

**Transportation Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 12, 2024
6:00 PM**

Call to Order

The Peachtree City Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) met Tuesday, November 12, 2024, in the Community Room at City Hall. Chairman Paul Schultz called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Other TAG members present: Vice Chair Keith Larson, Robert Hendry, Alan Reeves, Brian Bartal, and Public Works Director Jonathan Miller. Vincent Bonura was absent. City Manager Justin Strickland also attended.

Public Comments

Schultz remarked that he would send a memo soliciting agenda items to all members before the next meeting. Schultz remarked that he would send a memo soliciting agenda items to all members before the next meeting.

Larson said he had attended a Trail Regional Roundtable and Peachtree City's path network was included on the maps. He mentioned that they needed to be aware of any grant money available to them and that Go Georgia provided grant writing assistance to municipalities. Larson also noted that World Day of Remembrance for road traffic victims would be November 17.

Citizen Blake Hayes said he wanted the group to be aware of the issues with the application of stop signs along the path network, especially at T-intersections. He said he was in favor of stop signs, but only where necessary. Many of Peachtree City's were not, Hayes stated.

Minutes

A. October 8, 2024

Larson moved to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2024, TAG meeting. Miller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

A. Multi-Use Path System Advisory Group recommendations to Council presented December 2, 2021

Reeves asked if the path system was really a road network? Miller said it did have regulations but not the same as the road system. However, the regulations were catching up with the system. The network fell under Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Hendry mentioned issues he had had with people not hearing his golf cart because they were wearing headphones or ear buds.

The Multi-Use Path System Advisory Group (MUPSAG) was an eight-member appointed advisory group that met over a four-month period in 2021 to make

recommendations on path safety. Schultz and Larson both served on the group. Tonight, they wanted to review the presentation MUPSAG made to the City Council in December 2021.

Schultz explained that the MUPSAG broke into three teams covering Safety, Education and Outreach, and Registration. He pointed out that every recommendation had precedent. The group also told Council there should be an ongoing effort to focus on path safety.

Larson said he suggested they apply the Federal rubric for traffic safety to the path network. It was about risk mitigation, he stated, saying they suggested applying the Safe Systems approach to dial back the dangers in some areas, such as the numerous T-intersections along the eastern shore of Lake Peachtree, as well as at McIntosh High and Luther Glass Park.

They recommended speed humps at just two locations, Larson remarked, but the then-City Manager had them installed in eight places. Most of the recommendations dealt with cutting back brush and correcting blind spots. At the time of the presentation, there were 28 path crossings without signs warning cars that a crossing was upcoming, and those now had been corrected. The group recommended installing signs to tell drivers to beep their horns or ring a bell before entering a tunnel, and that had not been done. Larson pointed out that a half million dollars was earmarked in the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) for ADA transition ramps. Trees that were in danger of falling and that were blocking views or causing root damage were being removed, Larson remarked.

The presentation also pointed out that people felt more comfortable walking against vehicle traffic, and vehicle operators needed to understand that they needed to stay in their lanes. Larson said the City was on the second of two campaigns since MUPSAG met to distribute bells through bike and golf cart shops.

Another issue MUPSAG brought up was branding the path network with a unique name as was done in other areas. That had not happened yet, Larson remarked, even though a survey showed public interest. That was something they could work on and recommend to Council.

He also mentioned that alternate mode parking was a need in the City and needed to be written into an ordinance. The Planning Commission often asked developers to do this but could not require it.

Acting on the MUPSAG recommendations, the City had increased the presence of Code Enforcement officers on the paths. Surveillance cameras had also been installed at key locations.

Education programs in the schools were recommended but had not taken off.

Reeves said the Police Department had done a good job offering courses to teen drivers. Larson said these courses could be required as a condition to drive a golf cart at 15. Education also included path etiquette, and he said the City had done a good job of getting the message out through videos and social media posts. Another idea was recruiting cart ambassadors to talk with path users and hand out materials. Schultz noted that, based on the MUPSAG recommendations, people registering their carts now had to list all the users of that cart and verify that they had been informed of safety practices. Relocating decals to the front and back of the carts was another MUPSAG recommendation.

