



Implementation

The effectiveness of planning efforts is measured in their implementation. Not only are technical research and expertise important, but clear schedules for funding, designing, and construction projects are equally vital. The following section outlines implementation strategies, citizen priorities, potential funding sources, and time schedules with estimated costs for implementing recommendations.

CTP Public Marketing and Education Strategies

Implementing this transportation plan will be a process of years with results potentially felt for decades. However, the magnitude of redesigning the transportation system begins with simple and effective communication tools to help educate residents about the immediate implications of the planning process.

The first step should be a direct letter from the Mayor and City staff to the residents and businesses of the city. A letter of introduction to the plan and a packet of information should be included to inform residents of the benefits and costs of the recommendations as well as the city's schedule for making decisions regarding the plan. Building political support as well as asking for critical feedback from the public initially will go a long way towards supporting future implementation efforts.

“ The effectiveness of planning efforts is measured in their implementation. ”

In conjunction with the finalization and adoption of the plan, the city should reach out to local media to distribute information. The Decatur Focus is the clear starting point for informing city residents and businesses. The City has strong community contacts with a range of local and national organizations, such as Smart Growth America, which can help evaluate and support future improvements. Other professional publications within the Center for Disease Control, the American Planning Association, and other planning community groups should be included in press releases and plan synopses.

The City should also take initial steps towards updating the internet resources regarding the plan's recommendations. Web resources should include route finding, facilities locations, time lines and schedules for implementation, and technical documents supporting the plan's recommendations.

Separate educational pages should be targeted to specific user groups: cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. Information such as designated routes, bicycle parking locations, and upcoming events should be clearly publicized to help encourage riders of all ages as well as supporting local cycling and alternative transportation cultures.

The City must identify particularly attainable projects that will make a clear and immediate impression on both current and potential alternative transportation users. One potential area is safe and convenient bicycle parking that advertises the bicycle accessibility within the city while encouraging and supporting current bicycle users.

Sidewalk maintenance, cleaning and reinstalling signage, and many other support activities should be considered and implemented quickly to demonstrate momentum behind the planning process.

The most ambitious method for supporting bicycle and pedestrian travel is the development of a City staff position to coordinate bicycle, pedestrian, and active living issues, programs, and projects. This position could either be in the city manager's office or the Recreation Department as an Active Living Director. This staff member could develop, promote, and oversee the implementation of plan recommendations as well as gather and interpret feedback from system users. This staff position should receive national level education in bicycle and pedestrian education as well as facility design.

In conjunction with a staff position, the City should establish a citizens' advisory board to make decisions regarding active living, health, and transportation initiatives. The city current has citizens' boards for zoning, wastewater, greenspace, and many other city initiatives. A transportation or health & wellness board would be an opportunity for local citizens to shape and monitor the implementation of future plan recommendations.

Finally, critical public feedback channels are key to any implementation process. In conjunction with the public input gathered through the transportation plan, the city should distribute a follow-up survey to gather information on facility usage and implementation concerns. Critical feedback from system users can help inform future projects and monitor the effectiveness of city money. This survey can also help inform research on the health of the city and the effectiveness of encouraging residents to adopt regular active living exercise.



Citizen Priorities

In conjunction with the Community Transportation Plan, residents of the city were polled through a phone survey about their preferences regarding implementation of CTP recommendations. In addition to the public comments received, the results of this survey provide an important insight into the effectiveness of implementing the Community Transportation Plan. For more detail about all public comments, see Chapter 4, Community Involvement.

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Congestion, signal timing, wait time at lights, and other automobile travel issues consistently ranked as the biggest concerns by respondents. However a majority of residents (62%) said they would be more likely to walk or bicycle for leisure trips if the City installed additional facilities. Of those, 39 percent said they would be much more likely while 22 percent said they would be somewhat more likely and 37 percent said new facilities would have no effect on their transportation choices. Sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes were all highlighted as beneficial facilities that will encourage additional alternative transportation trips. The following section details priorities reported by residents.

