

A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT TRANSIT IN GEORGIA

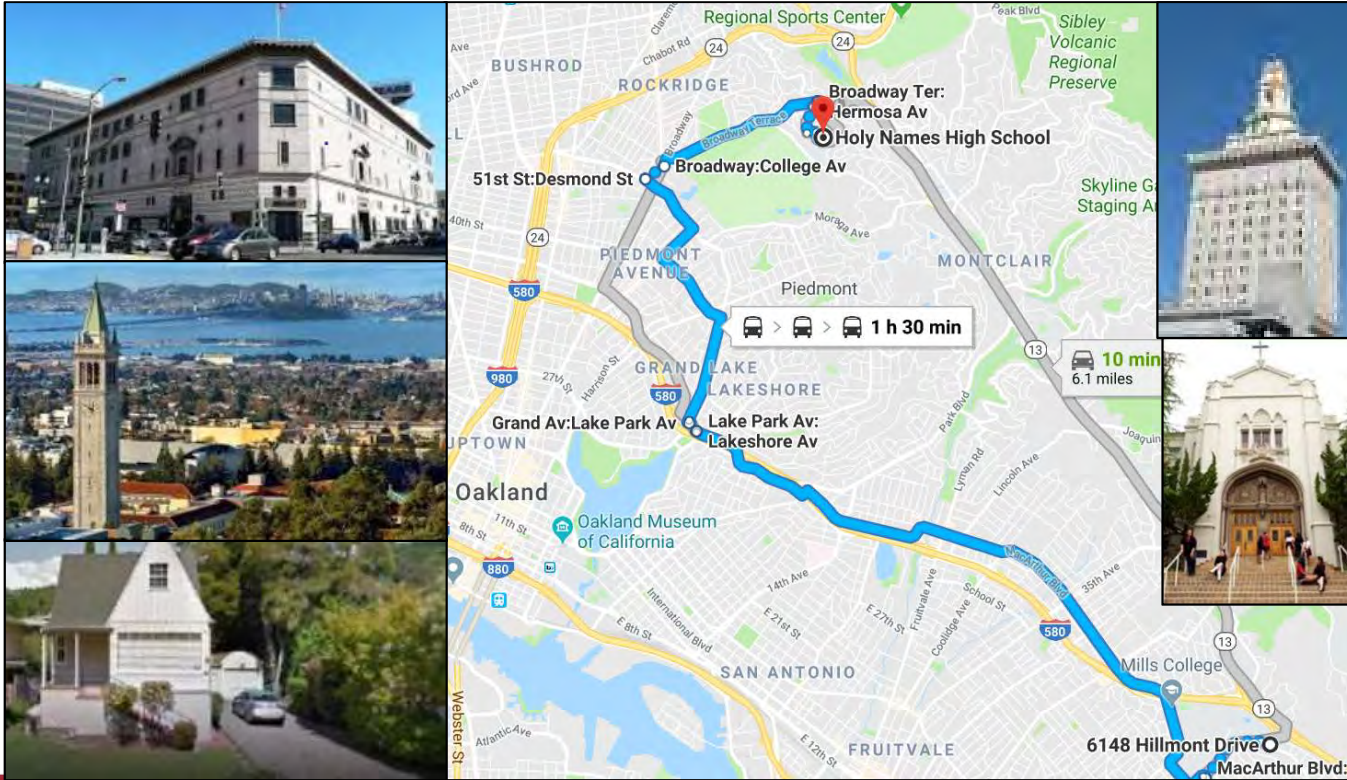
PRESENTATION TO
GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION
2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA

SOME CITY PLANNING WISDOM...

“...cities (communities) need to be squarely and fully in the solution business. Problem solving, stripped to the basics, has two sides – the problem and the solution. Cities, the media, and many national and local constituencies spend a vast amount of time analyzing problems – examining, dissecting, assessing, quantifying, and ranking – through increasingly sophisticated means. But they spend less time designing, financing, delivering, and reporting on solutions....we need to apply as much time, talent, and energy to crafting solutions as we do to defining and analyzing problems.

