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## **New markers show way for Macon cyclists in College Hill**

Bicycle lanes were always planned as a prominent feature of the College Hill Corridor's master plan.

That part of the 2008 plan is coming to fruition this week with the creation of sharrows — a series of road markings that urge drivers to be aware of cyclists on the road — being painted from the Mercer Village area of the corridor all the way to Macon's City Hall.

"It's extra satisfying," said Bill Causey, manager of the city's Engineering Department and chairman of the College Hill Corridor's Connection Committee. "As a native of Macon, this has been a lifelong dream of mine."

Causey, an avid cyclist, said the route covers about 1.25 miles and cost less than \$4,000 to implement and less than the \$4,800 the College Hill Alliance budgeted for the project.

"We want to make sure the corridor is a multimodal area," said Jessica Walden, communications director for the alliance. "That's the first step that's outlined in the master plan. One day, we hope it leads to designated bike lanes and further connections into downtown. We want to decrease (automobile) traffic in the area."

The sharrows are just the latest in a series of bicycle-based initiatives by the alliance, which included a bike event this month and the Bear Bikes program, which is now being run out of The Bike Store in Mercer Village. Charles Reeves, manager of The Bike Store, said the sharrows will benefit cyclists by making the routes safer.

“(The sharrows) are great for the community,” Reeves said. “Drivers will now be aware of something on the road and can swerve around it. It’s important to know that the city cares about cyclists and is working to help them. It will allow more people to commute” on bikes.

Reeves said he hopes Macon will expand bike routes like Athens has done. Athens is considered one of the more accessible cities for cyclists in Georgia.

“It’s small steps,” he said. “We’re getting there.”

Causey said the next sharrow route may be along College Street from the Mercer University campus to Riverside Cemetery.

“We want to develop connecting transportation routes to downtown, to the parks and the greenways,” he said.

“We’re using common sense. We want them to be safe. As long as we have the proper signage and logos, cyclists should be OK.”