Active Community Environments (ACE)  
Special Project: Colleton County

**ABSTRACT**
SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and Eat Smart Move More (ESMM) South Carolina funded Colleton County for an ACE Special Project. Alta Planning + Design, along with multiple stakeholders, assisted in developing a master bicycle and pedestrian plan to improve access to physical activity and connectivity between communities, retail and food hubs.

**BACKGROUND**
While many parts of the City of Walterboro have sidewalks, connectivity among surrounding neighborhoods to local retail clusters are fragmented or non-existent. Likewise, bicycle lanes are not present in the county. ESMM Colleton County used funding through the ACE Special Project to address the need for safe routes and an active community environment.

**PURPOSE**
The purpose of this project is to increase opportunities for safe bicycle and pedestrian routes for all residents, through the creation, adoption and implementation of a master bicycle and pedestrian plan by Walterboro and Colleton County.

**ASSESSMENT & RESULTS**
A traditional planning process was used to obtain data and to understand local public needs. Data collected included:
- Census data (age, race, housing, income, gender),
- Public meeting participants' surveys, and
- Government & other stakeholders’ input.

Although the assessment affirmed public support of trails and greenways, the planning process revealed a need for additional sidewalks, particularly among low income areas, to retail and food hubs. Significant feedback from public forums called for more cycling opportunities in and around Walterboro.

**KEY STEPS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
- Colleton County secured additional funding from the County Transportation Committee and Walterboro.
- A community advisory group was created, which helped increase public participation and support of the Plan.
- The Plan was completed in January 2015.
- Walterboro and County Planning Commissions approved and adopted the Plan in Spring 2015.
- Projects and resources needed to implement the Plan were identified.
- Grant applications to fund sidewalk projects have been submitted.
- A local advocacy group formed to support development of a 13-mile recreational trail.
- Key partnerships were formed and included: City and County planning, Clemson Extension, DHEC, SCDOT, County School District, Chamber of Commerce, and neighborhood groups.

**LESSONS LEARNED**
Need for strong community presence of any group to position themselves for creating change. ESMM Colleton County existed and had a framework to mobilize interest in taking on such a project.

**NEXT STEPS**
Colleton County is targeting funding opportunities to undertake specific Plan projects. ESMM Colleton County is advocating for Plan projects that meet their community objectives.

**PROPOSED CHANGES**
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Greenway Trail Improvements
- Cycle Tracks & Buffered Bike Lanes
- Bike Boulevards