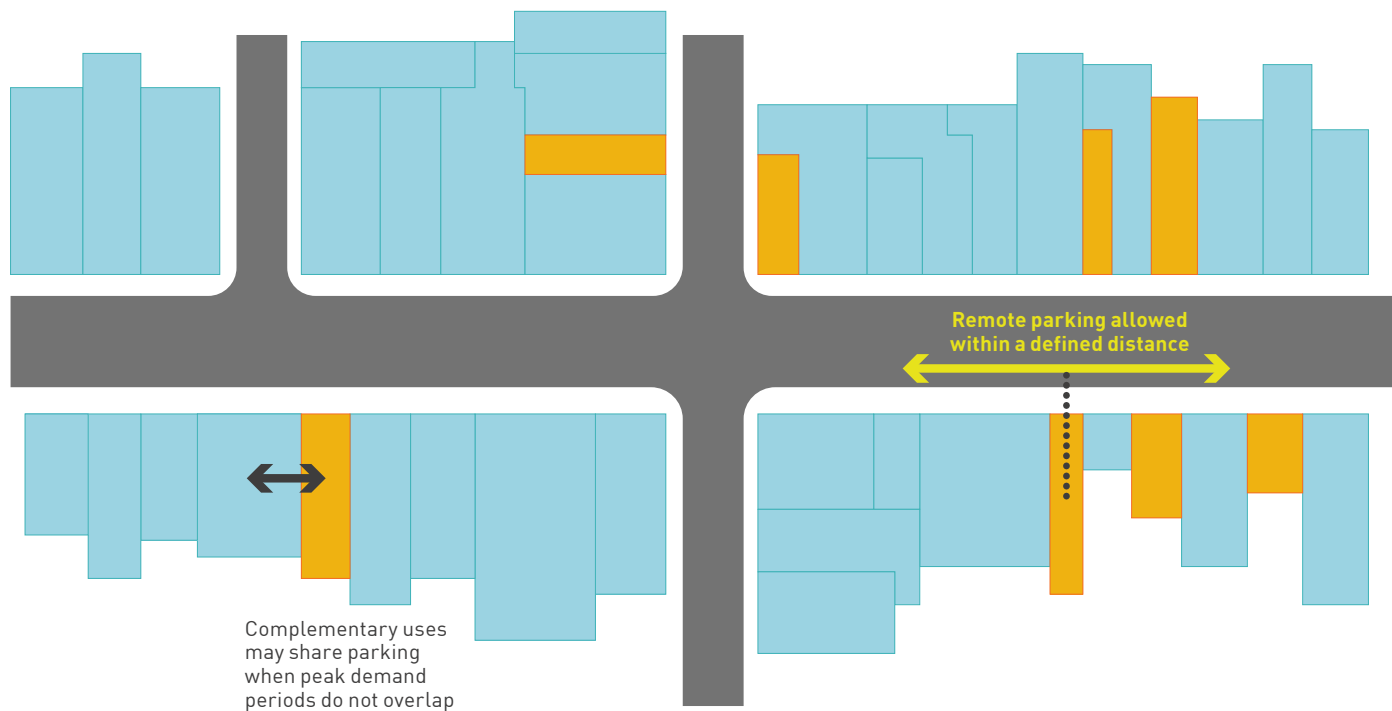
Bicycle and pedestrian projects are not typically associated with parking policy and requirements, which most local governments address through zoning ordinances or other land development regulations. However, the potential for the two to influence one another is a powerful (if not commonly used) policy tool that can improve community walkability and manage parking supply and demand.

Many regulations on parking and loading in local development codes go beyond setting minimum requirements—they may also allow a use to meet its off-street requirements on other sites within a defined distance, allow sharing of parking between complementary land uses, or even allow parking reductions along with an approved management plan that uses shuttle or valet service to meet access demand for a particular land use. These have typically been used in higher-density urban environments,

although they may also be useful approaches to meeting parking demand in activity centers and corridors throughout the Atlanta region if they are supported by a strong walking and bicycling network.

The following factors are helpful ways to evaluate how non-motorized facilities, especially pedestrian facilities, can give flexibility to how parking is addressed in development regulations—and how specific parking conditions on key corridors may bear on bicycle and pedestrian project decision-making by helping planners and elected officials to understand the corridors where they will be able to help solve parking challenges.

- What is the level of parking constraint on a corridor? Does a corridor feature smaller parcels or other constraints that make it difficult for individual development projects or existing uses to provide their own parking?
- What are the corridor’s nearby land uses? Is there high demand for walking to and from uses directly on the corridor?
- Do zoning and future land use plans allow for mixed use? Is there potential to further share parking or meet requirements through off-site facilities?
- Will other transportation projects have impacts on corridor properties that further constrain parking ability, such as acquiring private property for right-of-way? If so, can bicycle and pedestrian facilities be included in the project scope to add this connectivity between potentially shared parking resources?
- Is the larger area experiencing redevelopment activity or showing potential for change?



Adopt a Complete Streets Policy

A Complete Street safely accommodates all users, whether travelling on foot, by bike, transit, or car. Complete Streets create livable spaces for all ages to enjoy, with wide sidewalks, safe crossings, abundant bicycle facilities, and easy transit access.

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2012. The GDOT policy affects new construction, alteration and maintenance of state roads and any federally funded transportation project in the state, including those projects programmed by the ARC in the Atlanta region. The policy also outlines design guidelines for accommodating people who walk, bike, and use transit. Since the GDOT policy applies to state roads, only selected major roads are covered. In addition, as documented in the ARC's

TIP/RTP Blueprint, ARC requires that all projects it funds and programs in the TIP are consistent with complete streets principles (See Business Rule 2.6.5 in the TIP Blueprint)

The National Complete Streets Coalition is a comprehensive resource for cities and counties that are moving to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The Coalition lists more than 720 local and regional jurisdictions that have adopted a policy or ordinance. In the Atlanta region this includes;

- Atlanta
- Clarkston
- Cobb County
- Decatur
- DeKalb County
- Douglas County
- Dunwoody
- Roswell

Successful Complete Streets policies:

- Have a clear, unified vision
- Contain specific performance measures
- Are inclusive of all users
- List a clear prioritization and implementation process
- Include an oversight committee to provide guidance and evaluate progress



Complete street policies help government departments and agencies create a transportation system that accommodates all modes and ages.

Review Maintenance Plans

A regular maintenance schedule for all facilities helps protect investments and ensure a high-quality user experience. Existing facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and trails should be evaluated to determine whether the existing maintenance plan is working, and to make improvements.

Roadway infrastructure maintenance occurs as one of the three R's – reconstruction, repaving, and repair. Aligning pedestrian, bike, and transit upgrades and safety improvements with maintenance projects ensures that the upgrades are implemented frequently and efficiently. Maintenance schedules and planned improvements should be clearly communicated between departments within agencies. Roadway repaving projects, in particular, can integrate improvements such as bike lanes, safe crossings, traffic calming, and signage.

A separate sidewalk maintenance program is recommended in parts of metro Atlanta where sidewalk repairs are needed. In areas where there are large gaps in the sidewalk network, a sidewalk improvement plan can prioritize areas where demand is high (indicated by well-worn footpaths).

To develop a sidewalk maintenance program;

1. Gather data on sidewalk conditions (a prioritization system may be necessary in larger areas)
2. Identify funding needs
3. Develop a funding plan
4. Prioritize corridors for improvements based on condition and need
5. Create a transparent and accessible schedule of upcoming repairs

Large parts of the Atlanta region are inaccessible to people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all roadway repaving and reconstruction projects meet ADA standards for curb ramp accessibility (Section 502, 6-28-2013).

Trail maintenance programs should consider periodic surface quality inspections in addition to sealing and repaving (for asphalt trails) and reconstruction (for both concrete and asphalt trails). Consider including eventual reconstruction costs in an annual trail maintenance budget instead of a separate capital item. Trail maintenance plans may also include irrigation, mowing, tree trimming, seasonal leaf removal, and other tasks associated with caring for landscaping along the trail.



