



Tools to Increase Biking and Walking

Advocacy **Advance**



Atlanta Regional Funding Profile

Navigating the funding transportation funding process, especially the federal funding process can be difficult, for both agency staff and advocates. Each state and jurisdiction has particular rules, practices, personnel and contexts, which determine how decisions get made. To understand the system, it is helpful learn the **who, what, where and when** of each funding source. The following is an attempt to answer these questions for Atlanta, GA. This profile template can be used as a guide to gather this information in any community.

The focus of this profile is on un- or underutilized programs like STP, HSIP, & CMAQ. Information on Transportation enhancements can be found here: <http://enhancements.org/profile/GAprofile.php> and Safe Routes to School can be found here: <http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/statemap/Georgia>

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The Surface Transportation Program provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for projects on roads, bridges and transit. STP funds may be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use and walking.

Is funding distributed among funding categories? Are funding categories tied to federal categories or another system? If another system, what is it?

The Atlanta region uses STP funds for urban, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation funding through several different mechanisms. The general funding source is referred to STP Urban or L230. There are two important sub-programs within L230 – Last Mile Connectivity (LMC) and Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) – which are oriented primarily at funding bicycling and walking projects.

STP Urban (L230) – The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has traditionally taken a “centers and corridors” approach to strategically using the region’s L230 funding for both bicycle and pedestrian projects; the centers and corridors are based on ARC planning goals for both land use and transportation, including regional activity centers, regionally significant corridors, and a primary study network established in the region’s *Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan* (most recently 2007); the most recent previous call for projects in the regional TIP was 2003-2004.

The Atlanta Regional Commission has developed two key sub-programs which rely heavily on STP funds to achieve bike/ped/urban transportation goals:

Last Mile Connectivity (LMC) – This is a new program in 2012 targeted at implementing the region’s PLAN2040 long-range plan and regional goals; this new program will identify bicycle and pedestrian projects that address non-motorized safety, access, and connectivity within the regional transportation network; LMC projects will be drawn from existing plans or programs to streamline project selection and implementation; approximately \$12m annually.

Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) – This is a coordinated planning and implementation project designed to enhance existing centers and corridors consistent with regional development policies. The program funds planning grants on a competitive basis to local governments and nonprofit organizations, and provide transportation money to implement projects identified in planning studies. The budget is roughly \$20 million a year for projects and \$1 million per year for studies.

Two additional new (2012) programs include freight and roadway programs.

What is the project selection process?

Project selection varies within the ARC based on the specific program, but project selection is always tied closely to existing plan documents and regional priorities at both regional and local levels.

LMC – They are chosen based on project selection criteria developed at the regional level by the ARC staff and committees. There is a strong emphasis on developing projects with significant safety impact as well as completing the regional network or improving connectivity, both within and between activity centers. Projects may be solicited directly from local jurisdictions (rather than a general call for projects) to help streamline project identification and implementation rates.

LCI – ARC issues a call for projects to local governments. Projects are ranked and selected by staff committee and submitted to ARC executive leadership. LCI projects must be within LCI study area boundaries, generally the regional Activity Centers designated through the ARC's land use division. LCI funds may be available for both planning studies and project implementation.

Who sets the project selection policy?

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) board, which is the MPO policy committee, adopts the regional long-range plan (PLAN2040) and its goals and priorities.

Who makes funding decisions/selects projects?

Varies by program:

LMC – Staff selection, with procedural additions to regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

LCI – Staff and stakeholder selection

What does the project application look like? How was it written? Do good bike/ped projects score well?

Varies by program:

LMC – Currently underway (Feb 2012). There are internal discussions about project selection criteria and ways to simplify project selection process.

Bicycle and pedestrian projects may score well if they are consistent with regional priorities and networks, have strong local support, are cost effective, and can be implemented. All projects will be considered at the regional level, meaning that some good but purely local projects may not be in line with regional connectivity goals. The regional network is designed to build a framework that complements local projects.

LCI – application process highlights need to conform with existing regional priorities, activity center boundaries, and scope requirements; form requires detailed account of scope, budget, boundaries, and consistency with regional plans/goals; good bike/ped projects are generally part of a bigger center/corridor strategy development strategy

http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/LCI/New%20Applications/lu_lci_2012_full_appl_package.pdf

Who rates the applications?

ARC staff rate the applications.