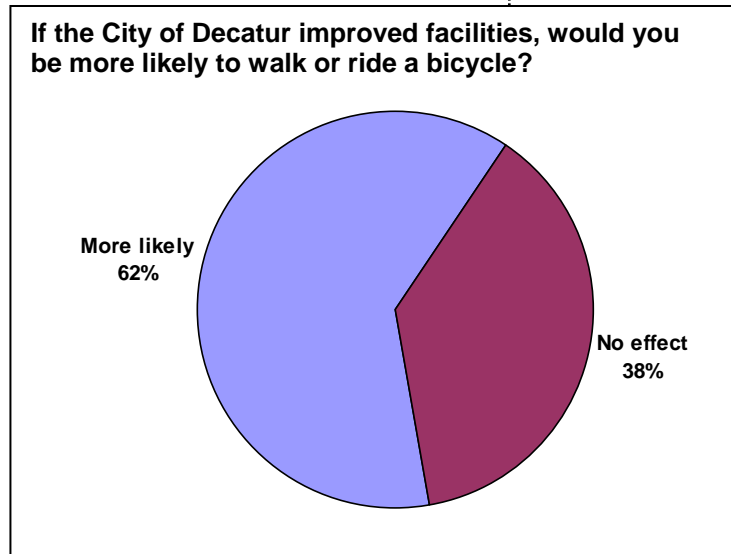


Figure 11-1 Survey Question and Response

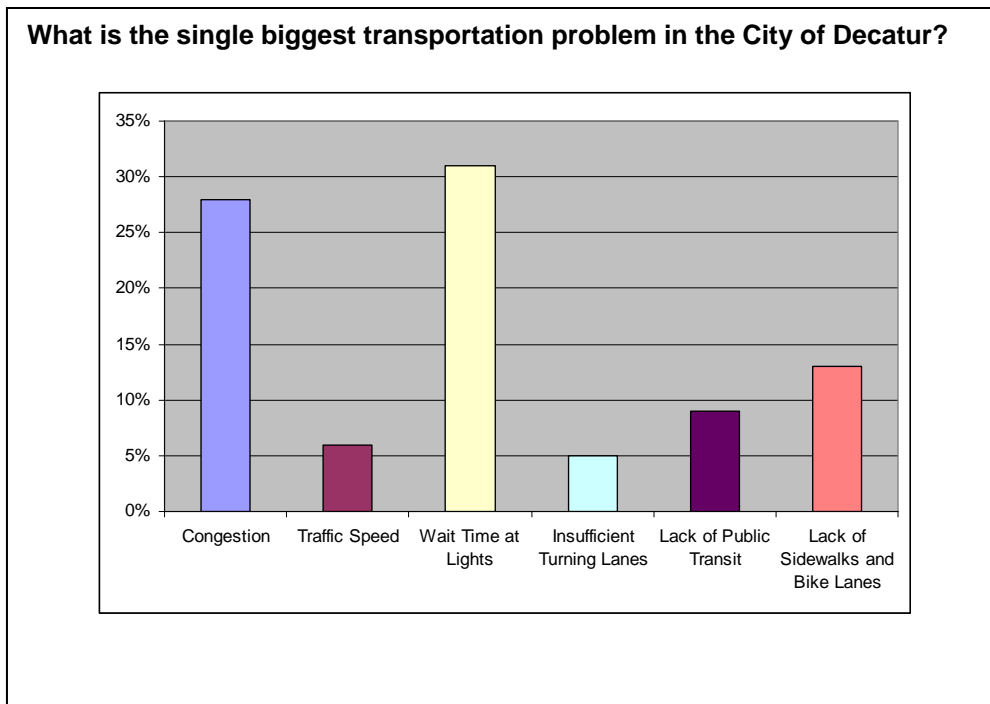


Figure 11-2 Survey Question and Response

Citywide Priorities

Additional questions asked about projects that would offer the biggest benefit to residents regarding transportation projects. A plurality, 37 percent, of respondents reported that redesigning intersections is the biggest priority. Regarding general corridor improvements, 17 percent chose improving roadway corridors as important.

Regarding alternative transportation facilities, 18 percent chose bicycle lanes as the biggest benefit and 14 chose pedestrian improvements. Bicycle parking was chosen 6 percent of the time as the most beneficial improvement to the city.

Adopting “Complete Streets” policies would address a wide range of improvements for both automobile and alternative transportation forms. The largest number of respondents, 37 percent, strongly supported the City adopting these policies while 24 percent somewhat supported these policies. A significant number of residents, 18 percent, strongly opposed the adoption of these policies while 13 percent somewhat opposed these policies. Overall, 61 percent supported “Complete Streets” while 31 percent opposed them.

