

Submitted By: Aaron Redman
Athens in Motion Commission
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Project Type: Bicycle/Pedestrian (bicycle lanes, sidewalks, other bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure, not including Greenway or Rail-to-Trails) related projects - Transportation & Public Works

General Program Goal: Social Well-Being

Previously Submitted and Rejected: No

Continuation Project: No

Project Total Cost: \$ 2,956,000

Total Annual Operating Cost: \$ 1,000

Abbreviated Project Description: This program is designed to identify and overcome barriers and gaps in accessibility to increase ADA accessibility and inclusion along our sidewalks and roadways. Projects might include things such as: removing obstructions such as utility poles in sidewalks; Widening sidewalks; Refuge islands in intersections; Improvements for the visually impaired; Improved sidewalk access for Transit stops; Improved ADA parking spaces; Eliminating or reducing steep grades in public sidewalks.

Project Location/Address: This project would implement accessibility improvements within or connected to the public right-of-way throughout all of Athens-Clarke County.

Is the Site currently owned by the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County? Yes

Is the Site within State Highway Rights-of-Way? Yes

Site Specific Information: Specific locations of ADA or accessibility improvements will be identified in coordination between Athens in Motion Commission and Transportation & Public Works Staff. Additionally, locations will also be determined based on reports through various methods from residents or visitors who identify gaps in accessibility or barriers to themselves or others. This would be primarily for existing infrastructure such as sidewalks or bus stops and the focus would be on smaller improvements. All work would have to be done in the public rights of way or additional rights of way would need to be acquired.

Does this Project require the acquisition of any land rights, whether existing sites, new site, easements, or Rights-of-Way? Unsure

Project/Program Description: This program is designed to identify and overcome barriers and gaps in accessibility to increase ADA accessibility and inclusion along our sidewalks and roadways. In order to achieve this and determine the full list of improvements throughout our community, Transportation and Public Works staff coordinate with ACCGov Inclusion Office to host multiple conversations with residents and those who are most affected by these accessibility barriers. These conversations will be framed around accessibility, persons with disabilities, and how they experience mobility in Athens-Clarke County. The three primary questions that will be asked are:

1. Who have we listened to?
2. What populations are impacted by the decisions we're about to make?
3. What data have we looked at, and has it been disaggregated?

These conversations are an important part of determining which projects will be developed, but examples of projects can include any of the following:

- Removing obstructions such as utility poles in sidewalks that prevent wheelchair use.
- Widening sidewalks that aren't wide enough for a wheel chair or stroller
- Refuge islands in intersections to allow for a safe place for those who have difficulty with longer crossings
- Installation of improvements for the visually impaired including Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) and/or tactile paving
- Improved sidewalk access for Transit stops to connect them into the sidewalk network where feasible
- Improved ramps and railings near and in front of ADA parking spaces within the public right-of-way
- Eliminating or reducing steep grades in public sidewalks.

We will also work with local and regional advocacy groups to develop how, when, and where we can have these conversations.

Project Mission Statement/Selection Criteria: This program will aim to overcome barriers and gaps in accessibility throughout Athens-Clarke County by working with those who are affected by these barriers and those who advocate for these groups of people.

How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGov Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Corridor Study, or Service Delivery Plan? Accessibility is a critical factor in the Athens in Motion Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan, Connect Athens - Atlanta Highway and Lexington Highway Corridor Studies, the Prince Ave. Corridor Study, the Athens Transit Development Plan, and any other inclusion / accessibility plan in Athens.

How is this Project included in the Madison Athens-Clarke County Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) long-range Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)? ADA compliance is a key goal of MACORTS Transit/Paratransit Planning <https://www.macorts.org/files/FinalFY20UPWP2-13-19wResolution.pdf>

Attachments:

[Attachment 1 - Athens in Motion ADA TSPLOST 2023](#)

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How will the Project meet one or more of the Selection Criteria?