Regular maintenance of existing infrastructure can ensure proper use and visibility of walkways and bikeways

Incorporate Active Transportation in Design Guidelines and Engineering Standards

Public works and transportation planning departments typically have formalized policies that guide the design of streets and public spaces. Agencies may house engineering standards and design guidelines in one design manual or use separate manuals based on project type or context. Incorporating specific design guidance on bikeways and pedestrian pathways into existing manuals, the agency's bicycle and pedestrian master plan, or a stand-alone document are effective ways to institutionalize good design that balances the needs of all road users.

The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) provides the Urban Street Design Guide and Urban Bikeway Design Guide as a resource for cities and policy makers. The NACTO guides enable communities to craft local design policies that balance transportation modes.

DESIGN VEHICLES

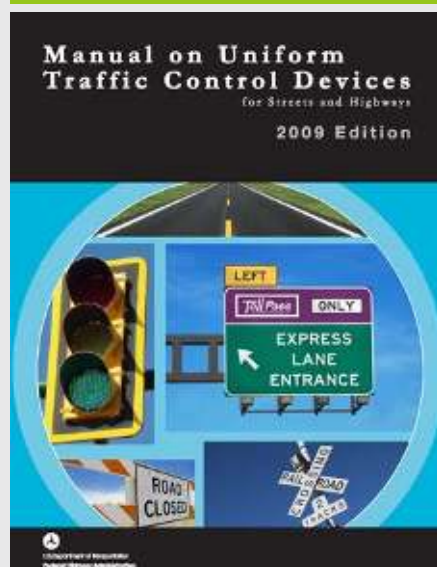
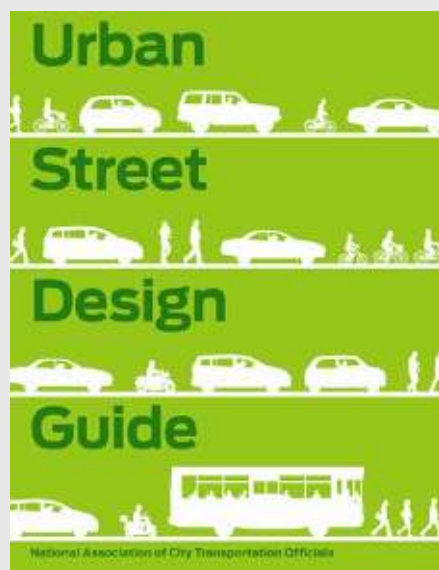
Roadway designers use a concept called a "design vehicle" to establish design parameters for streets. Designers sometimes use large trucks as the default design vehicle for roadways even when such vehicles infrequently use a given street or type of street. This results in wider-than-necessary lane widths and large curb radii that promote higher speeds, which in turn has a negative impact on bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort. While designs must account for the challenges of larger vehicles, especially emergency vehicles, may face, these infrequent challenges must not dominate the safety or comfort of a site for the majority of daily users.

The process for designing sidewalks, bikeways, and trails does not always include a design vehicle or, the case of pedestrian-specific infrastructure, a design user. However, the design of these facilities should be informed by the typical or target user. Some cities, including Portland, Oregon, have adopted a specific design user for active transportation infrastructure. In an attempt to take "all ages and abilities" seriously, the City of Portland's Active Transportation Division strives to design their sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and crossing treatments based on the needs of an 8-year old.



Smaller transit vehicles allow for more flexibility in safe street design.

National Standards and Best Practices in Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design



National standards and best practices for walkway and bikeway facility design is evolving quickly as the transportation industry responds to demand for innovation in implementation.

Transportation design standards and best practices are evolving quickly in the US. As cities and regions compete for economic growth, transportation professionals and decision-makers are increasingly looking for innovative ways to meet the multi-modal transportation needs of communities today and tomorrow. Below is a summary of current references for the design of facilities that support walking and biking. The summary is not exhaustive and is meant to highlight important reference documents and resources used in practice. In all cases, engineering judgment is recommended to ensure that the application makes sense for the context of each treatment, given the many complexities of streets.

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)

The Federal Highway Administration's MUTCD defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public traffic. The MUTCD is the primary source for guidance on lane striping requirements, signal warrants, and recommended signage and pavement markings.

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guides

The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, updated in June 2012 provides guidance on dimensions, use, and layout of specific bicycle facilities.

The standards and guidelines presented by AASHTO provide basic information, such as minimum sidewalk widths, bicycle lane dimensions, detailed striping requirements and recommended signage and pavement markings.

Offering similar guidance for pedestrian design, the 2004 AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities provides comprehensive guidance on planning and designing for people on foot.

The 2011 AASHTO: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets commonly referred to as the "Green Book," contains the current design research and practices for highway and street geometric design.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is an important part of any bicycle and pedestrian facility project. The United States Access Board's proposed Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards) contain standards and guidance for the construction of accessible facilities. This includes requirements for sidewalk curb ramps, slope requirements, and pedestrian railings along stairs.

National Association of City Transportation Officials' (NACTO)

The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide (2012) and the Urban Street Design Guide (2013) are the newest publications of nationally recognized urban street and bicycle-specific design guidelines, and offers guidance on the current state of the practice designs. The intent of the guides is to offer substantive guidance for cities seeking to improve transportation in places where competing demands for the use of the right of way present unique challenges. All of the NACTO guide treatments are in use internationally and in many cities around the US.

Manage Vehicle Speeds

People walking and biking are disproportionately threatened by even small increases in traffic speed. As vehicle speeds increase, the risk death for pedestrians increases dramatically. At 25mph, the risk of death for pedestrians is only about 11%. At 35mph, the risk increases to about 32%. At 45mph, 65% of pedestrians suffer fatal injuries.¹ Slower traffic speeds may also promote physical activity by making the roads safer and more comfortable for people walking and biking.

Unsafe traffic speeds are the result of roadway designs that encourage higher speeds, speed limits that are set too

¹ Tefft, B. C. *Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death*. Accident Analysis & Prevention 50 (2013) 871-878.

high, and people driving faster than set speed limits. Proven measures exist to reduce vehicle speeds to levels that are safer for everyone on the road.

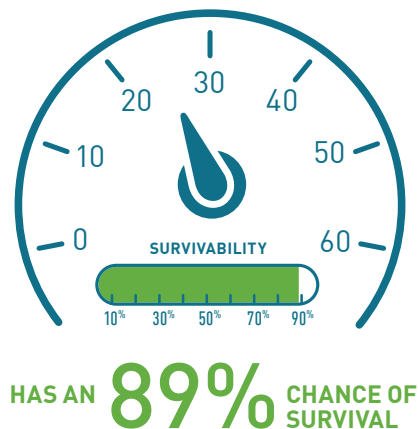
Key strategies for speed reduction include:

- **Design and retrofit road networks to ensure safe speeds for all road users.**

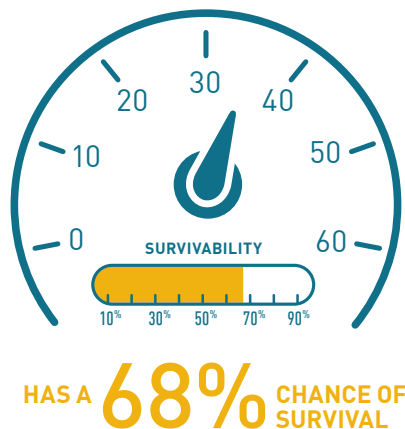
This includes setting a target speed, the speed you intend for drivers to go, rather than using 85th percentile operating speeds, when designing roadways. Use context-appropriate speed reduction mechanisms such as lane width reductions, medians, chicanes, speed humps, street trees, and on-street parking to encourage drivers to slow down.

