

The Peachtree City Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) held its first meeting on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, in the Community Room at City Hall at 6 p.m. Present were Brian Bartal, Vincent Bonura, Robert Hendry, Keith Larson, Paul Shultz, and Public Works Director Jonathan Miller, who also was a voting member. Alan Reeves joined via video call. Staff liaison present were City Manager Justin Strickland, Interim Assistant City Manager Yasmin Julio, and City Engineer Dave Borkowski.

Strickland called the meeting to order. He said Council intended to start and revive several citizen advisory groups, and decided TAG should be the first because transportation was such an important issue. The group introduced themselves, with Miller noting that his department maintained all streets, paths, and signage. Strickland said Miller would be able to guide them through their discussions. The group decided to wait until the end of the meeting to elect a chairman and vice chairman.

Strickland went over TAG's duties:

- Solicit comments, concerns, and advice from city residents regarding the impacts, conflicts, and benefits associated with the multi-use path system, road system, and other means of transportation throughout the city.
- Evaluate citizen concerns and proposals to better develop recommendations prioritized upon feasibility, safety, potential liability, and funding parameters.
- The TAG had no binding authority over City staff or City Council for any recommendations or proposals presented or votes taken.

Next, he discussed the recommendations the group would make, saying they could make them to the Mayor and Council and City staff for new projects or changes to the path system projects and traffic-related issues that had been referenced to them by the City Manager or staff, but not limited to:

- Recommending measures to mitigate safety concerns throughout the multi-use path system;
- Recommending measures to mitigate safety concerns on city-maintained roadways;

- Recommending promotional and educational strategies for transportation awareness and safety;
- Locating and advising staff of potential upgrades to path transitions, crossings, tunnels, ridges, and areas for calming measures;
- Reviewing path pavement condition index ratings and street resurfacing annually;
- Collaborating with staff for an annual prioritization of path reconstruction;
- An annual review with staff regarding recommended changes, additions, or deletions to the Path System Master Plan with the final adoption being the responsibility of City Council;
- An annual review with staff regarding recommended changes, additions, or deletions to the City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan with the final adoption being the responsibility of City Council;

Miller would present reports and recommendations to the Mayor and Council on behalf of the group at least once a year, Strickland stated, adding that it would be good to have the full group present at those Council meetings.

Miller then presented a flow chart of how the Public Works Department was organized, pointing out that a new Assistant Director position had been created this year. There were 58 people in the department, covering paths, streets, fleet maintenance, and grounds maintenance. They worked closely with the Engineering Services Department.

Strickland listed his initial tasks for the TAG:

- Review and make recommendations for updating the Multi-Use Path System Master Plan;
- Discuss and recommend a potential new decal location and implementation strategy for golf carts;
- Review path data with Public Works and, once complete, discuss and recommend a priority program for reconstruction of paths;
- Review street condition data with Public Works. A priority program was already in place.

- Provide support in Public Works and Engineering staff regarding completion of the ADA Transition Plan.

Strickland said the first task was for them to review the path master plan and consider upcoming projects and what they were trying to connect. The GIS Department could put it into an interactive map that would be easier to understand, and Strickland suggested they aim for recommendations to Council for a 2025 update of the plan. Strickland also said they could talk about ongoing projects from the 2017 and 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

The group discussed changes that would come about because of the Federal Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Advisory Guidelines (PROWAG), which Miller said would result in more maintenance on the paths rather than complete repaves. They now had data on the path conditions that would help them tremendously in deciding what to do, Miller stated. Bartal said he would like to see them create guidelines for how the City prioritized future path construction.

The next discussion was about requiring cart identification decals on the rear and front of the carts, rather than the sides. This was a recommendation from the temporary Multi-Use Path Safety Advisory Group (MUPSAG) that met about three years ago, and Council had brought it up again recently. However, it was difficult to find a spot to affix the decal on the rear of some carts, they observed, and that was something to discuss at a future meeting.

The company that assessed street conditions had been working on a similar assessment of the paths, and that data should be available soon, Strickland stated, giving them quantitative data for the first time. The City could use that data to set up a system on how to prioritize the repaving by using this data, and that was something TAG could work on. Miller remarked that, unlike streets, which had varying condition levels, paths always required full reconstruction, so the prioritization would have to depend on a combination of their rating and the amount of use. Right now, Strickland said, they paved all paths in the area, but PROWAG might cause them to re-think that and only re-do sections of paths. They

should try not to trigger PROWAG until they were ready to do a whole section, Miller stated.