Promotes the Goal of improving Equitability of capital improvements throughout the Community:

The Pedestrian Accessibility Improvement Project serves many diverse areas and populations of Athens and will enhance accessibility to schools, parks, jobs, and neighborhoods. This project will remove or reduce accessibility barriers that currently prevent those with disabilities from using sidewalks. By incorporating the selection processes addressed in the site specific information section,

Transportation and Public Works (TPW) will ensure funds from this TSPIST project are distributed in a fair and equitable way for all Athenians. TPW will also coordinate closely with the ACCGov Inclusion Office in a dedicated effort to engage in the conversations outlined above. Proposed improvements will provide transportation equity to those who walk, roll, and take transit. Additionally, all proposed designs will follow the newly updated Complete Streets Policy which highlights the importance of equity and inclusion in all parts of the design process.

Protects the community's existing Transportation Infrastructure Investments: This project focuses on improving access to our sidewalk infrastructure, ensuring that our sidewalks and pedestrian walkways are utilized to their fullest extent by everyone in Athens.

Promotes the Upgrade and Continued Use of Alternative Transportation Facilities: ACC has made major investments to date in developing new pedestrian and bike infrastructure including multi-use paths, trails, and sidewalks. However, older sidewalks and amenities remain insufficient and inaccessible to different groups of people throughout Athens-Clarke County. This project focuses on the upgrade of those facilities to bring them to the same standard as our new alternative transportation facilities. This project will focus on smaller improvements that make a big impact to those who experience transportation barriers.

Promotes increased access to existing public facilities: Increasing access is not only about building new facilities and filling in gaps in our infrastructure; it is also about increasing access to public facilities for those who experience barriers within our existing infrastructure. This project insures that all residents and visitors will have improved access throughout the county.

Promotes increased usage of the Transit System, including improving Pedestrian access to Transit Facilities: Many Athens bus stops still lack safe access via sidewalks or crosswalks. In addition to access to transit being considered as a whole, "bus service area coverage" and "percentage of population commuting by transit" are two explicitly stated equity criteria used to select and prioritize areas in need of bike and pedestrian infrastructure in the Athens in Motion Plan. This project would greatly expand accessible access to the transit system by providing the first and last mile connectivity via sidewalks that are currently lacking connectivity to transit facilities. This includes linkages to access bus stops and linkages that safely take passengers to the bus stop, and then from the bus stop to their final location via bike or on foot.

Maintains or Improves Air Quality: This project provides increased access to those with disabilities or those that have barriers and will result in fewer automobile trips by those individuals. The resultant exhaust emissions will be valuable in diminishing the impact on air quality.

Reduces vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion: This project will greatly improve pedestrian infrastructure in Athens-Clarke County, making it possible to accomplish trips to school, work, to local businesses, especially for those with disabilities, without having to rely on a car.

Reduces time spent traveling in vehicles: This project will reduce miles travelled, traffic congestion, and that maintains air quality, will also reduce the time spent in vehicles.

Continues TSPLOST 2018 Corridor Improvements or transportation related safety improvements:

The TSPLOST 2018 Corridor Improvement Projects identified many barriers to access throughout Atlanta Highway, Lexington Road, and Prince Avenue. This program could be utilized to remove or reduce the number of accessibility barriers along these critical corridors.

Promotes Health and Safety: A central goal of this project is to increase safety for pedestrians of all ages and abilities, including those with disabilities. Additionally, communities with access to safe places to walk have lower rates of obesity and diabetes, conditions that disproportionately affect communities of color. And of course, when people feel safer using alternative transportation options such as sidewalks they are more willing to walk or roll longer distances. By improving access to existing sidewalks, multi-use trails, and bus stops, we will create a more complete and inclusive network for active transport that is more likely to be used.

Continues Sidewalk & Multi-Use Trail construction: The central focus of this project is to identify and remove barriers along our existing active transportation network. This will create more access to our sidewalks and multi-use paths in Athens Clarke County, continuing the goals of inclusion and access. Our goal is to create a fully interconnected network for all users that connects existing trails, sidewalks, and paths with schools, downtown, campus, and community centers.

Implements components of an updated Greenway Network Plan: This project complements components of the updated Greenway Network Plan by providing improved access and connectivity to and from the Greenway from a wide range of locations in Athens-Clarke County.

