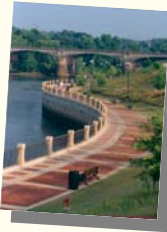


COLUMBUS PLANS!

Volume 1, Issue 5
Fall, 2008

COLUMBUS REGION NOT RECOMMENDED FOR NONATTAINMENT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) have made initial recommendations to State Government Officials to not include the Columbus Region in the list of nonattainment areas under the 2006 24-hour PM 2.5 standards. These are preliminary findings based on data collected in the last 3 years. The EPA and EPD will make their final determination in December 2008.



per cubic meter. EPA notified 25 states that they are currently meeting the 2006 PM 2.5 standards, while the remaining states have at least one area under consideration for a nonattainment designation. The Air Quality Alliance of the Chattahoochee Valley, conformed of two states and seven counties, was identified as exceeding the 24-hour PM 2.5 standard.



In September 2006, EPA dramatically strengthened the fine particle standards to protect public health, tightening the 24-hour standard from 65 to 35 micrograms

Visit the EPA's website at www.epa.gov/pmdesignations/2006standards/index.htm for more information or contact the Air Quality Alliance of the Chattahoochee Valley by phone at 706-653-4421 or by e-mail at cpcmpo@columbusga.org.



AQA HAS LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE

The Air Quality Alliance of the Chattahoochee Valley (AQA) has launched a new website to continue with their air quality efforts. In this website you will be able to:

- Monitor the effects of air pollution by checking the air quality forecast
- Sign up to receive smog alerts
- Find learning resources to help you understand the effects of air pollution

- Register to participate in the commute rewards program
- And much more

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www.columbusga.com/MPO/AQA/

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Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming PAC Meetings

Meetings will be held at the Council Chambers at 9:00 AM

- September 3, 2008
- September 17, 2008
- October 1, 2008
- October 15, 2008
- November 5, 2008
- November 19, 2008

Upcoming MPO Meetings

Citizen Advisory Committee
Council Chambers at 2:00PM

- September 9, 2008
- October 14, 2008
- November 12, 2008

Technical Coordination Committee

Annex Conference Room at 10:30AM

- September 12, 2008
- November 13, 2008

Policy Coordination Committee

Tower Conference Room at 10:30AM

- September 26, 2008
- November 21, 2008

AQA LAUNCHES A NEW WEBSITE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

The air quality forecast is a tool that can help you stay informed about the health effects associated with different levels of air pollution and will offer you guidelines for making decisions about outdoor activities on days when air pollution may be a concern. If air quality is projected to be poor, a “Smog Alert” will be issued and you will be asked to take steps ranging from carpooling and teleworking that day to curtailing driving, daytime refueling, and yard work in order to limit pollution.

Commute Rewards is a program that rewards commuters who carpool, ride transit, vanpool, telework, bicycle or walk to work. The Commute Rewards program can even help you find a carpool partner. Go to <https://ridessmart.myridessmart.com> to instantly find and carpool partner.



AQA is a region-wide volunteer initiative of government, business, and members of the community interested in public health and sustainable economic growth in the seven-county, two-state

Chattahoochee Valley region. The alliance works with the valley's businesses, schools, organizations, and citizens to educate them on the importance of improving air quality.



Air Quality Alliance
of the Chattahoochee Valley

DESIGN GUIDELINES TO BECOME MORE USER-FRIENDLY

In August 2000, the City of Columbus updated its current Design Guidelines with funds provided by a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This year, the SHPO awarded the City again with an additional grant to update the existing guidelines and make them user-friendlier. Local organizations such as, The Historic Columbus Foundation and Midtown, Inc., also gave a financial contribution to the City for this update.



The City of Columbus is currently looking for a firm with professional historic preservation qualifications to update these guidelines. City staff, local preservation groups and the Board of Historic and Architectural Review (BHAR) members will assist with the review and editing of the final document.