- **Set speed limits for the safety of all road users.** For urban arterial roadways, this means a maximum of 35mph. Some urban arterials that fall outside of built-up areas where people are likely or permitted to walk or bike. In these highway-like conditions, a higher target speed may be appropriate. New York City recently set a city-wide speed limit of 30mph. In neighborhood settings, many cities around the country are moving toward 20mph posted speeds to improve safety and increase livability.
- **Enforce speed limits.** Law enforcement officers play a key role in promoting safe driving behavior. Consistent enforcement can have a big impact on driver behavior over the long term.

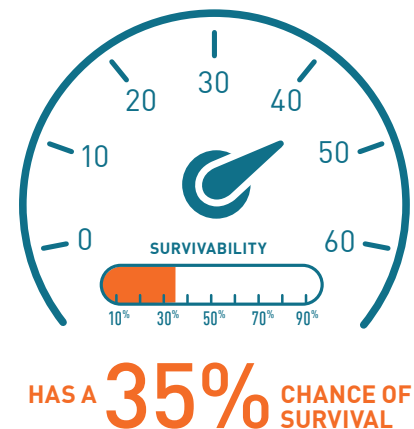
A PEDESTRIAN HIT BY A VEHICLE TRAVELING AT 25 MPH



A PEDESTRIAN HIT BY A VEHICLE TRAVELING AT 35 MPH



A PEDESTRIAN HIT BY A VEHICLE TRAVELING AT 45 MPH



Speed impacts the safety of all users of the street.

Create Safe Walkways in Construction Zones

Walkways in construction zones should be routed on the same side of the street as the construction site, run on or parallel to the closed sidewalk, and must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Signage related to construction activities shall be located in an area that does not block safe pedestrian or bike access. Frequent site visits and enforcement may be required to ensure compliance with local standards.

Adopt a Vision Zero Policy

Vision Zero is the concept that **no loss of life is acceptable** on our roadways. Jurisdictions across the nation and across the world are adopting Vision Zero policies to eliminate preventable traffic deaths.

A Vision Zero policy acknowledges that human life takes priority over transportation mobility and that government bodies, roadway designers, and road users share responsibility for traffic safety. This policy can help develop a holistic program for prioritizing Engineering solutions and using Enforcement, Education, and Encouragement together to support safety outcomes.

For more information on developing a Vision Zero policy, go to visionzeronetwork.org



Regular, safe, and convenient street crossings for those walking and biking in the region can help reduce bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Active Transport Programs and Marketing Ideas for Local Governments

Active transportation infrastructure is complemented by effective education, encouragement, and enforcement programs. Recommendations for programs and activities were refined based on stakeholder feedback, community input, and existing programs with a track record of success. By implementing these strategies, jurisdictions in metro Atlanta can improve mobility, safety, and comfort for all residents.

Program Type	Potential Lead agency							Program Goal						
	ARC	City or County	Transit Agency	CIDs	GDOT	NGOs	School Districts	Mode shift	Skill building	Info sharing	Awareness & visibility	Broaden participation	Reduce conflicts	Improve safety
Promoting Good Road User Behavior	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
Pedestrian Safety Campaigns	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
Bike Skills Education		x	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	x
Bike to Work/ School Commute Challenge	x	x		x		x	x	x				x		
Bike + Transit - Education and Promotion		x	x	x		x		x	x	x		x		x
Demographic-Specific Programs		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x
Bike/Walk Events/Festivals	x	x		x	x	x				x	x	x	x	
Agency Staff Training	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				
Bike Parking Program	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x	x	
Open Streets	x	x		x		x			x		x	x		
Safe Routes to School	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Enforcement	x	x		x		x	x	x		x	x		x	x
Bike/Ped Legal Training		x			x	x			x	x				x
Local Business Rewards/ Discount Program	x	x		x				x			x	x		
Active Transportation RX	x	x		x				x			x			
Employer Incentives	x			x	x	x		x		x		x		
Popup Projects	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x



Promote Good Road User Behavior Programs

These programs encourage road users to abide by local laws, to be courteous to other road users, and promotes safe behaviors and actions. They can be targeted at just one mode (e.g. cyclists), or at multiple road user types (e.g. cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians).

Examples: Share the Road, Lights on, and Stop for Pedestrians campaigns



Create Pedestrian Safety Campaigns

Pedestrian safety campaigns show people how and why to walk. Typical programs focus on reducing conflicts with motor vehicles, providing information on how and when to safely cross the road, and distributing information on local laws. These campaigns can be geared to adults and/or youth.



Provide Bike Skills Education

Bike education programs help people bike more often and more safely. These programs teach bike maintenance, bicycle handling skills, traffic safety know-how, and laws related to bicycling on public roads. Courses, campaigns, and educational materials can be geared to both adults and/or youth.

Examples: Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, Bike Emory, and Georgia Bikes courses



Start or Join a Bike to Work/Commute Challenge

Commute-based programs and challenges can focus on a day, a week, a month, or another period of time. Bike-to-work programs often offer an incentive to employees in the form of reward or prize drawing for participating. Challenges allow individuals, teams, or workplaces to compete against each other.

Example: Georgia Commute Options' Atlanta Bike Challenge



Host Bike + Transit Education and Training

Combining bicycling with transit is a great way to extend any trip. However, the task of coordinating biking and transit can be nerve-racking. This program aims to reduce the barriers of combining bikes with transit by providing information and education on how to load your bike on a bus or train, rules from your local transit provider, and in some cases host events that allow people to try it out in a comfortable group setting.



Partner with Community Groups on Demographic-Specific Programs

Programs that target a specific demographic group can create a strong sense of support and community. There are many possible groups to target, including women, new residents, seniors, families with young children, people of color, and recent immigrants/refugees. These programs are usually best delivered in partnership with community organizations.

Example: ARC's Lifelong Communities program



Raise the Visibility of Walking and Biking with events/festivals

The Atlanta region is known for its festivals, and many events are pedestrian friendly. Cycling festivals typically combine multiple themed bike rides, parties, and races into a condensed period of time. Cities and neighborhoods can organize events that get more people out walking and interacting with the community. Block parties, art strolls, walking tours, and group bike rides all instill a sense of community pride and appreciation for pedestrian-scaled environments.

Examples: Atlanta Cycling Festival, Car-free festivals, and Social rides



Provide Agency Staff Training

Public agency staff have many opportunities to contribute to making the Atlanta region a great place to walk and bike. Internal trainings will make sure that they all are fully trained on policies and practices that the agency wants to institutionalize.



Develop a Bike Parking Program

Bike parking is an essential part of creating a bike-friendly city. Bike parking programs can install bike parking on request near local businesses, or can offer valet services at events. Revisiting bike parking policy and development guidelines is also important.

Examples: Atlanta Bicycle Coalition Bike Valet, Bike parking/bike corral business request program



Start Open Streets Events

Open street initiatives temporarily close the streets to automobiles so people may use them for various activities like walking, jogging, bicycling, skating, dancing and other social activities. These events are great at bringing the community together and promoting transportation options, placemaking, and public health. Open Street events are also excellent at building community. They bring together neighborhoods, businesses and visitors alike. They can be centered in a downtown or across neighborhoods.

Example: Atlanta Streets Alive



Enhance Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs encourage children to walk or bike to school more often and more safely. SRTS programs promote road user safety, enhance children's health, improve quality of life, and creates a new transportation option for families. These programs require strong partnerships between schools and community members. Most SRTS programs combine the "Five Es" of education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation.



Partner with the Police on Enforcement

An enforcement strategy aims to deter unsafe behaviors of drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists, and encourages all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely. Enforcement complements many transportation programs. Options include community enforcement (pedestrian/bike safety training) or law enforcement (promoting good road user behaviors).

Example: Crosswalk enforcement program



Offer Bike/Ped Legal Training

Legal training and education allows pedestrians and/or bicyclists to learn about their rights and responsibilities as road users. These programs offer free legal clinics, handouts and legal guides, and provide information on state and local laws. This information is valuable to all road users and creates an informed community around important bicycle and pedestrian laws.