Problem solving must become a central part of our cultural and societal DNA....the power belongs to the problem solvers...”

From “The New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in an Age of Populism” by Bruce Katz and Jeremy



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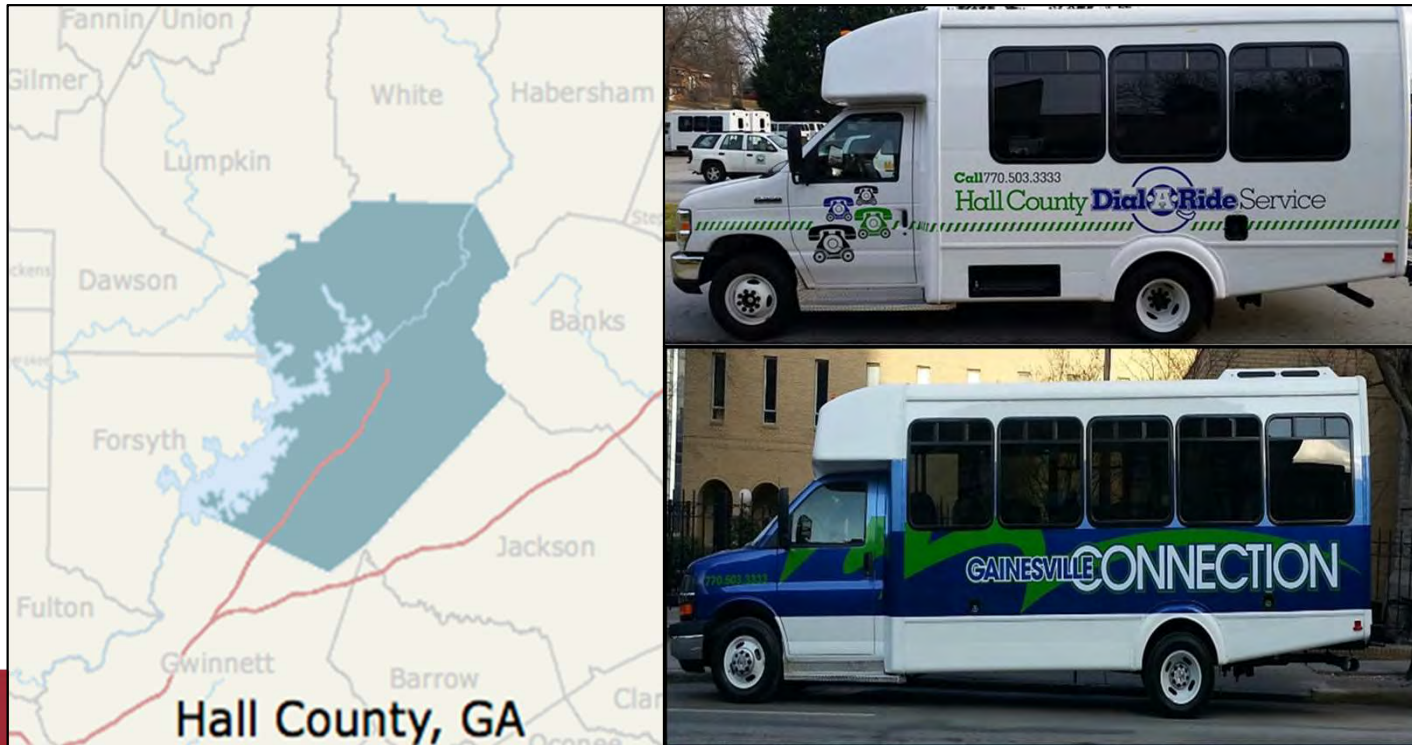
EMPOWER – ENCOURAGE – RETHINK - SUCCEED