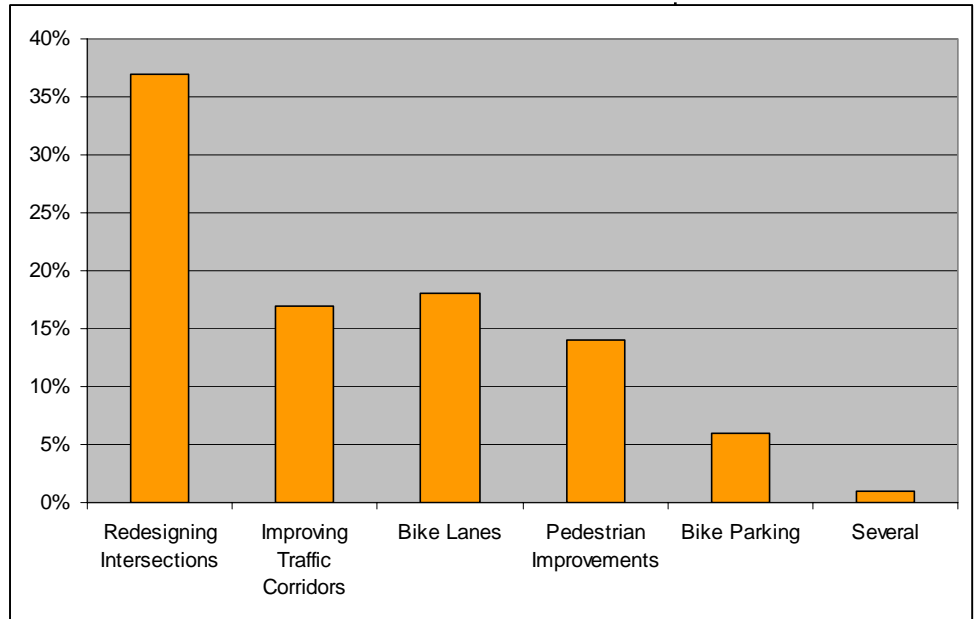
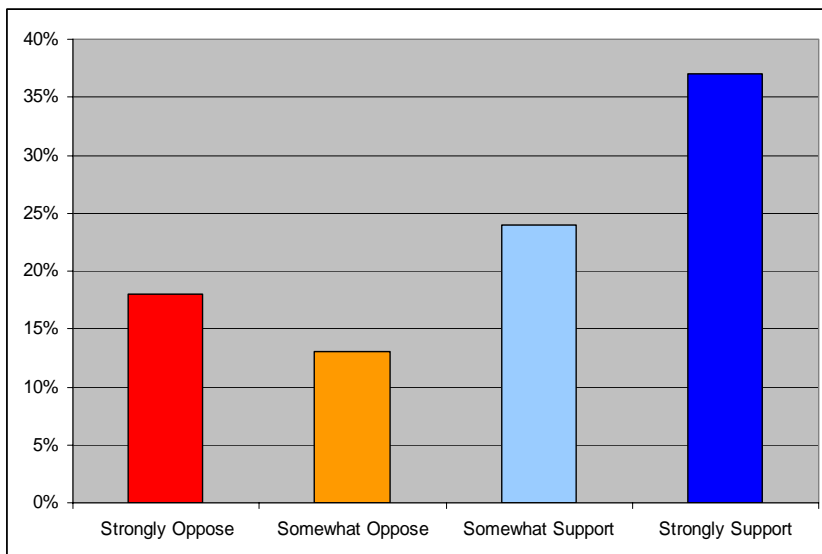


Figure 11-3 Projects with Biggest Benefit to the City

Figure 11-4 Support for Complete Streets Policy



Intersections

Respondents of the phone survey were asked to pick the intersection of greatest concern to them. The most frequent intersection of concern, with 24 percent, was Commerce Dr at Clairemont Ave. Second most common was College Ave at McDonough Rd with 22 percent. Tied for third were E. College Ave at Candler Rd and Commerce Dr at Church St, both with 19 percent.

As a follow up question, respondents reported nearly identical results for their second most important intersection. Commerce Dr at Clairemont Ave received 26 percent of the responses while E. College Ave at Candler Rd and Commerce Dr at Church Street were both close to 22 percent.

A majority of survey respondents, 55 percent, reported that signal timing was their most important concern at intersections. The second most frequent response was 19 percent for crosswalks or medians. Sidewalks and bike lanes received 11 percent and 9 percent respectively.