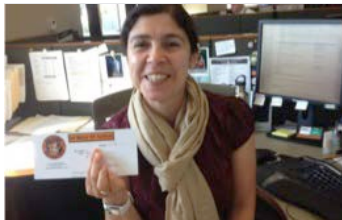
Local Business Rewards/Discount Program

SmartTrips programs are most commonly an intensive residential TDM campaign that promotes walking, biking, transit, and shared modes to a target audience. This audience is most commonly a residential neighborhood, but SmartTrips programs have also successfully targeted universities, new residents, and downtown business districts. The program combines customized travel information packets with fun events and ongoing communications to engage people in changing their travel habits.



Prescribe Active Transportation

Active transportation prescriptions are a fun way to encourage people to be active and healthy. Health care providers are given a special prescription pad and other tools to help promote healthy lifestyle changes for their patients. In the state of New Mexico, for example, this type of program linked prescriptions to a website that provided walking tips, a trip log, groups to join, and an interactive map that helped people find walking routes in their neighborhoods.



Reward Walking and Biking with Employer Incentives

Employer incentives aim to reduce driving alone commuting. Solutions include promoting transit, vanpool/carpools, carsharing, bicycling and walking. Employees who bike to work and report on their bicycle trips earn rewards or prizes such as paycheck bonuses, gift cards, or workplace perks. Employees are also offered resources and tools and invited to attend trainings and events.

Local business reward and discount programs encourage people to commute or run errands by biking. People who bike are eligible for rewards or discounts at participating local businesses. In some cases a membership or helmet stickers needed by consumers to receive the discount. This program reinforces bicycling as a positive behavior, business see increased customer loyalty, it encourages bike- friendly establishments, and it provides the opportunity to build partnerships with local businesses.



Demonstrate Improvements through Popup Projects

Temporary popup projects can demonstrate the success of walking and biking infrastructure without a long-term commitment and a big budget. Popup projects include temporary protected bike lanes, painted sidewalks, parklets, pedestrian plazas in formerly vacant spaces, and traffic calming techniques.

Examples: Sweet Auburn Living Beyond Expectations Project, North Avondale Rd Road Diet and roundabout project in Avondale Estates

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Evaluate and Monitor Active Transportation Outcomes

A successful plan requires frequent monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation includes oversight of implementation as well as benchmarks, quantifiable performance measures, surveys, and reports.

Perform Crash Analysis

The Atlanta metro currently ranks as one of the 10 most dangerous places to walk (Smart Growth America, 2014) and is an FHWA Pedestrian-Bicycle Focus City due to the high crash rate. Additionally, the state of Georgia is an FHWA Focus state. In response, the Georgia Department of Transportation created a Georgia Pedestrian Safety Task Force and a Bicycle Safety Task Force that includes the Atlanta Regional Commission, the City of Atlanta, local advocates, and other stakeholders to implement strategies to reduce fatalities regionally and statewide. A primary objective of both Task Forces is to gather data to optimize the location and selection of safety improvements.

Crash analysis can help identify system network issues, such as consistent bicycle and pedestrian crashes along major roadways. Systemic safety issues can be addressed by policy changes and implemented with safety improvements consistently over time. Crash analysis can also be used to understand safety issues in specific locations, such as a particular intersection, and help identify solutions to improve safety.

Perform Roadway Safety Audits

Roadway safety audits, or RSAs, are frequently used to assess safety concerns for people who walk and bike. The goal of the RSA is to use field analysis to make informed recommendations for safety improvements. This is best accomplished by carefully walking the corridor during the day to note existing conditions, and walking or driving the corridor at night to note lighting, visibility, and safety concerns. RSAs may take place at specific intersections and locations, or along corridors. Safety audits should be prioritized in areas with high crash rates, and/or where street reconstruction or restriping is scheduled, such as Complete Streets makeovers or road diets. RSAs should not be conducted by the agency that owns the road being audited. RSAs may be conducted by consultants, experts on pedestrian and bike safety, community groups, and local advocacy organizations.

Road Safety Audits are comprised of three parts; 1) data collection and organization, 2) field work, and 3) report on findings and recommendations. The field work for many RSAs can be completed in one day, however RSAs on corridors more than two miles in length may require two days.

Record Vehicle Speeds and Traffic Volumes

In areas where residents or businesses report that speeding is an issue, vehicle speed data should be collected to determine the severity of the problem. After reviewing speed data, posted speed limits, and functional classification of the roadway, the need for and applicability of traffic calming measures can be evaluated. Accurate speed detection devices can be purchased for less than \$150, and speeds are easily recorded by municipal agencies or concerned citizens. If traffic calming measures are installed, vehicle speeds should be recorded again for evaluation.

Traffic counts can help inform decision-making about potential complete streets. Counts may indicate that certain roads have excess capacity to accommodate vehicle traffic, allowing for the repurposing of street to accommodate walking, biking, or transit. Conducting traffic counts can also help identify roadways with opportunities to reconfigure travel lanes to include facilities for people walking and biking, improve traffic flow, and safety for all road users.

Monitor Active Transportation Spending

Evaluation of spending can determine whether the desired amount of funds are allocated to bicycle and pedestrian projects. Municipalities should monitor how local, regional, state and federal funds are being spent and assess future need. To prioritize active transportation, spending should appropriately match the overall need and growth of bicycling and walking as transit modes. Similarly, maintenance funds should exceed the need for repairs to improve conditions for people who walk and bike.

As an example, if the maintenance backlog for sidewalks is 20 percent of the overall infrastructure maintenance backlog, then at least 20 percent of the maintenance budget should be allocated for sidewalk repairs.

Local jurisdictions should report funding on stand-alone pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects as well as infrastructure that is part of larger roadway redesigns, such as Complete Street Projects. For these projects, funding for pedestrian and bike improvements (on-street bike lanes, sidewalks, etc) should be isolated to make funding analysis easier. Infrastructure that is required by law as part of larger road projects, such as ADA compliant curb ramps and push buttons, should not be included as separate pedestrian and bike projects for the funding analysis.

Funding for non-pedestrian and bike infrastructure should also be evaluated, to determine whether access and safety for all users is improving. For example, if sidewalks are improved but roads are widened to accommodate more vehicles, then overall safety and convenience may decline.

Spending on education, encouragement, and enforcement campaigns for people who walk or bike should also be evaluated by category for year-by-year comparisons and benchmarks.

Count the Number of People Walking and Bicycling

Understanding where people are walking and biking is critical to making improvements in local walking and biking networks. The number of people walking or biking can be used to evaluate the success of infrastructure projects, or to make data-based decisions on where to make improvements. Comparing numbers seasonally and over multiple years provides insight on emerging trends. And in cases where demand is questioned, this information can support the need for improvements. Conducting bicycle and pedestrian counts whenever vehicles are counted during traffic studies is one way to integrate planning for walking and bicycling into existing activities.

Counts can be conducted manually or with automatic sensors. Manual counts are low-cost, easy to implement, and can provide additional data such as gender and percentage of people who bike that wear helmets or have bike lights. However, manual counts require significant volunteer time and do not provide a continual, 24 hour picture of usage.

Automatic pedestrian and bike counting technology has advanced rapidly in recent years. In-pavement sensors, computer vision, infrared beams, radar, and tube counters can all detect people who walk and bike. However, devices vary considerably in terms of cost, accuracy, data collection, and ease of deployment. It is important to choose counting devices that are best suited for the type of data needed (short term or long term) and the site characteristics where counts will take place. This includes counts on shared paths less than 10 feet wide, shared spaces more than 10 feet wide, barrier separated cycle tracks, bike lanes, and mixed-traffic roads.



Bike counters can help evaluate and impact the success of infrastructure projects.

Gather Travel Surveys and User-Generated Travel Data

The American Community Survey, or ACS, is the most widely known source of data for walking and biking trips, but is limited in scope. The ACS only reports on commute trip purpose, and partial trips are not recorded, so walking and biking trips are often grouped with transit on commutes with multiple modes. At some geographies, bike trips are grouped with “other” transportation modes that include taxis.