Who administers the programs?

ARC staff administers the programs.

What is the timeline for project selection? Key dates for application and selection?

LMC –

Spring 2012: Meetings with local jurisdictions and stakeholders

Summer 2012: Project selection

LCI – No current (Feb 2012) call for projects; currently selecting projects submitted in 2011.

STP Resources:

Atlanta Regional Commission, *PLAN2040*

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040>

Atlanta Regional Commission, *Bicycle Transportation & Pedestrian Walkways Plan*

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/bicycle--pedestrian>

ARC Livable Centers Initiative

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/land-use/livable-centers-initiative>

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The CMAQ program funds transportation projects that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion. See our Advocacy Advance report on CMAQ: http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/lab_cmaq.pdf
FHWA recently confirmed that Bike/ped projects are eligible for CMAQ funds:
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/cmaqfunds.htm>

Where are Georgia's non-attainment areas?

Ozone: Metropolitan Atlanta – 20 counties (Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Newton, Paulding, Rockdale, Spalding, Walton)

Particulate Matter (PM): Metropolitan Atlanta – 22 counties (Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Heard*, Henry, Newton, Paulding, Putnam*, Rockdale, Spalding, Walton); Chattanooga – (Catoosa and Walker); Rome – (Floyd County); Macon – (Bibb and Monroe*)

* indicate partial counties

Non-Attainment Areas Map:

<http://www.gaepd.org/air/airpermit/downloads/planningsupport/naa/GANAA2008.pdf>

Who sets project selection policy?

Policy is written jointly by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, GDOT, Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), and state partners.

The role of the state DOT and state partners have varied over previous years. Prior to 2007 the state deferred to the MPO but recent calls have been a collaboration between state and regional partners.

What is the project selection process?

For the Atlanta urban area, ARC coordinated with GDOT and state CMAQ partners.

CMAQ projects require emissions analysis with modeling to demonstrate significant air quality benefits (for bike/ped projects, it is often hard to demonstrated given available data).

A general overview of the CMAQ project selection process is as follows:

- a) GDOT issues a statewide call for projects every other year (off-cycle call may be needed initially)
- b) The MPOs actively participates with the State in the review and rating process

- c) Final project ratings are based on group consensus
- d) Project ratings and comments are reviewed by all
- e) The State and MPO participate in the joint final selection process through group consensus
- f) Final project selection will be fiscally constrained
- g) Project selections must be drawn from the highly recommended (d) projects in order for project funds to be authorized

Who makes the project-selection decisions?

MPO and state partners, approved by the ARC board, the MPO policy committee.

When are programming decisions made?

Generally as funding is available. For 2012 decisions, timing will be similar to Last Mile Connectivity program as part of TIP project selection, depending on project qualities and funding availability.

Can good bike/ped projects compete?

Some bike/ped projects are more suitable than others. Those that can demonstrate clear congestion mitigation impacts within specific corridors will be given priority.

A difficult barrier is that within the modeling program, which determines air quality benefits, it can be hard demonstrate significant air quality benefits from bike/ped projects. The model lack of clear demonstration that bike/ped facilities generate replacement of car trips.

History of low *implementation rates* for bike/ped projects can discourage future investments in new bike/ped projects. Advocates and agency staff need to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian projects funded by CMAQ are built and/or implemented.

Funding History

Strong focus on using CMAQ for bike/ped projects in late 1990's, but with an overall low implementation rate at the local level.

Federal focus in 2007 call for projects on reducing PM levels, including diesel retrofitting, for achieving air quality benefits (no similar focus in 2012 call for projects, meaning bike/ped projects will be eligible).

What is the competition?

Bicycle and pedestrian project typically have to compete against:

- TDM activities at the state and regional level, which can be used for bicycle and pedestrian programs including education and encouragement
- Diesel retrofit projects targeted at PM sources
- Auto projects that reduce idling
- Corridor signal timing projects to reduce congestion

CMAQ Resources:

GDOT CMAQ Program Homepage:

<http://www.dot.state.ga.us/localgovernment/fundingprograms/cmaq/Pages/default.aspx>

GDOT CMAQ Process:

http://www.dot.state.ga.us/localgovernment/FundingPrograms/cmaq/Documents/georgia_cmaq_program.pdf