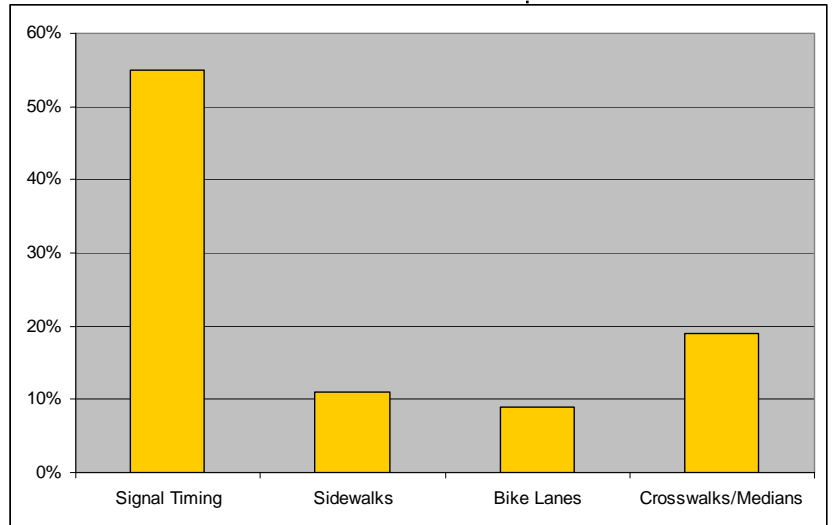


Figure 11-5 Desired Intersection Improvements

Corridors

The second set of questions in the survey dealt with corridors and roadway segments within the city. Survey respondents were asked to choose their corridor of greatest concern and the improvements that would be most beneficial for the city. The most frequently chosen corridor was College Ave with 18 percent of the responses. The rest were closely grouped, with Scott Blvd receiving 17 percent, Church St receiving 16 percent, and Clairemont Ave receiving 15 percent. Commerce Dr and S. Candler St were less popular with 11 and 9 percent respectively. Howard Ave received only 4 percent of the responses.

Asked about their second most important corridor, respondents said Clairemont Ave 19 percent of the time. Church St and Commerce Dr tied for second with 15 percent while College Ave and Scott Blvd tied for third with 13 percent. S. Candler St and Howard Ave received 11 and 8 percent respectively.

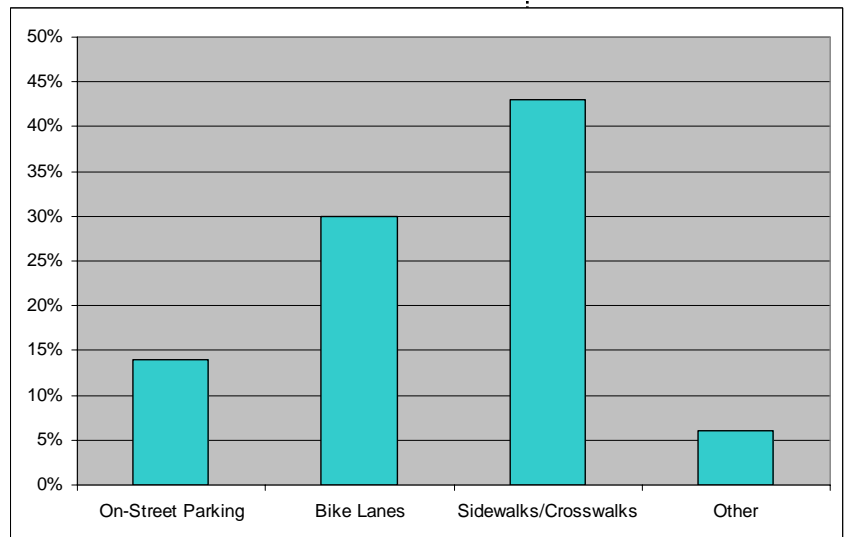


Figure 11-6 Desired Corridor Improvements

Regarding improvements to corridors, sidewalks and crosswalks were the most frequent response with 43 percent of the responses. Bike lanes received 30 percent while on-street parking received 14 percent.

Special Topics

Finally, the survey asked respondents about several specific transportation related proposals made by City of Decatur officials and staff. For this summary, strongly or somewhat responses have been grouped together for support and opposition to each proposal.

The railroad quiet zone would restrict train engineers from blowing their horns when traveling through Decatur. Close to half of respondents, 46 percent, support the quiet zone. Fewer, 44 percent, oppose a quiet zone while 10 percent did not know or refused to answer.