Pedestrian and bicycle travel surveys can address the shortcomings of limited data from national surveys. These surveys can be tailored to fit the needs of local municipalities, and provide specific information on travel behavior. Surveys can be completed in-house and sent via mail to randomly selected residents.

User-generated travel data is a rapidly emerging source of information on where and when people walk and bike. Most user-generated data is tracked and submitted by mobile phone, with information displayed online and shared via social media platforms.

Nationally, Strava is a free services that provides a massive database on where people run and bike. While exercise-oriented, approximately half of all Strava data points in major cities are commutes. The Strava “heat maps” show spatial data that can inform maintenance needs, planning, and improvements to infrastructure for people who walk and bike.

Locally, the Cycle Atlanta app sends GPS data on your bike route to City of Atlanta planners and engineers. The app also can be used to report issues such as safety hazards and vehicle parking in bike lanes.

User-generated data provides helpful information but should not be used as a sole indicator of demand. Many areas may have high demand but fewer people recording trips due to lack of safe and sufficient infrastructure.

Capture Feedback from User Surveys

Intercept surveys capture data directly from users along a specific route or corridor. While methods vary, surveys should be kept very short (less than a page) to improve participation and gather complete data. To get more data and still achieve a high response rate, mail-back surveys may be handed out in person. The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project (NBPDP), provides standard count and survey instructions, as well as one page surveys for people who walk and bike.

Many people who use transit are unable to attend traditional public meetings. PEDS – metro Atlanta’s pedestrian advocacy organization – uses Walk-by Visioning to gather feedback from people who walk to transit. Walk by Visioning uses images and stickers to quickly convey issues and potential solutions as people enter or leave transit stations. This method eliminates language barriers, allowing for input from diverse communities. Information can be collected to identify safety issues and prioritize Safe Routes to Transit projects.

Establish Performance Measures and Benchmarks

Performance measures are quantitative indicators of a plan's success. *Benchmarks* are standards that set specific goals or targets for a plan. Performance measures should align with benchmarks, which should in turn align with specific objectives outlined in the plan.

As an example, an *objective* may be to improve the quantity of bicycle parking.

A *performance measure* would be the number of bicycle parking spaces.

A *benchmark* would be to install 200 parking spaces per year through 2020.

Benchmarks should be:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-based

Benchmarks should have agencies or personnel assigned to achieve the goal, and a separate advisory committee should track outcomes for all objectives. Arranging performance measures, benchmarks, and the responsible agencies in a table with a timeline for implementation helps to monitor progress.

Identify Progress with Evaluation Reports

Evaluation reports give an overview of progress towards implementing a community's goals and benchmarks for active transportation. Evaluation reports may include:

- A recap of the community vision for people who walk and bike
- A description of accomplishments
- An update on performance measures
- Trends and comparisons with peer communities
- Results and interpretation of the findings
- How the findings will be shared

A summary of the active transportation evaluation report can be adapted to present the findings to stakeholder groups, advisory committees, and council meetings. Clear reporting of failures and successes fosters trust that officials are following up on objectives.

At the national level, the Alliance for Biking and Walking Benchmarking project is a comprehensive data resource for government officials, advocates, and planners to compare progress between cities or states. At the local level, many cities produce "report cards" on walking and biking that are updated annually or every few years.

What Makes a Good Walking or Biking Project?

High-quality walking and biking networks are developed incrementally – block by block and intersection by intersection. To build a connected local system – on that ultimately has regional value too – requires developing good projects. Good projects, implemented incrementally with a focus on achieving a larger vision for community improvement, support the

development of connected networks that improve quality of life. Good walking and bicycling projects maximize three functions: Safety, Convenience, and Comfort. As highlighted in Walking and Biking Network sections previously, connectivity and user comfort are key measures of the success of a bicycling- and walking-friendly community. The

details of individual projects determine success at network-, community-, and regional-scales. The following matrix describes the key qualities that contribute to the success for different types of walking and biking projects. Local governments should use this list as a checklist to scope good projects that contribute great places to walk and bike.

Key Qualities

Walkways	Bikeways	Trails	Places and Public Spaces	Support Infrastructure
Increases the connectivity of the walkway network	Increases the connectivity of the bikeway network	Increases the connectivity of the local or regional trail system	Sociability	Increases the convenience of walking or biking
Provides a direct route between destinations, including frequent and convenient crossings	Provides convenient access to destinations	Safety, Security, and Universal Access	Designed for the intended user	Increases the attractiveness of walking or biking
Design details promote safety and comfort: adequate width, protection from vehicles, landscaped buffers and shade trees, highly visible crossing treatments	Minimizes potential for bodily harm: smooth and stable surface, adequate operating space, visibility at intersections	Wayfinding and Navigation	Access and Linkages	
Universal Access: smooth, stable, barrier-free surface with ADA-compliant curb ramps	Intuitive, context-appropriate design promotes comfort and predictability for all roadway users	Seamless transition to local networks and regional trails	Comfort and Image	
Includes social spaces for standing, sitting, and visiting	Accommodates expected user type	Adequate width	Sense of place	

Recommendations for Funding Walking and Biking Projects

	Short term Project < 2 years	Long term Project > 2 years
Small budget	Neighborhood Associations Community Improvement Districts Crowdsourcing Non-Profit Grants Impact Fees Infrastructure bonds Governor’s Office of Highway Safety Local taxes Local health departments Foundation grants Individual donors	Federal Transportation Funds Capital Improvement budget funds State Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Georgia Department of TransportationRecreational Trails Program (Dept. of Natural Resources)Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Big budget	Foundation grants Individual donors Community Improvement Districts Public-Private Partnerships Infrastructure bonds Local taxes	Federal Transportation Funds Congressional earmarks

Having sufficient funds for transportation infrastructure and related transportation programs is critical to achieving The Atlanta Region’s Plan to create world class infrastructure and meet local needs and priorities. Communities that are consistently successful in expanding their walking and biking systems leverage funds from a variety of sources and are consistent, year over year, with making investment in capital and maintenance projects.

During the Active Transportation Project Delivery Forum for this plan, several key themes were noted related to funding process, funding sources, and funding needs. They include:

- There is a need for diversified funding strategies.
- There is a need to deliver projects faster.
- There is a need to reduce bureaucracy to deliver smaller projects, such as walking and biking projects.
- With fewer staff and technical resources, smaller jurisdictions often struggle to delivery projects through the federally funded project process.
- There is a desire for more public-private partnerships.
- There is a need for big regional projects.
- Scoping assistance can help identify project delivery issues early in the federally funded project delivery process.

The sections that follow summarize the funding ecosystem and strategies available for active transportation projects.

Select the Right Funding Strategy for a Project

No two projects are alike and each may require one or more funding sources to be completed. The funding selection matrix on the previous page provides an overview of different funding strategies and potential funding sources based on the size and time frame for project delivery.

Federal

Federal transportation dollars can be used to plan, design, and implement active transportation projects and programs. Historically, the largest source of federal funding for walking and biking has been the US DOT's Federal-Aid Highway Program, which Congress has reauthorized roughly every six years since the passage of the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916. The details of federal transportation funding programs, structure, and requirements are constantly evolving, but the trend in recent Acts has been in the direction of increased spending flexibility at the state and local levels.

In the Atlanta Region, federal transportation monies are administered through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and ARC. Most, but not all, funding is oriented toward transportation (as opposed to recreation), with an emphasis on reducing auto trips and providing inter-modal connections. Federal funding is intended for capital improvements and safety and education programs, and projects must relate to the surface transportation system. Federal funding typically requires a local match of 20%, although there are sometimes exceptions, such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus funds, which did not require a match.

In addition to transportation infrastructure funding, the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) administered by ARC provides funding for many of the recommendations outlined in this plan for local communities. LCI funded projects include studies and activities that promote multi-modal transportation including (but not limited to): master plans, site plans for TOD, active transportation plans, concept development/feasibility studies for bicycle or pedestrian projects, development of zoning, land use and parking regulations, parking studies, and design standards.