Staff implemented a number of the recommendations, including adding classes, updating the path rules brochure, and engineering changes during the MUPSAG process, Larson stated. He presented a scorecard he had created that showed which of the MUPSAG recommendations had been implemented. Council had approved participating in Fayette County's safety action plan which would include projects on Peachtree City's paths. The City was doing a lot that involved engineering to improve path safety, Larson noted. However, the narrow tunnels had not been marked, which would mitigate risks.

Encouragement and education were evolving, but youth still were not required to complete a safety course. Evaluation and planning were being worked on. There were a lot of good ideas involving registration, and a couple had been implemented, but many more had not, Larson remarked. The highest priority would be relocating tags on the carts.

He said he believed MUPSAG accomplished a lot and gave staff a lot to consider. However, a safety management system had to be monitored, and he saw that as one of TAG's key functions.

Bartal asked why MUPSAG was disbanded? He also said he did not see much overlap with what TAG was tasked to do. Larson said it was his opinion that Council voted to create MUPSAG because it was an election year, and there was a lot of outcry about safety on the paths. He said the focus was on safety and was purposely end-dated. It was not a formal committee, and the City Manager at the time said he did not want input from the public. Bartal said he was glad to have this background, but did not feel it was the same ask as for this group. Larson said he felt it was within the scope, but there were a lot of other things to get through first. They could look at safety maybe in the spring. Reeves said many items MUPSAG addressed were still problems that needed to be addressed.

Most of the complaints they got were about pedestrian/cart conflict, Miller remarked. The newest path on Aberdeen was about 14 feet wide, and they could strike out a four-foot pedestrian only area on it and on future paths. Strickland said this was something they were trying on Aberdeen and could do it to de-escalate conflict on major paths.

Bartal said safety was not the major ask for this group, although it was part of what they should consider. Strickland agreed, and Bartal said it would be easy to get off track in talking about safety, as did Larson.

They were looking at meeting twice a month, Schultz stated, on weeks that Council did not meet. Holidays and summer vacation might mean they met just once a month, as they were in November and December this year. He also proposed they get together for a longer session, maybe in January, and doing a SWOT analysis and creating priorities for the rest of the year. The group agreed this would be a good idea.

Bartal then explained he had created a matrix that could serve as a starting point for how to approach future projects and provide an objective tool for prioritization. Miller said the Sumner Road Path was a good example because people felt it was a safety issue. Hendry asked about what roads were forbidden for golf carts, and Miller said the few roads where carts were banned were listed in the ordinance.

Bartal and the group talked a little more about the categories he had created for the matrix and how it should work. He said he wanted to create something that would stand the test of time and be a useful tool. They could look at SPLOST projects and non-SPLOST projects separately. Schultz asked when Council expected a ranking? Schultz suggested they devote one of their meetings to prioritizing projects, and Larson mentioned they look around the city and come up with a list of projects.

Miller said before they started ranking anything, the Master Plan needed updating. Strickland said the interactive map was up to date in showing completed projects, but needed some upcoming projects added.

The group decided they needed printed copies of the maps that they could draw on during their discussions. Bartal said they needed to agree on a matrix, draw everything on the large map, and create a list. Then they could start prioritizing and have a list to present to Council. Cost and feasibility considerations would be next. Larson noted that costs might not be such a major consideration because developers were required to build path connections. At some point, a costing or feasibility score would need to be developed.

Reeves suggested they use the matrix and send feedback to the group before the next meeting about paths they thought should be on the map. Bartal said he could create a spreadsheet with all their suggestions, and they could make adjustments. They discussed methods for working with the maps, prioritizing and creating a list, then how to apply a cost code to them.

B. Meeting Schedule

Again, Schultz said they would work on the matrix at the December 10 meeting and pick up individual maps in preparation for their January session.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Barta moved to adjourn at 8 p.m. Reeves seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Paul Schultz, Chairman