The City current implements speed bumps for traffic calming measures. A new city proposal would ask neighborhoods to pay for projects more than speed bumps, including radar signs, traffic circles, and increased enforcement. A majority of respondents, 58 percent, supported this initiative. Less than half, 36 percent, opposed new traffic calming implementation requirements.

Finally, public transportation is generally operated at a regional level outside of Decatur. Respondents were asked about using City funds to implement a city-wide trolley or circulator bus system. Most respondents, 73 percent, supported a new transit program. Less than a quarter, 21 percent opposes a city-wide trolley or circulator bus.

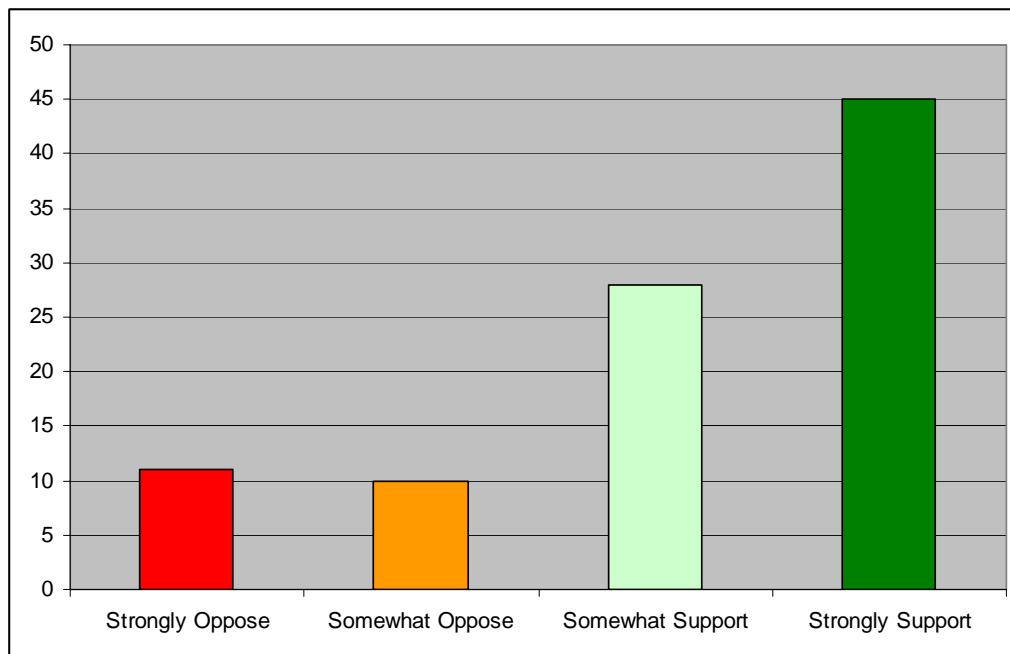


Figure 11-7 Support for a City-wide Trolley

Funding

The Challenge of Funding

Nothing epitomizes the “living” nature of a plan as does the topic of funding. The challenge of funding planned programs and projects will be alive long after the Community Transportation Plan has been put on the shelf. Obtaining funds for projects is a two-fold exercise. First, there is the matter of knowing what funding resources are available and what projects are well-matched to their criteria. Second, there is the matter of relationships with funding agencies and potential partners. The following provides a summary of the funding resources which will be potentially applicable for the in the City of Decatur, and a list of next steps for relationship building.

Federal and State Funding Opportunities

Much of the funding for the construction, improvement, operation and maintenance of infrastructure comes from monies distributed by the Federal Government through transportation legislation like the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This legislation provides revenue sources for bicycle and pedestrian plan and facility funding through programs like the Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails, all of which are disseminated through the transportation planning processes administered by Georgia DOT and Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) . There are also some funding mechanisms provided through the State of Georgia that are disseminated by other entities including, Highway Safety Funds (administered by GDOT District 7) and Local Development Funds (administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

The ability to access these funds is determined by effective participation in the transportation planning processes of the Atlanta Region. In most instances, the process attempts to balance regional need with available funds, which it does by evaluating potential projects for funding. Criteria for accessing these funds are related to eligibility, need (both local and regional) and ability to achieve the goals of the funding category. There is a clear advantage for communities that have their projects “ready” prior to requesting funds. Readiness is achieved by local governments who take a proactive stance toward designing their projects with local funds and then requesting federal/state assistance with only the construction phase.