State

While most of the federal funding used for bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Atlanta Region come from funds allocated directly to the Atlanta Regional Commission (as the designated MPO for the area), there are many other federal funding programs that can be used for walking and biking projects that are administered by the Georgia Department of Transportation to local jurisdictions and MPOs such as the Atlanta Regional Commission. GDOT administers the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) through which they fund and implement safety projects at high crash locations, including bicycle and pedestrian crash locations.

Additionally, GDOT uses state or federal funds to provide sidewalks, bike lanes, or pedestrian crossing improvements on maintenance, widening or reconstruction projects. Georgia also offers funds through the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) for pedestrian and bicycle safety programs. Non-profit organizations, city, and county agencies are eligible to apply for up to three years of GOHS funding.

Local

Local taxes and infrastructure bonds are the primary local public funding sources for pedestrian and bicycle projects. Local sources of revenue include property taxes, impact fees, transportation sales taxes, hotel/motel taxes, Tax Allocation Districts (aka Tax Increment Financing -- value capture of the increment tax increase collected and used for improvements within the district), Community Improvement Districts (self-taxing districts for non-residential properties) and capital improvement budget funds.

Private

Many private funding sources are available for pedestrian and bicycle projects, from small grants for marketing activities to multi-year foundation grants. Small scale projects and improvements that require land acquisition are often funded primarily from private sources. Specific funding sources for creating active communities in metro Atlanta include AARP, Kaiser, The Blank Foundation, Advocacy Advance, health departments, Grantmakers in Aging, the Coca Cola Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and People for Bikes.

To promote healthy lifestyles and attract talent, large companies are building active transportation amenities for their campuses and surrounding communities.

Public-Private Partnership

Public-private partnerships are contractual agreements that can leverage funds from both sectors for infrastructure projects and facilities. Where municipal budgets fall short, private revenue can fill the gaps.

Innovative funding sources

Increasingly, non-profits organizations, municipalities, and individual advocates are using crowdsourcing to fund innovative pedestrian and bicycle projects. Crowdsourcing uses a large audience for fundraising, typically with the help of internet donation websites such as ioby.org and kickstarter.com.

MARTA used ioby.org to raise \$4,500 for self-service bicycle maintenance kiosks at select transit stations. The kiosks will be useful for basic repairs such as fixing flat tires or broken chains and will complement Atlanta's bike share program.

Local set-asides

Transportation is only successful if users can safely access it by walking or biking. Local governments can set aside portions of general transportation revenue, public school bonds, county health department funding, parking fees, and traffic violation revenue for upgrades to walking and biking facilities.

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Decision-Making and Process Recommendations for Walk and Bike Friendly Communities

How to Make Multi-modal Decisions

Walk.Bike.Thrive! has been developed on a foundation that many projects will originate at the local level, either through community interest or a locally-identified need for improved bicycle and pedestrian travel options. To this end, local governments will benefit from a broader range of decision-making tools, especially that allow them to more comprehensively evaluate multimodal transportation factors and that expand the conventional range of transportation measures of effectiveness—many of which have historically been focused on vehicle-based traffic concerns.

In most transportation decision-making, projects are evaluated on the basis of an engineering concept known as level of service (LOS), a quantified assessment of infrastructure performance that considers factors such as delay, travel time and travel speed. However, most LOS criteria that are currently used in evaluating transportation projects focus on vehicle mobility, especially congestion-related travel delay at intersections. This tends to drive capital project decisions that use automobile-oriented designs, often at the expense of bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort. Communities may wish to explore different approaches to

evaluating infrastructure performance, especially when land and financial constraints limit the conventional approaches to mitigating transportation impacts (especially road and intersection widening).

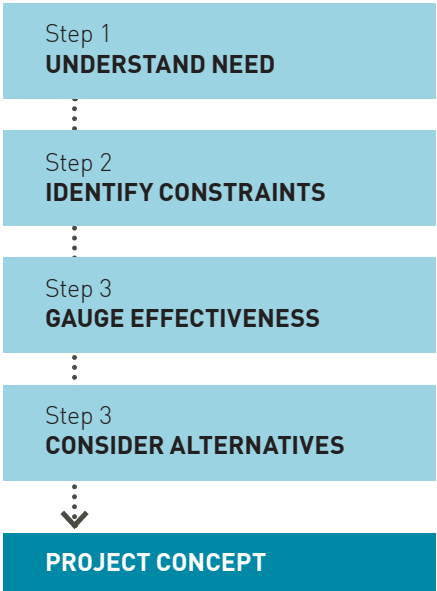
The following offers a series of decision-making steps intended to guide communities in developing bicycle and pedestrian project concepts to a level ready for implementation. It should not be interpreted as a checklist for project development, but rather a good-practice guide for ensuring that projects have been selected and their scopes defined in the interest of implementable projects that make efficient use of public resources.

- **What is the bicycle and pedestrian need of the area?** Is it driven by demand or opportunities for access to particular locations such as schools, parks, or places of employment?
- **What kinds of constraints do existing and potential corridors face?** Is there underutilized roadway capacity, space for expansion or construction of new facilities, or other ways of accommodating bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure?
- **How would the project affect person-travel on a corridor?** Does the project offer a meaningful, defensible way of expanding infrastructure capacity and increasing travel options to meet needs, especially for shorter trips?
- **Are there alternative designs or alignments for the project?** If a desired corridor’s constraints are cost-prohibitive or not politically practical to overcome, could the same travel need be met through a different project design or location?

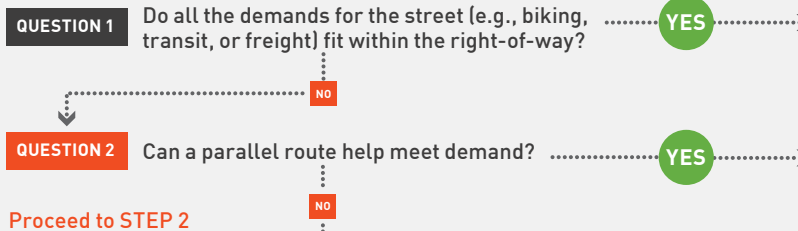
Right-of-Way Tradeoffs

One of the most common challenges communities face in implementing bicycle and pedestrian plans is how to balance the many transportation needs in existing rights-of-way, nearly all of which are constrained by either physical, political or cost-based factors. While there may be opportunities to add facilities for non-motorized users that have no impact on other users of streets and roads, there are typically always other challenging examples of potential projects that might require reduction in travel lanes, bicycles and pedestrians on freight routes, or balancing high-speed corridors with more vulnerable users in limited space.

The diagram on the following page provides a basic decision-making framework that starts with understanding how a project can work within existing right-of-way. For projects that do not, the diagram provides guidance on how planners should consider various community factors in making decisions on bicycle and pedestrian projects.



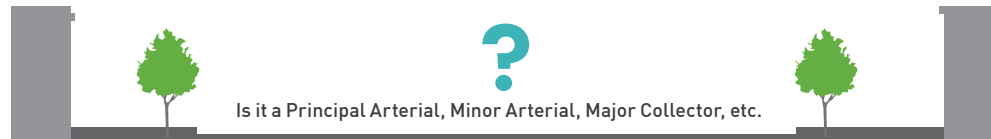
STEP 1: Determine Need



STEP 2: Decision-Making Framework

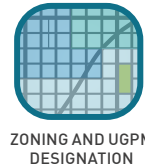
1

WHAT IS THE
STREET
CLASSIFICATION?



2

WHAT ARE THE
CORRIDOR
ATTRIBUTES?



3

HOW DO
CLASSIFICATION
AND DESIGN FIT
WITH THESE
ATTRIBUTES?