GDOT CMAQ Project Selection Policy:

http://www.dot.state.ga.us/localgovernment/FundingPrograms/cmaq/Documents/cmaq_project_selection_policy.pdf

Non-Attainment Areas Map:

<http://www.gaepd.org/air/airpermit/downloads/planningsupport/naa/GANAA2008.pdf>

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds safety projects aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Bike and pedestrian safety projects are eligible for HSIP funding. All public roads – including state, county and local roads – are eligible for HSIP funding. Examples of eligible projects include bike lanes, roadway shoulders, crosswalks, other intersection improvements and signage. See the Advocacy Advance report on HSIP case studies:

http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/hsip_casestudies_shsp_emphasis.pdf

Are bicycle and pedestrian safety identified as emphasis areas in Georgia’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan?

Yes, but with limited current (2012) program information or data.

Have state HSIP funds been allocated to bicycle and pedestrian safety at a “fair share” in proportion to fatalities?

Yes, beginning in FY2012 and continuing more fully in FY2013 and beyond. Based on GDOT policy to allocate funding based on crash type percentages.

Low representation of bicycles (typically <1% of crashes) have meant very low levels of funding out of HSIP pot based on cost-benefit analysis and difficulty with practical minimum project funding levels.

Particularly good for pedestrian projects been elevated from low funding levels to 10-15% annually, based on pedestrian crash percentages.

What are the project selection criteria?

HSIP project selection is largely data driven to identify problem locations with consistently high crash rates, including systemic problems, site problems, modal trends, and cost/benefit analysis; particularly helpful for pedestrian crashes where numbers are high and increasing as a general percentage of overall crashes.

Project determination depends heavily on Roadway Safety Audit processes, using professional expertise to evaluate high crash locations and determine best countermeasures. It often focuses small fixes along a priority corridor.

Who sets the project selection criteria?

GDOT staff, based on safety best practices and identified through data driven analysis.

Who makes the project selections?

Project selection and development are largely done by GDOT at the staff level. They are based on planning efforts conducted by GDOT, GOHS, safety task teams (including bike/ped), and safety stakeholders. The process is data-driven, in response to crash reports, developed by the GDOT staff and safety partners.

When are the proposals and decisions made?

Decisions are made as needed and as funding becomes available; project solicitation from GDOT district offices as money becomes available, especially to help identify off-system high crash locations.

There are several ongoing prioritization projects, addressing persistent crash types or modes including run-off-the-road crashes, pedestrian countdown signals, Safe Routes to School, etc.

HSIP Resources:

HSIP Annual Report (2009)

<http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/shsp/hsip2009jan10.pdf>

Section 402 – State and Community Highway Safety Grants

Section 402, the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program, is a federal program that provides funds for education, enforcement and research programs designed to reduce traffic crashes, deaths, injuries, and property damage. Under Section 402, bike and pedestrian safety programs are eligible to receive funding for projects such as these:

- *Comprehensive school-based pedestrian and bike safety education programs*
- *Helmet distribution programs*
- *Pedestrian safety programs for older adults*
- *Training in use of pedestrian and bicycle design guidelines*
- *Community information and education programs*
- *Public information in May, such as “Bike Safety Month”, and in September, “Back to School Safety Month.”*
- *Public information for school zone and crosswalk safety*
- *Public information about older adults and impaired pedestrian*

Which agency administers 402 grants?

Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety administers Section 402 grants.

What is the selection process?

There is an annual call for projects based on funding availability.

Grants are awarded to state and local safety-related agencies as “seed” money to assist in the development and implementation of programs that address traffic safety deficiencies or expand ongoing safety programs activities in safety priority program areas. Funding may be available for projects in other program areas if there is documented evidence of an identified problem.

Who makes the selection decisions?

GOHS staff and executive committee select projects.

What else do we need to know?

For bicycle programs, 402 money were combined with special interest license plate revenue (bicycle program funding from “Share the Road” car tags) to help match and extend program funding.

402 Resources:

GOHS Grant Program

<http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/generalgrantinfo.html>

2011 Georgia Highway Safety Plan

http://www.nhtsa.gov/nhtsa/whatsup/safeteaweb/FY11/FY11HSPs/GA_FY11HSP.pdf

Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety

www.gohs.state.ga.us/

GHS 402 funding overview

<http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/programs/402.html>

Other Funding Sources

Transportation Investment Act (TIA) – a regional transportation sales tax for selected projects; project list developed in 2011 with public referendum vote on sales tax to occur in July 2012

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/transportation-investment-act-of-2010>

The funding source will be divided 85%/15% for regional/local projects; the regional list contains few bike/ped projects, but the 15% local funds will allow for more bike/ped projects at the local level.