Larson noted the paths were in far better condition than they were a few years ago. Miller said tree roots had been mentioned, but ideally, they needed to get rid of the trees that were too close to the paths. A lot of undergrowth had been cut back, Hendry noted, and Miller said he hoped this group could help develop standards because tree removal was often a controversial topic but sometimes was needed for safety. Trees would have to be removed to meet ADA standards and also because they were blocking sight lines on the paths, Strickland said, but they would keep as many trees as possible.

Strickland said he wanted Miller to keep them updated on street condition data, but that should not be a big part of their work, because the street paving program was in such good shape. He noted there were many different ways to pave roads, and the company they used had a system that indicated what roads should be priorities before their condition dropped to a more expensive repair.

Strickland said Borkowski was in charge of the ADA transition plan, which was a new requirement from the State. Bartal then asked if they could make recommendations for certain intersections, and Strickland replied that they certainly could. He said he would get them a list of what projects were planned. He explained how the SPLOST list was compiled by a citizens committee with input from other citizens. Council then voted to approve the list before the referendum was put before voters. The 2023 SPLOST passed by 75%. There was a lot of discussion of roundabouts by the group, with comments both pro and con. Miller said the size of the roundabout was important.

For homework, Miller asked the committee to look over the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). He said this huge document had information on crossings, signage, and other transportation issues. PROWAG was another thing they needed to become familiar with. It specified what must be done to get the path system up to ADA standards. If they did not meet those requirements going forward, they would risk

losing Federal transportation funding. This would be a massive challenge, Miller remarked, but the end result would be a very user-friendly path system.

They needed to decide when and how often to meet, Strickland stated, and Larson pointed out that at least four members had to be physically present. Others could join through video calls and could vote as long as a quorum was physically present. They also had to consider when City Council, Planning Commission, and other City groups met, so it was decided that Tuesdays would be a good day to avoid conflict. They would meet again on October 22, then hold just one meeting per month in November and December, due to the holidays. Starting at 6 p.m. was fine with everyone.

Miller would be the main staff person, Strickland explained, and would work with them on agendas. The chairman would run the meetings. Reeves said he did not want to be considered as chairman, as did Hendry. Bartal nominated Schultz as chairman. Hendry seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Larson volunteered to serve as vice chairman. Hendry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The calendar they set showed the next meeting on October 22, followed by meetings on November 12 and December 10. The first meeting of 2025 would be January 7.

What did they want to do at the next meeting? Schultz asked, and Larson suggested they go over the final presentation that MUPSAG made to Council in 2021, noting that he and Schultz served on that group. The group members could watch the presentation from that Council meeting on YouTube and read through the final report. Larson said he had an update on what had been accomplished since then. Schultz agreed this would give them a good background, as did the other group members. They could review the document at the October 22 meeting.

Larson pointed out that Fayette County and its municipalities were developing a Safety Action Plan for streets, roads and paths. Now was the time for public input through a survey and also with an interactive

map. There would be a town hall meeting in Tyrone at the end of the month, and he urged the group to take the survey and explore the website.

Reeves remarked that everyone had their own individual interests, and suggested they assign items from the list of projects to people who were interested. Schultz said they would look into that. Larson said some of the items on their list would be impactful on the budget, but Miller again said that most of the money came from SPLOST or impact fees, not the General Fund.

The Master Plan was what Strickland wanted them to look into first, along with the decal positioning issue. Schultz said he liked the idea of focusing on the Master Plan and using the interactive map to develop priorities. He speculated that would take a couple of months.

The decal location was more complicated than it appeared. Strickland said the renewal sticker could go on the sides, but perhaps a smaller sticker with the number only could go on the back. Larson said most carts would require a physical modification and suggested they ask golf cart dealers their opinions. Bonura asked if the City could provide tag holders that could be attached to the carts, and all members said they would be thinking about possible solutions.

There being no further business, Bonura moved to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Hendry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.


Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary


Paul Schultz, Chairman