The designation of local historic districts and landmarks, and the subsequent implementation of a process known as design review, is primarily intended to recognize and protect the unique character and integrity of the historic areas and properties while also following their active use.

Many residents in Columbus appreciate the distinctive architectural and design qualities of their community, but the pressures of growth and development



always place these resources in some degree of danger unless they are protected.

In order to protect those resources, the City staff, the Historic Preservation Board, and City officials use these guidelines in their decision making process when issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The design guidelines are primarily used in Columbus' design review process and are intended to aid property owners through the community who may be considering rehabilitation or new construction projects. These guidelines should be viewed as guiding principles that, when followed, will result in sound historic preservation practices and help maintain the unique sense of place enjoyed by the residents of Columbus.



The new design guidelines will be available in fall of 2009 and will be easily accessible via electronic copy and hard-copy formats making it more reachable for the community.

For more information visit:

www.columbusga.com/MPO/

STAFF UPDATE

The Planning Department would like to congratulate transportation planner **Rush Wickes** on recently earning professional certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners. This was achieved by meeting various career prerequisites followed by a comprehensive planning examination, of which only half of all examinees pass. He



is the second member of the planning staff to have earned this certification.

Rush earned his B.A. in political science and M.A. in urban and regional planning from Virginia Tech. His primary responsibilities are congestion management and long range transportation planning. He can be reached by telephone at 706-225-3937 or via e-mail at rwickes@columbusga.org.

COMMUNITY AGENDA READY FOR REVIEW

The Columbus Consolidated Government Planning Department held a public hearing on July 29, 2008 at the Government Center Council Chambers to request permission from the City Council to submit the Community Agenda to the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center and the Department of Community Affairs.

At the meeting, citizens had the last opportunity to participate, ask questions, and make comments in regards to the 2028 Comprehensive Plan.

The Community Agenda is the third and final component of the comprehensive plan that provides the 20-year road map for the City's future. The document meets the guidelines of the state's local planning requirements while innovatively organizing the City's planning approach around six goal areas unique to Columbus:

1. Community revitalization,
2. Quality community infrastructure,
3. Balanced transportation,
4. Preserving and enhancing the natural environment,
5. Managing impacts of growth, and
6. Regional coordination and local partnerships.

The approach to implementing this vision was built on the following principles:

Seize the Moment

Columbus has a one-in-a-decade opportunity because of the growth coming its way via Fort Benning, Aflac, and Kia. This gives the Columbus the opportunity to do things that the City might have been putting off, waiting for better times. The Community Agenda lays out a plan for addressing the different challenges and implementing a new strategy.



Revitalize in Order to Minimize Sprawl

During the 2028 Comprehensive Plan Update, it was determine that neighborhoods are asking for revitalization; and the panhandle wants to preserve its greenspace and limit

growth. All these factors will be forcing the City to direct growth back to the in-town neighborhoods; be more efficient with its transportation system and public service costs; and focus public improvements on in-town neighborhoods.

Strengthen Our Role in the Region



Due to upcoming regional expansion, Columbus will be called on to provide many more services. This will require more proactive efforts by the City to coordinate regional decision-making, keep growth and

infrastructure balanced and focused, and solicit – and receive – support and cooperation from the surrounding jurisdictions and variety of public agencies and private organizations within the region. The Future Land Use Plan defines the community's existing assets and potential new concepts for the future of Columbus.

Make the Big Decisions Wisely

Currently, the City's financial capacity to improve these services is constrained. New revenue sources will be needed and new priorities must be set in order to manage the impacts of growth. The Fiscal Impact Study should provide the City with a critical analysis of existing revenue sources and other potential ways to raise city revenues to help pursue the goals of this Community Agenda.

Citizen Trust and Involvement is Crucial

The City's leadership must continue building citizen trust and energy by identifying and empowering champions of the Comprehensive Plan. Public engagement, education, and outreach – as much as money – are the most critical elements of carrying out each step of the implementation program for this Plan.