Transportation Enhancements (TE) – federal dedicated funding for bicycle, pedestrian, and alternative transportation projects; occasional call for applications with GDOT staff and stakeholder committee review of projects; funds allocated for project selection by GDOT board members

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) – federal dedicated funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects near elementary and middle school sites; occasional call for projects for school programs; ongoing free resource center for education and encouragement programs for school and community partners

Routine Accommodation – ongoing efforts by MPO, GDOT, local staff, and advocates to incorporate bike- and ped-friendly elements into every transportation project, regardless of purpose, location, and funding source; supported by PLAN2040 and policy decisions at the ARC and MPO levels, as well as many local communities.

General questions

Who owns the majority of the roads?

Designation	Owner	Mileage	%
<i>Statewide Ownership</i>			
State Highway System*	Georgia DOT	17,986	14%
Interstates*	Georgia DOT	1249	1%
County Roads	Local Government	79,296	64%
City Streets	Local Government	21,492	17%
Other Public Roads	Varies	4,143	3%

<i>Atlanta Region Ownership (10 county)</i>			
Total Mileage	Varies	13,053	100%
State Highway System	Georgia DOT	1,543	12%

<i>Roadway Classification (10 county area)</i>			
Interstate	Georgia DOT	356	2%
Principle arterial	Varies	566	3%
Minor Arterial	Varies	1,679	9%
Collector	Varies	1,541	8%
Local Road	Varies	14,902	78%
Total Mileage	Varies	19,044	100%

[* includes interstates]

Sources:

ARC 2011 Factbook (http://documents.atlantaregional.com/transportation/TPD2011factbook_v04.pdf)

GDOT 2011 Factbook

(http://www.dot.ga.gov/informationcenter/pressroom/Documents/publications/FactBook/2010-11FactBook_SmallQ.pdf)

GDOT 400 Series Reports (<http://www.dot.state.ga.us/statistics/roaddata/pages/400Series.aspx>)

What advantages and disadvantages do bicycle and pedestrian projects have currently?

The emphasis is placed on projects of “state” and “regional” significance, within a context of bigger regional issues of highway congestion, auto mobility, and freight-driven economic development. This disadvantages small “local” projects.

There is always a strong need for data collection and reporting to demonstrate current ridership, existing need, latent demand, and safety concerns.

How are the non-federal matching funds paid for?

Matched are paid for with a mixture of state, local, and bond funds.

How do the various jurisdictions within the MPO work together? What are the relevant considerations?

There is a strong divide between inner, denser, urban counties and outer, low density, suburban counties. There are differing priorities at county level for implementing bicycle facilities.

Contacts

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For questions on bicycle and pedestrian planning and funding within the Atlanta metropolitan region, contact Byron Rushing at the Atlanta Regional Commission (brushing@atlantaregional.com); for

statewide questions in Georgia, contact the Georgia DOT's bicycle and pedestrian coordinator (position currently unfilled).

Documents

Safety plans

Georgia Strategic Highway Safety Plan
www.gahighwaysafety.org/shsp/

Georgia Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Action Plan
<http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/shsp/bsap2010.pdf>

Clean air policies

ARC Air Quality
<http://www.atlantaregional.com/environment/air>

GDOT CMAQ Program
<http://www.dot.state.ga.us/localgovernment/fundingprograms/cmaq/>

Clean Air Campaign
<http://www.cleanaircampaign.org/>

Transportation Improvement Program/State Transportation Improvement Program

ARC TIP
<http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/transportation-improvement-program>

ARC Plan 2040
<http://www.atlantaregional.com/plan2040>

GDOT STIP
<http://dot.ga.gov/informationcenter/programs/transportation/pages/stip.aspx>

Performance Management

ARC Program Delivery
<http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/transportation-improvement-program/program-delivery>

ARC *Breaking Ground 2011* – Program Delivery Dashboard
<http://documents.atlantaregional.com/transportation/bg/bg2011.html>

GDOT Performance Management Dashboard

<http://dot.ga.gov/statistics/performance/Pages/default.aspx>

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