Based on the
previous two
steps, identify a
street type and
note related
design factors

COMMERCIAL ARTERIAL

Driveway access
Truck Traffic
4 or more
travel lanes
Protected bike lanes
Transit Potential

RESIDENTIAL ARTERIAL

2-4 travel lanes
Higher traffic volume
Protected bike lanes
Transit Potential

NEIGHBORHOOD COLLECTOR

Frequent
driveway access
2-3 travel lanes
School and park access
Limited truck traffic
Likely ROW constraints

LOCAL STREET

Sidewalks
2-5 travel lanes
On-street parking
Protected bike
lanes or parallel
path facility

RURAL-TO- SUBURBAN

12' sidewalks
2-4 travel lanes
Truck traffic
Protected bike lanes
or parallel path facility
Transit

4

WHAT ARE THE
COMMUNITY'S
DEMANDS FOR
THE CORRIDOR
AND THE
LARGER AREA?



ADT, CRASHES, BIKE
AND PEDESTRIAN
VOLUMES, TRANSIT
RIDERSHIP, ETC.



MODE PLANS:
What has been
planned for the
corridor?



COMMUNITY AND
STAKEHOLDER
INPUT



FUTURE MODE
DEMAND



ACCESS AND MOBILITY
PRIORITIZATION
(curb management
framework)



FUTURE LAND
USE AND
DEVELOPMENT

5

DETERMINE
MODE
HIERARCHY



All arterials should be designed
at a minimum for walking and
vehicular travel.

The hierarchy for the remaining modes is based on reviewing the previous steps
of the framework and building community consensus on tradeoffs



Make the Right Decision at the Right Scale

The Atlanta region is geographically vast and features numerous communities and corridors of distinct characters and development patterns. To be sure, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to any transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian travel. While the best practices proposed in this plan establish a basic foundation for how highways, streets, paths and other infrastructure types should be designed to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, it is also important for a project to be understood at different scales, or levels of detail in a community environment, with key decisions made for each one.

The diagrams to the right provide additional detail on three key levels of bicycle and pedestrian system understanding. It is not necessary to consider a potential project, policy or action at each one, as needs to be met or challenges to overcome might exist only at the smallest of these scales.



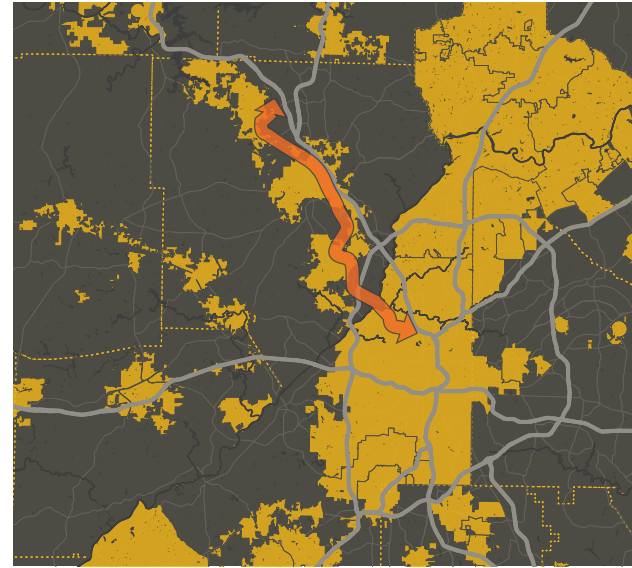
Decision-making happens at multiple levels of government, but ultimately the impact is at street-level.

Region, County and City

Projects must have a clear and broadly-accepted vision at the largest of geographic scales, and in many cases may originate in a parks and recreation plan or an active transportation plan. These project definitions often only include a conceptual level of design detail and a general level of stakeholder involvement and participation, but they involve public discussion that is critical to projects moving forward.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Need for intergovernmental or inter-agency coordination to develop a common project understand and implementation strategy
- Engagement—or likelihood—of project ‘champions’ or advocates who constitute a link between planning concept and public acceptance
- Key institutional and government objectives that project should help to meet
- Differences in local policy or legislation that may mean differences in design along a project’s length



Neighborhood and Corridor

It is critical at this scale for projects to understand barriers and potential opportunities for resource-sharing. There is also likely to be a basic idea, or at least a set of options, for specific alignments of bicycle and pedestrian routes or specific points for improvements to be made.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Physical constraints such as topography, infrastructure and natural features
- Capital project plans or public programs already making infrastructure investments to which bike/pedestrian elements might be added

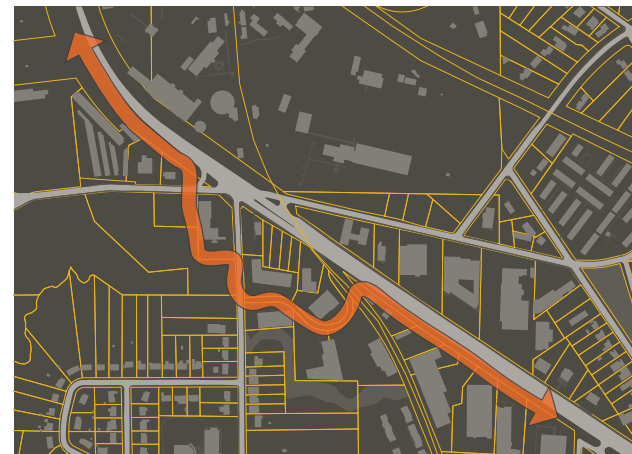


Street and Block

This is the scale where facility design is most important, as specific details of the built environment affect basic safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians. This is also where partnerships and agreements (such as easements) have a more specific bearing on the alignment of a project and the ways it navigates the built environment.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Potential locations of easements, right-of-way to acquire or public land to share
- Existing and planned street design, capital projects and private development activity



Understand the Roles of Agencies, Jurisdictions, and Other Stakeholders

Achieving a high standard of bicycle and pedestrian travel and facilities throughout the Atlanta region has relied and will continue to rely on multiple partners and stakeholders.

Regional and State Level

The Atlanta Regional Commission maintains federally-compliant Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through which project funding is distributed. As part of updates to these documents, ARC leads a project selection process (and defines the criteria for this process) through which projects that meet regional goals and policy objectives are preferred candidates for limited regional funding. ARC provides separate project funding and grant assistance for small-area planning through its LCI program and comparable programs into the future. ARC also provides technical assistance for smaller communities interested in developing projects.

The Georgia Department of Transportation provides multiple services and resources for transportation improvements. In addition to capital projects along state roadways, GDOT provides resources for resurfacing and maintenance projects (opportunities for active transportation improvements), safety programs (such as the Highway Safety Improvement Program), and bridge replacements and improvements, among others. Additionally, GDOT provides guidance and oversight for permitting projects, particularly those receiving federal funds. GDOT is a resource for design policy as well as funding and implementation.

Local Level

City and County Governments are most likely the lead agencies for projects, and generally the lead for all projects in the right-of-way of streets and roads that they own and operate. Local governments will also be the

primary coordinators of public outreach and engagement around projects, programs and policies.

Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) may also develop project and policy ideas, although they are generally not allowed to lead projects directly. CIDs are often important sources of project funding and may be able to provide funds that can be leveraged as a local match for state and federal funding sources.

School Districts generally serve an entire county, although the region also has city-specific districts such as those in Atlanta, Decatur and Marietta. They will usually not lead projects but may assist in seeking funding or leveraging their own funding for projects that have a direct connection to schools.

Private Organizations

Other non-governmental organizations will have a key role in identifying project opportunities and perhaps even helping to secure funding, especially grant funding, but these partners are often instrumental contributors to successful public engagement and building a base of community support for projects and policies.

Although these groups tend to focus on local-level issues and are oriented to single communities or municipalities, the Atlanta region also has organizations working at a regional scale, such as Georgia Commute Options and Citizens for Progressive Transit, and also benefits from institutional ties to some national organizations. These key partners should be engaged in the following ways:

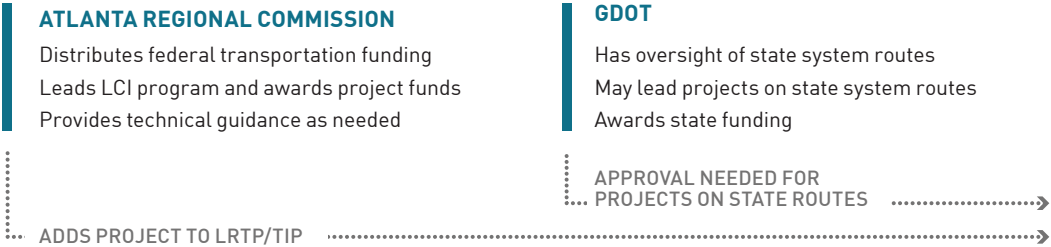
- **Advocacy Groups.** Organizations that promote awareness of bicycling and walking as viable and important forms of transportation serve a key role in advocating for stronger public policy, targeted investment in capital projects, and educational programs to complement other public programs and resources (such as public school safety programs and driver education). These groups are often organized as not-for-profit

non-governmental organizations, although they may be less formally organized yet still serve a key role in community outreach.

