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# Alpharetta wants input on bike road plan

## City asks residents for ideas to share roads with cyclists

By **HATCHER HURD**  
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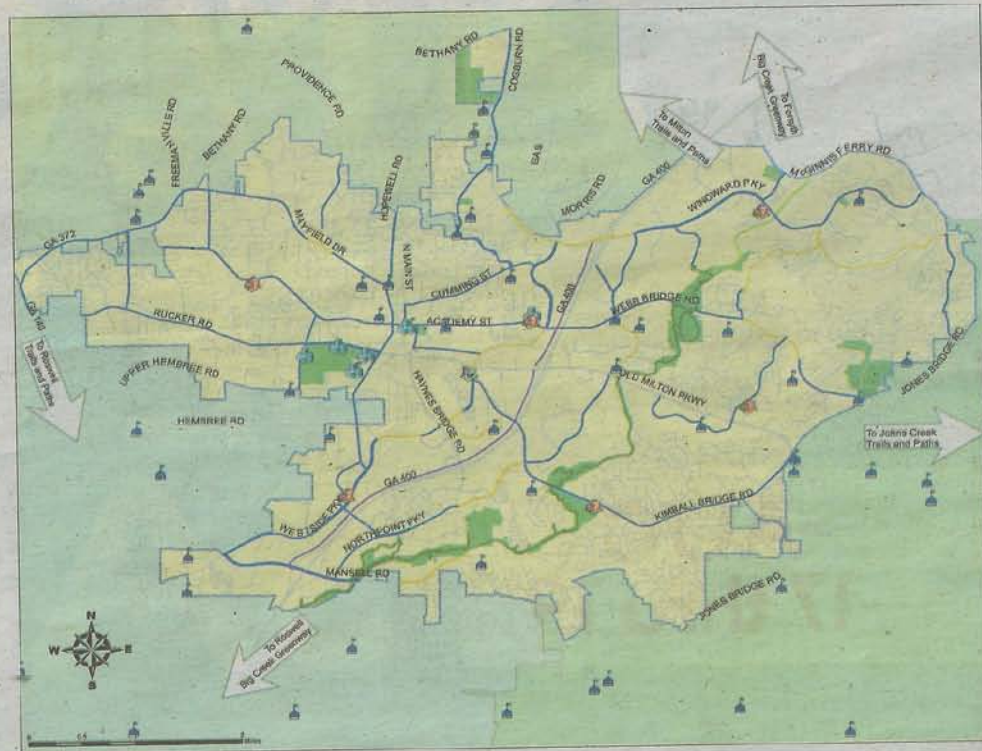
ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Part of being a Green City is finding ways to reduce the number of combustion engines on Alpharetta's public roads. Making the city safe for cyclists headed for work or play is a top priority for the city.

The Alpharetta Transportation Department is requesting public comment on the proposed Alpharetta Bike Plan. The purpose of this plan is to identify roadways that should receive enhanced accommodations for recreational and commuter cyclists.

These enhancements would include wide travel lanes, full on-street bike lanes and wide shared-use side paths. City Traffic Engineer Eric Graves wants to let the public know that the city is working on this and wants their input.

"One of our aspirations is to work with the biking community and publicize that we have a plan," Graves said.

The city has limited funding for specific improvements at present. By developing



this plan, Alpharetta will have a road map to incrementally make improvements as it performs routine maintenance and as

properties further develop.

A big part of the plan is linking as

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# Bike:

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many major roads as possible to access points along Big Creek Greenway. Big Creek Greenway already links to Roswell's portion of the BCG, which in future years will link up with Cobb County's greenway system and ultimately the Silver Comet Trail 13 miles northwest of Atlanta, which travels west through Cobb, Paulding and Polk counties.

At the northern end, plans call for linking up with the Forsyth Greenway. To the east, linkage with the Johns Creek

Greenway will let cyclists cross the Chattahoochee at Rogers Bridge and onto the Gwinnett trail system.

One of the complaints on the Greenway has been by pedestrians saying the cyclists go too fast.

"We have been systematically narrowing travel lanes as they come under repair to create a shoulder that can ultimately serve as a bike lane," Graves said. "There has been a good deal done on North Point Parkway and Windward Parkway. Along most of Westside Parkway, there is a shared sidewalk."

Rucker Road has been identified as a good connector.

The city also wants to offer

commuting cyclists the opportunity to get to work without using a car.

"This will be an incremental project," Graves said. "As opportunities arise during the course of reconstruction and milling and resurfacing as well as new construction, we can create more linkages."

Funding had been earmarked as part of the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, but that is now gone by the wayside.

The city has talked with Bike Alpharetta, a cycling group that has always lobbied for more bike-friendly roads in the city. Now, Alpharetta wants to hear from the general public.

Jack Tyson, who along with his wife Jackie helped found Bike Alpharetta, said the group provides ongoing feedback to the city about the feelings of the biking community.

"We know things will come in stages, through masterplan funding," Tyson said. "The Greenway is a big asset. Once it expands to Roswell and Forsyth, it will be the spine."

The city also needs to have an education arm in creating a more bicycle-friendly city.

"We need to get people used to seeing bicyclists on the road. That helps encourage tolerance on both sides," Tyson said.

Meanwhile, Tyson has some tips for cyclists:

\*\* Never ride on Friday.

People are in a hurry to get away.

\*\* Saturday and Sunday are the best days to ride, but get out early before the traffic starts to build.

"Even an hour can make a big difference," Tyson said.

"Commuting by bicycle is becoming more and more popular, especially among the younger crowd. Now that people are talking seriously about creating bike paths in the community, people are beginning to see the sense it makes," Tyson said.

*Should you have specific questions you can email City Traffic Engineer Eric Graves at [Traffic@alpharetta.ga.us](mailto:Traffic@alpharetta.ga.us).*