Another way to approach the issue of accessing federal and state funds is to fully understand the bigger picture needs and desires of the funding agencies. There is tremendous market demand for innovative answers to the region’s pressing issues, including congestion and continued growth in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). If a local government approaches these issues with a fresh perspective, political will, and some local money to get the kick-start the process, and follows up with strategic dialogue with the funding agencies, there is potentially an opportunity to become a “Poster Child” for effective transportation planning.

STP Set-aside for Transportation Enhancements (TE)

Georgia's Transportation Enhancement Program (TE) is one of the most successful TE programs in the nation. Funds provided through the TE program are eligible for use in the provision of facilities for pedestrians and/or bicycles and for the provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists. To be eligible for funding, projects must be sponsored by a governmental body and upon selection the project must be included in the TIP. Under this program, the sponsoring body is required to fund 20% of the cost and the remaining 80% will be covered by designated federal funds administered through the state. There is a \$1 million per project maximum per State Transportation Board policy.

Given Decatur's history of successfully leveraging these funds, this funding mechanism is still an important tool for financing future improvements.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

Money for this program comes from the Federal Government and is allocated to states based on the population living within ozone and carbon monoxide non-attainment areas and the relative severity of region's air quality problems. Under this program, the sponsoring body is required to fund 20% of the cost and the remaining 80% will be covered by designated federal funds administered through the state. Bicycle and pedestrian facility programs are eligible for CMAQ funding. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires an emissions analysis to show actual emissions benefits that will come about from implementation of the project.

For the metro Atlanta area, the air quality monitoring for such a project is performed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and projects are selected by the ARC along with GDOT, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). Typically, bicycle and pedestrian projects have a lower chance of being selected because of their relatively low potential effect on emission levels. However, pedestrian and bicycle projects have been funded when they were heavily transportation focused such as providing access to transit or to schools.

Safe Routes to School

The purpose of the Safe Routes to School program is to enable children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike to school. The intent of the Safe Routes to School program is to make bicycling and walking to school safe and attractive for school children. This program is designed to support projects (design, development, and implementation) that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety while reducing air pollution and traffic in the vicinity of elementary and middle schools.

Funds from the Safe Routes to School program can be used for projects including sidewalk improvements, pedestrian crossing improvements, off-street facilities and traffic diversion within approximately 2 miles of elementary and middle schools. This program is 100% federally funded (no match required) and funds are administered through GDOT.

Decatur is already a State Leader in the Safe Routes to School Program, and should capitalize on those early activities and expand the program to encompass all schools in

Decatur. This would expand the number of projects that are potentially eligible for SRTS funding, and would help showcase the Program's goals in a community-wide context.

The Safe Routes to School Program is also unique in that its objectives have overlapping appeal to a number of State and Federal agencies, including Public Health Agencies such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the DeKalb County Board of Health.

Recreational Trails

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a grant program that provides funding for the creation and/or maintenance of recreational pathways and trails that have been identified in, or that further a specific goal of, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The RTP is administered through the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and requires a 20% local match. The funds can be combined with other Federal program funds provided they are for a project that would be eligible for the RTP.

The current SCORP for the State of Georgia will expire in September 2007 and the process is underway to set the SCORP for 2008-2013. Information on the process can be found on the Georgia State Parks website located at:

<http://gastateparks.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=132975.0.1.5>

Highway Safety Funds

The Governor's Office of Highway Safety provides funding for safety-related programs, including pedestrian and bicycle projects that improve safety along or across roadways. State grants are available for up to three years with the first year being 100% funded, the second year requiring a 20% match and the final year requiring a 40% match. Funding is generally prioritized by crash frequency.

Although Decatur's safety issues are not extreme, this funding source, which allows for GDOT discretion, may be a good funding candidate for a number of Decatur's high priority projects, such as the various intersection improvements along Commerce Drive and the Railroad Corridor. Here, the improvements to safety and traffic flow may be enough to qualify for these funds, which are administered less formally by GDOT.

Local Development Fund

The Local Development Fund (LDF) program is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Pedestrian improvements such as recreational pathways, sidewalk improvements in historical districts, or ADA-related improvements may be eligible for funding. The city is required to commit local funds or in-kind contributions to match the state funding.

Table 11-1 details the federal and state funding sources with contact information.