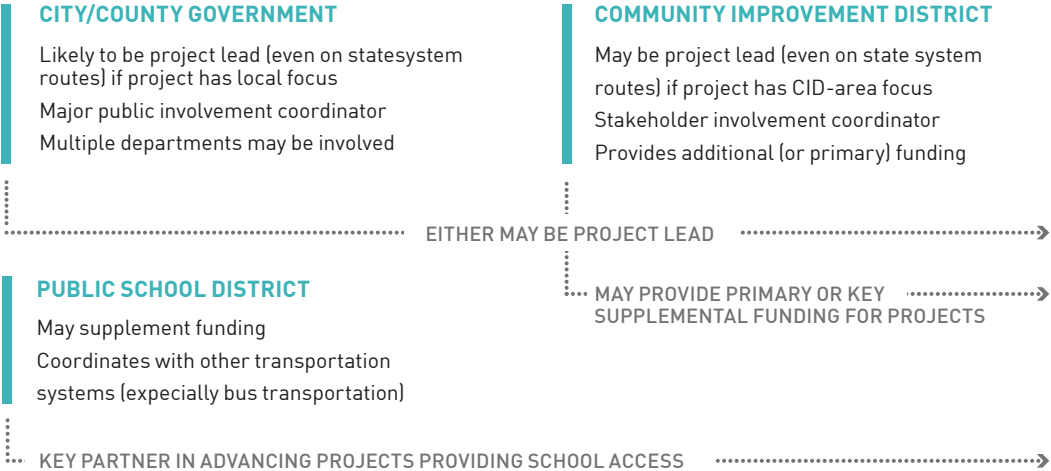
- **Foundations and Philanthropic Organizations.** National foundations that focus on missions to which bicycle and pedestrian mobility and connectivity have a strategic relationship can be helpful partners, especially for funding.
- **Universities and Other Educational Institutions.** Not only do universities constitute major potential generators of bicycle and pedestrian travel, they also provide potential funding and research capacity to help advance projects, make the case for investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, or provide research support in evaluating project effectiveness. Universities may not be inclined to support project efforts and policy approaches not directly aligned with their organizational mandates, although they are increasingly focused on promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety on their campuses and are likely to serve as important partners in projects located in or near their them.
- **Neighborhood and Civic Groups.** Many bicycle and pedestrian projects originate through neighborhood interest. These groups provide a fundamental level of public support; larger-scale projects involving multiple neighborhoods can benefit from broad involvement of all affected groups.

The diagram on the following page provides a general understanding of how these different actors participate in the project development and policy-making process. Not every partner may be involved, but each is envisioned to be engaged for particular roles and responsibilities. Planners leading bicycle and pedestrian projects should consult this resource to understand how to structure their project and policy discussions so that these participants can help to advance projects and contribute to a regional system of bicycle and pedestrian connections.

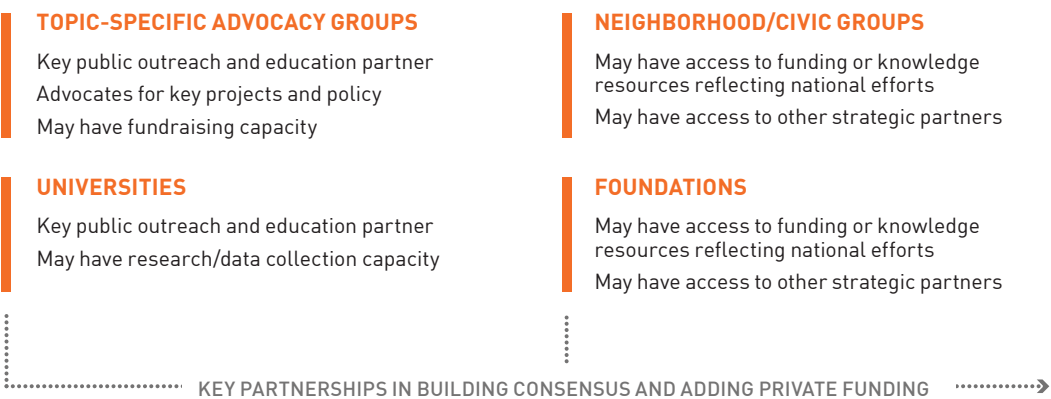
REGIONAL LEVEL



LOCAL LEVEL



PRIVATE SECTOR



Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects and Programs

Incorporate Elements of Good Process and Public Participation

Public Participation

Continuous public involvement is key to the development of a high-quality walking and bicycling system. The public should be invited to participate during master planning, project scoping, and project design/implementation. Identifying stakeholders beyond the usual suspects such as pedestrian advocacy groups and bicycle clubs is critical to producing robust, implementable plans and projects. Ensure that you include stakeholders with the power to block plan or project approval or delay implementation in addition to those that stand to benefit. These groups may include:

- Low-income, minority, and immigrant populations
- The business community
- Freight interests
- Emergency services
- Automobile clubs
- School district and school safety committee representatives
- Youth and older adults

Advisory Committees

Cities and counties should also assemble a pedestrian or bicycle advisory committee that meets on a regular basis to discuss trends and progress on established goals. Advisory committees should be made up of interested community members and work directly with staff and elected officials to advance initiatives, develop policies, and scope projects. Having a pedestrian or bicycle advisory committee is also a key element required to achieve Walk Friendly and Bicycle Friendly Designation.



Advisory committees help prioritize investments and guide policy changes.

How to Talk about Equity

Safe, healthy, affordable, and convenient transportation options are not always available to the disadvantaged populations that need them most. As noted in the Assessment, people with the greatest need to walk, bike, and take transit are disproportionately living in areas that are less bikeable, walkable, and transit-served. This mismatch between need and the availability of high-quality walking, biking, and transit infrastructure results in long, unhealthy, and/or dangerous travel for some of the region's most vulnerable populations. Additionally, long average commutes and limited transit can prevent access to jobs, thereby impacting people's ability to escape poverty.

Being open and honest about these realities is the first step in creating a more equitable region. However, talking about (in)equity isn't always easy. The bullet points below provide some suggestions for how to have these difficult conversations.

ARC's Equitable Target Area Index and related maps, as well as the Partnership for Southern Equity's Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas, are helpful technical resources that can help cities and counties understand the geography of opportunity relative to the region as a whole.

Listen.

Part of achieving equity is understanding what people want. People's needs may not be immediately obvious, especially if they are coming from a different cultural background.

Distinguish between Equity and Equality.

The terms "equity" and "equality" are sometimes used interchangeably, which can lead to confusion. Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Leveling the playing field means that active transportation funding will need to be prioritized in areas with greater needs, rather than distributed equally based on geography.

Use one key fact about your community to convey the need for equity.

For example, "30% of x community are zero vehicle households, but only 3% of transportation funding goes to walking and biking infrastructure."

Use informal language and keep transportation planning jargon to a minimum.

Acronyms and technical language can be intimidating to any non-expert, and the feeling may be amplified if the audience is not a native English speaker. Using photos and graphics to help illustrate a point can help reduce language barriers.

Mean what you say and say what you mean.

When talking about specific groups, specify the population to which you are referring. Are you talking about Black people? Latino people? Asian immigrants? Women? Try to avoid using the term "minority" to describe multiple community groups with different needs.



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