The Community Agenda is available at any of the four Muscogee County libraries, the Planning Department, and via the web at www.jjg.com/CCGPlan/.

“IN TOUCH” TO START IN SEPTEMBER

The Planning Department is always looking for ways to improve its effectiveness and we believe that one of the key elements is involving the community in the planning process; therefore, we have created a program called “In Touch”. Starting in September 2008, citizens will have the opportunity to sign up to a variety of issues according to their preference, some of these issues depend on special interests and others depend geographic interests as specified below.



Special interests:

- Community wide notices
- 2028 Comprehensive Plan
- Board of Architectural Review (BHAR) Notices
- Air Quality Alliance of the Chattahoochee Valley (AQA) Notices
- Planning Advisory Commission (PAC) Notices
- US Highway 80 Overlay District
- Quarterly Newsletter

And geographic interests:

- North Columbus Planning District
- Panhandle Planning District
- Columbus South Planning District
- Midtown/Uptown Planning District
- Southeast Columbus Planning District
- Bibb City/North Highland Planning District



People can sign up in one of two ways: by calling the Planning Department at 706-653-4116, or by visiting the Department's website.

Note: Your privacy is very important to us and we will not release your e-mail address to anyone nor will we use it for sending you any material other than that which you have requested.

**Sign up for “In Touch”
Via Web:
www.columbusga.com/MPO/
Via Phone:
706-653-4116**

OPEN HOUSE HELD FOR THE WARM SPRINGS BIKE/TRAIL PHASE III

The Columbus Phenix City Metropolitan Planning Organization held an informational open house for the third phase of the proposed multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trail project at Midland Academy on August 19, 2008 with approximately 50 people in attendance.

The purpose of this open house was to discuss the details of the project with the residents of the area, hear their comments, and answer any questions they had in regards to the this phase of the project. Attendees had the option to complete a comment card at the meeting or submit their comments about the project until September 7, 2008. Comments could be submitted in one of three options:

Via mail:

Mr. Rick Jones, AICP
Planning Department
P.O. Box 1340,
Columbus, GA 31902

Via E-mail

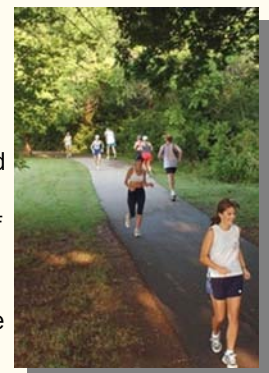
Cpcmpo@columbusga.org

Via the web:

www.columbus.wkdickson.com

Project Overview

The Columbus Warm Springs Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail Phase III project will be located on the abandoned railroad route and will start at Cooper Creek Park and end at Psalm Road. This trail will provide an additional 4.25 miles of pedestrian and bicycle trail to the City's trail system which starts with the 1 mile Riverwalk Trail along the Chattahoochee River, continues with the 5.75 mile Warm Springs Phase I and II Trail (construction scheduled in 2009), which runs from the 14th Street Bridge to Cooper Creek Park, and concludes with the Phase III portion of the trail.



For more information visit the project website at

www.columbus.wkdickson.com

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

The Columbus-Phenix City Metropolitan Planning Organization is working hard to make necessary improvements in different areas of the city to increase safety, security, and connectivity in order to improve the quality of life for all citizens.



Here is a list of some of the main transportation projects that are taking place right now:

- Moon Road from Whittlesey Boulevard to Knology Way:** Construction is underway to widen this section of roadway to four (4) lanes. Improvements include dual left turn lanes on Whittlesey Boulevard onto Moon Road; and a dedicated right turn lane onto Moon Road from the east off-ramp at J.R. Allen Parkway. Construction is estimated to be complete toward the end of September 2008.



