



*City of South Fulton Government*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Department of Communications**

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### **South Fulton Approves Sidewalk Study to Improve Pedestrian Opportunities**

(CITY OF SOUTH FULTON, GA – May 14, 2020) – The City of South Fulton took a first step today in developing an inventory of sidewalks that could lead to the expansion of walking opportunities within the city.

City council members approved \$25,000 in matching funds that will allow the city to secure a Georgia Smart Communities Challenge grant, which could total up to \$100,000. The proposed project will help the city develop a sidewalk plan by creating an inventory and map of current pedestrian paths, assessing pathway connectivity and conducting detailed inspections of existing sidewalks. The project remains contingent upon the city receiving the grant funds, which it will apply for in coming weeks.

“Having a unified system of quality walking corridors provides a diverse set of benefits for residents,” said Mayor William “Bill” Edwards. “First it gives people an additional option for travel by allowing them to walk safely between different destinations. Additionally, it creates an opportunity for exercise, while protecting the environment by reducing the number of miles people travel by car.”

As part of the proposed study, data collection teams, trained by the city’s public works staff and Georgia Tech researchers, would map the sidewalk network, plan data collection routes and track progress of data collection. Additionally, they would host the data and prepare final summary reports. Georgia Tech will purchase wheelchairs, tablets and phones to be used during the project and manage data collection.

A pedestrian plan developed in the mid-1990s by Fulton County was revised and updated in 2001 during the development of the county’s first comprehensive transportation plan.

“Since then, the transportation landscape has changed dramatically,” said South Fulton Public Works Director Antonio Valenzuela. “The city needs a comprehensive inventory of where sidewalks exist and where they are needed. That will allow us to assess sidewalk connectivity and accessibility and establish funding and construction priorities.”

The project would cost just over \$170,000, with the remaining funds coming from an additional Georgia Smart Communities Challenge grant sought by Georgia Tech.



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The Georgia Smart Communities Challenge provides funding and technical assistance to local governments, allowing them to envision, explore and plan smart futures. Communities receive financial assistance, access to a Georgia Tech research team and networking opportunities.

The program is organized by Georgia Tech in partnership with Georgia Power, the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, the Georgia Centers for Innovation, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, the Technology Association of Georgia, the Georgia Planning Association and the Global City Teams Challenge.

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