Triple Bottom Line Impacts

Positive Benefits for the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: This project will improve mobility for all residents, but especially for those with disabilities by allowing them to use sidewalks which currently represent barriers to them due to problems with grading, obstructions, or gaps. By improving our sidewalks and by building a connected network of pedestrian and transit facilities, ACCGov will provide greater access to housing, businesses, and recreation opportunities for those with disabilities.

Detrimental Impacts to the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: None

Positive Benefits for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: When we walk and bike, we have opportunities to interact with others in a way that is not possible while driving. Athens needs more places where people can walk, roll, and interact with each other. By removing barriers for walkers and those with disabilities, it encourages active transportation which has important health benefits for the community. It also helps our community move toward the Vision Zero goal of zero collisions for all road users.

Detrimental Impacts for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: None

Positive Impacts on the Environment: Fewer cars on the roads means fewer emissions in the atmosphere. People will choose the most convenient option for a trip, so creating a network that facilitates easy, safe and accessible active travel within the trip shed will reduce time spent in vehicles.

Detrimental Impacts on the Environment: None

Positive/Negative Impacts on ACCGov Departments, Agencies, or other Organizations, if not covered in one of the above questions: ACCGov Transportation and Public Works will benefit from a more complete and accessible sidewalk network.

ACCGov Inclusion Office will work to ensure that residents and visitors have fewer barriers to their homes and destinations.

Various advocacy groups for those with disabilities will benefit by having their voices heard

The entire community will benefit from a more accessible network, but those with disabilities that are often overlooked will benefit the most.

Project Costs

Detailed project capital budget costs (to be funded from TSPLOST 2023 only):

Project Costs (round to thousand)	Amount
1. Land Acquisition / ROW / Easement:	\$ -
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno,; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 240,000
3. Miscellaneous Fees: (Min. Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.)	\$ 60,000
4. Construction:	\$ 2,000,000
5. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 200,000
6. Acquisition of Capital Equipment	\$ -
7. Testing:	\$ 15,000
8. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 101,000
9. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 262,000
10. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 20,000
11. Other 1:	\$
12. Other 2:	\$
Project Subtotal:	\$ 2,898,000
14. Program Management (2% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 58,000
TSPLOST 2023 Project Total:	\$ 2,956,000

Operating Cost

Total Annual Net Operating Costs when Project is complete:

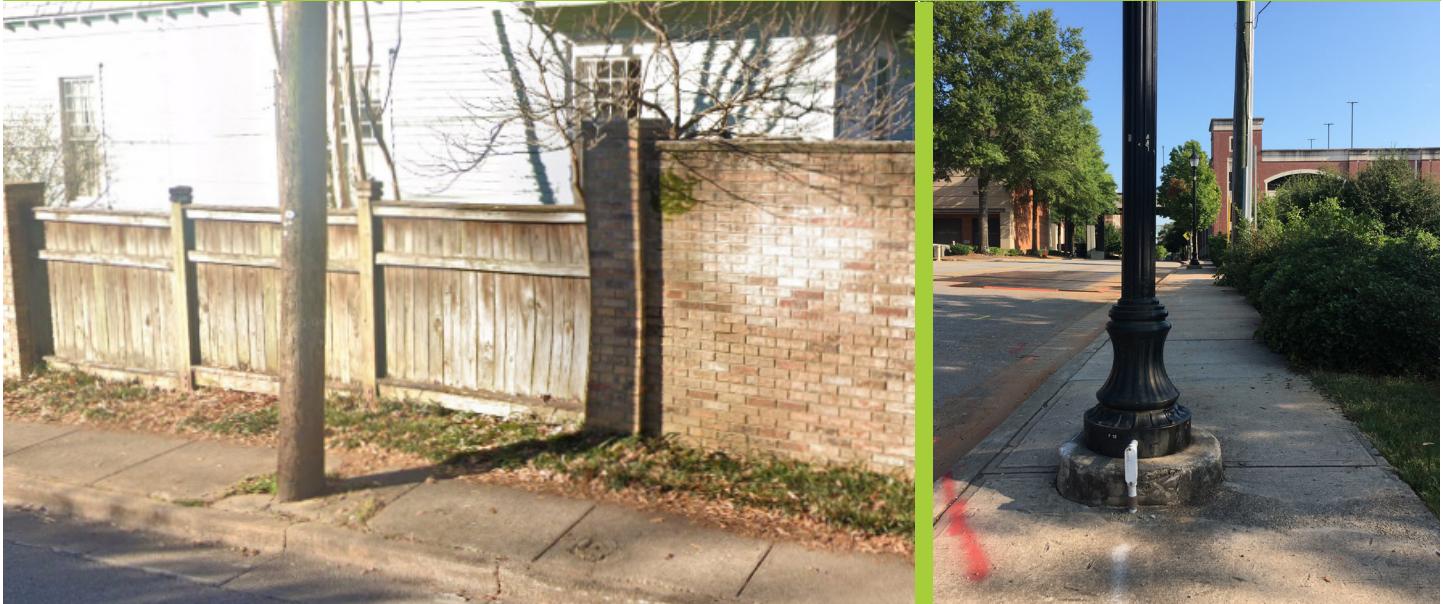
Only identify additional or net operating costs to be paid by ACCGov as a result of this Project. Identify the additional or net costs needed, above ACCGov's current operating budget, to operate the requested project; as well as any additional Project related revenues that would be generated. Provide budget costs for each identified category below.