- Veterans Parkway from Old Moon Road to Hancock Road:** This project will widen the roadway from four (4) to possibly six (6) lanes. Approval for the environmental assessment is anticipated from the Federal Highway Administration this Summer, with the purchase of right-of-way expected to begin shortly thereafter. Acquisition of the needed right-of-way is projected to take 18 months to complete. Construction of the project is also expected to take 18 months to complete.

- The Whittlesey Road Widening Project:** Right-of-way acquisition is well underway for the project and is anticipated being complete by the end late spring 2009. Construction will follow immediately after, and should take approximately 24 months to complete.
- Eastern Connector (Lynch Road) from Chattsworth Road to U.S. 80 (Macon Road):** This project will widen the roadway from two (2) to four (4) lanes. Design plans have been certified for right-of-way acquisition to begin. Construction of the roadway is scheduled for 2009.
- Talbotton/Warm Springs Road:** Widening of this roadway will begin at 7th Avenue and go to Woodruff Road. Design plans have been certified by GDOT for right-of-way acquisition to begin. Acquisition of the needed right of way is expected to take anywhere from 30 to 36 months.
- LARP Resurfacing Project:** This is the annual contract of resurfacing city streets that is sponsored by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The project is complete for the 2007/2008 contract @ 27 miles, 107 streets, \$3,382,844.00 combined funding with City and GDOT. The 2008/2009 LARP Project was contracted for 10.13 miles, 36 streets, \$1,191,606.00 combined funding with City and GDOT. An additional 12.39 miles, 23 streets is to be done by City on a Supplemental List to be determined as funding becomes available. The last phase of the project should start in September of 2008 to be complete in spring of 2009.



**COLUMBUS CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Lead agency for the Columbus Phenix City Metropolitan
Planning Organization (CPCMPO) and the Air Quality
Alliance of the Chattahoochee Valley (AQA)

P.O. Box 1340
420 10th Street
Columbus, GA 31902

Phone: 706-653-4116 and 706-653-4421
Fax: 706-653-4534
Email: CPCMPO@columbusga.org

"The mission of the Planning Department is to provide continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated planning efforts, through a proactive public participation process, that will provide for regional growth, and regional mobility, while fostering sustainable development sensitive to community and natural resources."

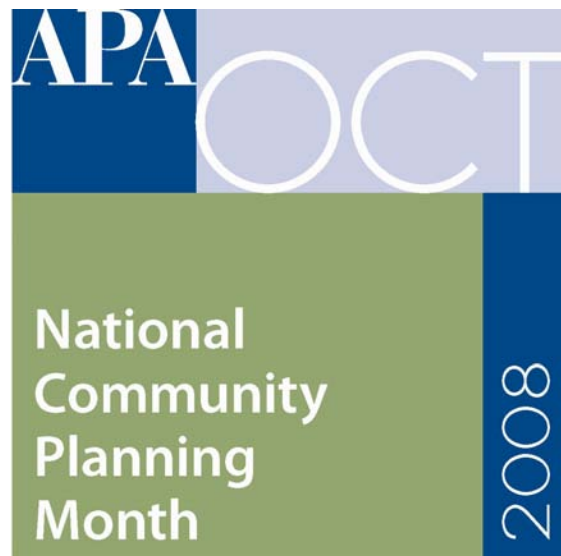
We're on the Web:
www.columbusga.com/MPO/

OCTOBER IS THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

Each year the American Planning Association (APA), its members, chapters, divisions, and professional institute sponsor National Community Planning Month to raise the visibility of the important role of planners and planning in communities across the U.S.

Planners address both the existing and future needs of a community. This year's theme, Green Communities, recognizes the role planners have in helping ensure our communities are environmentally-friendly and sustainable.

From alternative energy sources to reducing automobile dependence, planners can have key role in changing how our communities work, function, and impact the earth. You're invited to celebrate how your town, neighborhood, or community already is or working to become a green community this October.



[GREEN COMMUNITIES]