TODAY'S DISCUSSION

- **Transit's Current Challenges and Opportunities**
 - **Working Toward Seamless Transit in Metro Atlanta**
 - **Growing Urbanization in Georgia and What It Means to Transit**
- **House Committee on Transit Governance and Funding**
- **Institutional and Management Challenges in Rural Transit**
- **A New Vision for Transit in Georgia's Outside Metro Atlanta**

HALL AREA TRANSIT: A SYSTEM IN TRANSITION



2016/17 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Gainesville-Hall County
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Gainesville-Hall County Community Service Center
J.R.Wilburn & Associates**



GAINESVILLE CONNECTION

- **FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE**
- **250 BUS STOPS IN GAINESVILLE AND PART OF OAKWOOD**
- **SIX FIXED ROUTES**
- **WEEKDAY SERVICE**
- **OPERATING HOURS 6AM - 6PM**
- **ONE-HOUR FREQUENCY/HEADWAY**
- **11,800 MONTHLY TRIPS**
- **50%:50% FUNDING BY FTA AND CITY OF GAINESVILLE**



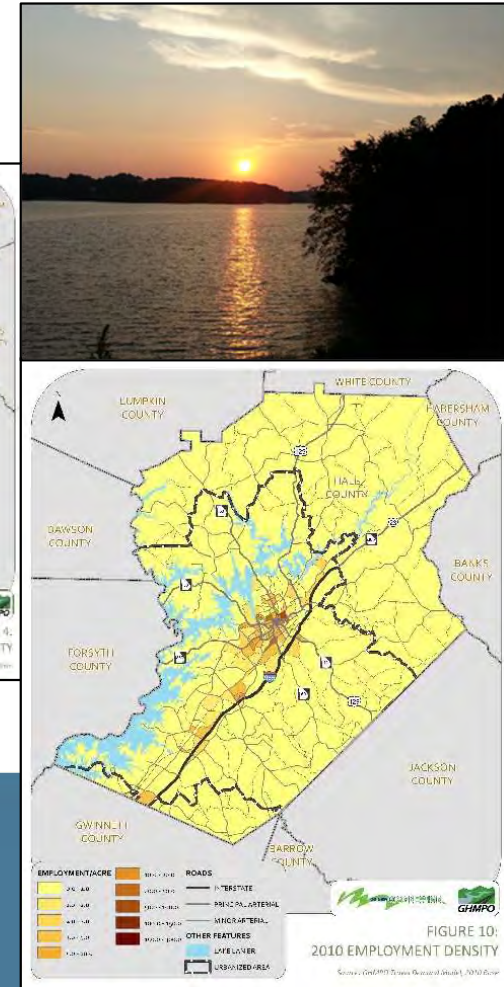
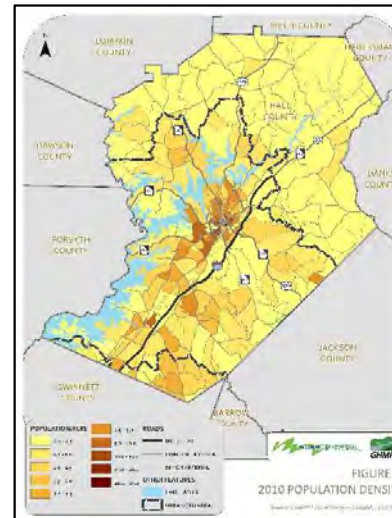
HALL COUNTY DIAL-A-RIDE

- **HALL COUNTYWIDE DEMAND RESPONSE VANPOOL**
- **429 SQUARE MILES**
- **CURB-TO-CURB/DOOR-TO-DOOR**
- **WEEKDAY SERVICE**
- **OPERATING HOURS 7AM - 5PM**
- **2,000 MONTHLY TRIPS**
- **50%:50% FUNDING BY FTA AND HALL COUNTY**