Table 11-1 Federal and State Funding Sources

Funding Program	Required Matching Funds	Deadlines	Available Annual Funding	Contact/ Information
Transportation Enhancement (TE)	20%	Biennial	\$60 million over the 6-year legislative period	http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/te/index.shtml
Congestion Mitigation/ Air Quality Program (CMAQ)	20%	Variable	\$43 million	http://www.dot.state.ga.us/DOT/plan-prog/planning/AQ/CMAQ/index.shtml
Safe Routes to School	None		Minimum of \$1 million annually	http://www.dot.state.ga.us/DOT/plan-prog/planning/projects/bicycle/SRTS/index.shtml
National Recreational Trails Fund	20%	Fall	Approximately \$1.3 million statewide, maximum \$100,000 per project	Contact: RTP Coordinator, Georgia State Parks Phone: 404-656-6536 http://www.gastateparks.org/grants
Highway Safety Program	Yr 1 - 0% Yr 2 - 20% Yr 3 - 40%	On-going	\$15 million annually	http://www.gohts.state.ga.us/main.html
Local Development Fund	Equivalent local match - dollars or in-kind	Semi-annual competition in Spring and Fall	Each project not to exceed \$10,000	Program Manager: (404)- 679-4789 http://www.dca.state.ga.us/economic/financing/programs/ldf.asp

Other Sources of Funding

Funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be acquired through local means and also through private funding entities. In addition to the use of local general funds, funding instruments such as community improvement districts (CIDs), revenue and general obligation bonds, parks and recreation funds, development agreements, and grant funding through private foundations can be used to finance bicycle and pedestrian projects as well as other modes. Tax Allocation Districts (TAD), by State Law, are limited to economically depressed areas and are therefore not particularly relevant for funding the transportation challenges of Decatur.

National Public Health Leadership Institute

The purpose of this cooperative agreement is to enhance the leadership knowledge and competencies of federal, state and local health officials and other public health professionals by continuing to develop and conduct an annual National Public Health Leadership Program (PHLI). PHLI is intended to provide participants with a comprehensive, developmental experience, highlighted by an intensive, residence-based program. It will provide an opportunity for public health leaders to interact and create a network of leaders who can be instrumental in influencing the future direction of public health. Participants will be periodically evaluated during the course of the program to ascertain the impact of the experience on their personal leadership skills and its effect on their organization's effectiveness and efficiency. The results of these evaluations, along with the participant's recommendations for improvement, will be used to enhance the PHLI program and to help those at the national, state and local levels to develop their current and emerging leaders. www.Grants.gov

This program may offer Decatur staff an opportunity to build relationships within the Health Community and to further promote Decatur as a Poster Child for Leadership in Designing and Managing a Healthy Community.

Building Relationships: A Series of Next Steps

The transportation planning and programming process in metropolitan areas include numerous government agency partners at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. By federal directive, the process is to be Continuing, Coordinated, and Cooperative, which means that every agency has a role and a voice in the process by which plans are developed, projects are evaluated, and funds are programmed.

To this end, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is given significant legislative authority to allocate federal funds throughout the region (i.e. STP Funds, CMAQ funds, LCI funds). The State (GDOT) also has a role in the process, with preeminent authority to allocate funds within certain federal funding categories (i.e. TE, Safety Funds).

Some jurisdictions are more successful at obtaining funds than others. This success is partially due to strong participation in the planning/programming process (measured by attendance and participation in the MPO's Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Transportation Air Quality Committee (TAQC) and partially due to an ability to have projects on the shelf that are ready for funding when funding becomes available.

Presently, the MPO and GDOT are experiencing an unprecedented funding shortfall that is due to a reduction in available federal funds (as authorized by SAFETE-LU) and an increase in construction and right-of-way costs for projects already programmed. The end result is a repackaging of projects that have already been programmed, as well as the deletion of projects that don't appear to have the political will or the transportation benefit required to become manifest.

What this means for Decatur and the funding of CTP projects is that there is an even greater need to be strategic with local bond funds and relationship building than there might otherwise be. In addition, the notion of readiness becomes even more important because when federal funds loosen up, which history suggests will happen, there will be tremendous competition for funding. Those projects that can be programmed immediately will have a funding advantage.

The following table lists agencies and potential CTP projects that may offer opportunities for partnership. Where appropriate, next technical steps are identified as well.