Operating Costs (round to thousand)	Estimated Impact for Annual Operating Expenditures
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES FROM PROJECT	
PROJECTED EXPENDITURES	
1. Personnel Costs: from Appendix A	
2. Annual Utilities:	
• Natural Gas:	
• Electrical:	
• Water:	
• Sewer:	
• Phone:	
• Solid Waste Collection:	
• Other:	
3. Operating Supplies:	
4. Equipment Maintenance:	
5. Facility Maintenance:	
6. Other: Public Art Maintenance minimum	1,000
7. Other:	
8. Other:	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	
NET OPERATING COSTS OF PROJECT:	\$ 1,000

Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than TSPLOST 2023? No

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS



Utility poles in the middle of sidewalks are one example of conflicts pedestrians face while walking or rolling.

By eliminating barriers and improving access, we will create a more complete and inclusive network for active transport.

Staff will have multiple conversations with residents and those who are most affected by these accessibility barriers. These conversations will be framed around accessibility, persons with disabilities, and how they experience mobility in Athens-Clarke County.

Examples of projects can include any of the following:

- Removing obstructions such as utility poles in sidewalks that prevent wheelchair use.
- Widening sidewalks that aren't wide enough for a wheel chair or stroller
- Refuge islands in sidewalks to allow for a safe place for those who have difficulty with longer crossings

- Installation of improvements for the visually impaired including Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) and/or tactile paving
- Improved sidewalk access for Transit stops to connect them into the sidewalk network
- Improved ramps and railings near and in front of ADA parking spaces within the public right-of-way
- Eliminating steep grades in public sidewalks.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS
\$2.94 million

Attachments:
Letter from AiMC

Contact:
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Athens in Motion Commission

SPLOST Program Management
ATTN: TSPLOST 2023 Advisory Committee
301 College Avenue, Suite 101
Athens, GA 30601

To the Advisory Committee:

On behalf of the Athens in Motion Commission, I am pleased to present this TSPLOST 2023 proposal for Pedestrian Accessibility Improvements.

Athens in Motion held its first meeting in September of 2019. Since then, the AiM Commission and the Department of Transportation and Public Works have developed a mutually respectful and productive working relationship. To date, we have advanced five projects. These projects serve our mission of safety for all road users and meet our goals of Connectivity, Equity, More Users, Education, and Implementation.

The central focus of this project is to identify and remove barriers along our existing network of sidewalks and multi-use paths and trails. This will create more access to our sidewalks and multi-use paths in Athens-Clarke County, continuing the goals of inclusion and access. Our goal is to create a fully interconnected network for all users that connects existing trails, sidewalks, and paths with schools, downtown, campus, and community centers.

We look forward to presenting this TSPLOST 2023 proposal to the Advisory Committee. TPW staff have embraced the Complete Streets ethos and are creative and supportive team members. Thank you for considering our funding request for this project.

Respectfully submitted,
AiM Commissioner Aaron Redman