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FHWA bills Synectics-led Road Safety Audit a "Success Story"

The US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has billed the first Road Safety Audit (RSA) completed under its Peer-to-Peer (P2P) RSA Assistance Program as a "Success Story".

Greg Junnor, Vice-president of Synectics, led the audit team, which was comprised of representatives from FHWA, Georgia State DOT, Georgia State Patrol, Albany Safe Communities, and County and Local officials.

The audit was conducted in December 2006 in the City of Albany and Dougherty County, an urban center of 250,000 people, located in southwestern Georgia. It was made possible through sponsorship by Ms. Michele DeMott, Safe Communities Coordinator for Albany Safe Communities. Albany Safe Communities is a grant-funded project of the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety. Their mission is to decrease the number of injuries sustained in traffic crashes in the City of Albany, and in Dougherty County, Georgia.

The FHWA P2P program matches interested State and Local road agencies and officials with pre-qualified RSA consultants, and funds an experienced audit team leader to provide coordination and guide the team through their first audit. The goal is for agencies and staff to gain an appreciation of the audit process and its merits, while addressing a demonstrated safety concern within their community.

The study area comprised five major roadways, including three State Highways, and five intersections, two of which were signalized. The decision to audit was based on four (4) key factors.

1. Existing intersection operations and safety concerns;
2. Pending redevelopment and expansion of a service station and truck stop;
3. Proposed, major new commercial development; and
4. Road widening project proposed by Georgia DOT.

Following an exchange of information, the audit was conducted in Georgia over a period of two days, and an audit report was generated within two weeks.



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Numerous audit suggestions were developed, with some being implemented in "real time" as the audit progressed – a beneficial result of the involvement of key stakeholder agencies.

Other suggestions were implemented within weeks of the audit, immediately resulting in safer intersections and roadways. The audit also influenced the design of a major road widening which was being planned at the time.

Suggestions pertaining to access management and adjacent land use have been implemented over time, as redevelopment and expansion within the study area has progressed, with similar beneficial results.

Albany Safe Communities has gone on to sponsor and lead subsequent audits of other locations identified as having safety concerns, with the continued involvement of State and Local agencies.

Their audit suggestions now form an integral part of the community's program for safety improvement.

To learn more about RSAs; the FHWA's P2P program; and the City of Albany/Dougherty County's success, visit the FHWA's website at:

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rsa/rsa_samplerpts.htm