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Table 11-2 Agencies and Potential Areas of Collaboration

Agency	Potential Areas of Collaboration	Next Steps (technical)
Clifton Corridor TMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Education activities • Bicycle Route(s) from Decatur to Emory • Public transportation between Decatur and Emory • Bicycle parking 	
DeKalb County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle route connections and coordination • Intersection signal improvements • Columbia Drive improvements 	
MARTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle lockers at MARTA stations • Pedestrian improvements near transit stations • Bus route changes 	
Atlanta Regional Commission (MPO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle and Pedestrian funding • CMAQ funding for Columbia Drive Multi-modal trail • LCI follow-up • Intersection improvements • Clairemont Ave corridor study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary (30%) design of Columbia Drive improvements
Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TE funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements • Safety funds for railroad crossing intersections and other priority intersections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary (30%) design of intersection and railroad improvements
Federal Highway Administration, Region 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Decatur as leader in innovative planning; ability to showcase early wins 	
Center for Disease Control (CDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of Decatur as a case example for active living and universal design; ability to compare before and after statistics for long-term research project 	

CTP Time Schedules and Costs

The following table details the probable cost of the CTP Implementation plan in 2007 dollars.

Table 11-3 Decatur CTP Implementation Plan - Opinion of Probable Construction Cost (in 2007 dollars)

Corridor/Intersection	Section	Length (in ft)	Recommended Actions	2007 Cost (\$ Million)	Timeframe	Lead Agency
S. Candler Street	Railroad to Pharr Road	6300	Restripe, add bike lanes	1.5	2015 - 2020	City with GDOT aid
Church Street	Northern city limit to Ponce de Leon Avenue	4700	Road diet, streetscape, add bike lanes	3.1	2010 - 2015	City
Clairemont Avenue	Northern city limit to Ponce de Leon Avenue	5500	Enhanced transit facilities	3.1	2015 - 2020	City and Emory University with GDOT aid
College Avenue	Western city limit to eastern city limit	9700	Sidewalk safety, signal modifications	1.0	2015 - 2020	Georgia DOT
S. Columbia Street	Railroad to southern city limit	4600	Build multi-use path on west side	2.0	2015 - 2020	City
Commerce Drive	West Howard Avenue to South Columbia Street	8600	Road diet, add bike lanes	4.0	2010 - 2015	City
Howard Avenue	Western city limit to Trinity Place	7700	Road diet, streetscape, two-way conversion	4.2	2015 - 2020	City
N. McDonough Street	Trinity Place to Howard Avenue	1400	Restripe with diagonal parking both sides	0.5	2007 - 2010	City
Ponce de Leon Avenue	Trinity Place to eastern city limit	8000	Create signature street	1.5	2010 - 2015	City
Scott Boulevard	Within city limits	7500	Widen sidewalk on west side only	0.9 - 3.4	2007 - 2010	Georgia DOT
W. Trinity Place	West Ponce de Leon to McDonough Street	3200	Restripe, add bike lanes	0.25	2007 - 2010	City
E. Trinity Place	North McDonough Street to Railroad	1500	Streetscape enhancement	0.5	2010 - 2015	City
Commerce Drive @ Clairemont Avenue	N/A	N/A	Widen sidewalks and crosswalks, countdown signals, signal timing and changes to traffic lanes	1.4	2010 - 2015	City
Commerce Drive @ Church St.	N/A	N/A	Widen sidewalks and crosswalks, countdown signals, signal timing and changes to traffic lanes	1.4	2010 - 2015	City
S Candler Street @ College Avenue, Howard Avenue and CSX Railroad	N/A	N/A	Widen sidewalks and crosswalks, countdown signals, signal timing and changes to traffic lanes	1.6	2010 - 2015	City
McDonough Street @ College Avenue, Howard Avenue and CSX Railroad	N/A	N/A	Widen sidewalks and crosswalks, countdown signals, signal timing and changes to traffic lanes	1.1	2010 - 2015	City
Atlanta Avenue @ College Avenue, Howard Avenue and CSX Railroad	N/A	N/A	Redesign intersection into two conventional intersections	1.9	2010 - 2015	City
Traffic Calming on Neighborhood Conservation Streets	Citywide	Average 500 feet per measure - no more than 10 measures per street.	Varies	1.5 (Budget \$100,000 per street. Typical \$300,000 per year for 5 years.)	2010 - 2015	City
TOTAL				\$31-34 Million		