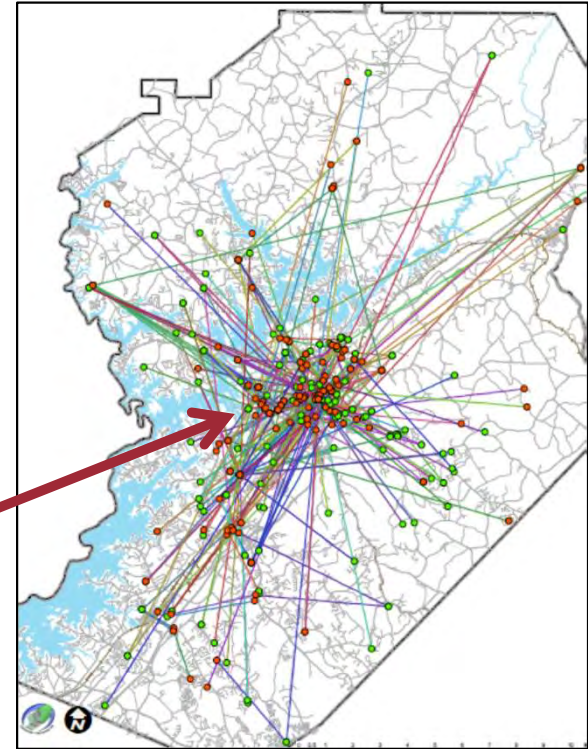
GAINESVILLE CONNECTION SERVICE AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Low density development
- Residential - primarily single family and rural areas
- Employment - mostly industry and service related, with very little office or high density
- Higher densities in Gainesville



HALL COUNTY DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Land area: 429 square miles
- 54th largest county in land mass
- Trip pattern is very random
- Trip origins vary
- Trip destinations focus on Gainesville



GAINESVILLE CONNECTION: MOST FREQUENTED SITES



35% Aging/Nutrition



4% Activities



17% Employment



8% Shopping



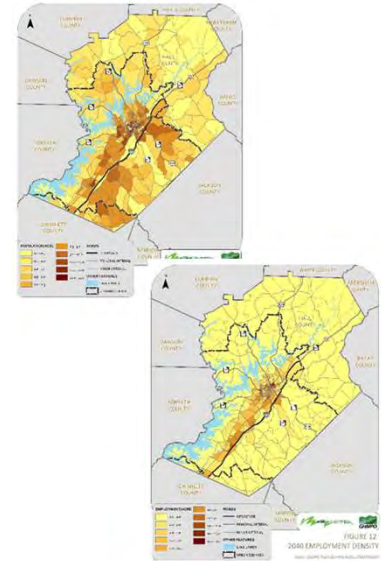
30% Medical



6% Education

GROWING DEMAND FOR TRANSIT

- US 129 Corridor Into Jackson County
- I-985 Corridor Into Oakwood, Braselton, Flowery Branch, VA
- GA 365 Corridor To Sites for Lanier Tech, YMCA, Other
- South Hall – Increasing # of Underserved Senior Populations
- Growth of Retiree Population
- Growth of Population of Persons with Disabilities
- Increase Demand for Workers (3.3% Unemployment Rate)



The Times

 **SUNDAY**
FEBRUARY 21, 2016

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\$1.50
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

More drivers clog dense I-985

Hall County traffic has doubled in past 20 years

BY JEFF GILL
jgill@gainesvilletimes.com

Some 30 years ago, Fred Moses couldn't wait to escape Atlanta traffic to travel to his Hall County farm.

"When I'd get off I-85 and hit I-985, I might not see a car until I'd get to Gainesville," he said.

That has certainly changed in the years since Moses set up his tire store, Fred's Treads, off Mundy Mill Road at Interstate 985 in Oakwood in 1989.



Moses

"This is a very, very thriving community now," he said.

The Hall County area's growth has turned I-985 into a bustling roadway over the years, particularly in South Hall, where traffic counts have nearly doubled in the past 20 years.

An average of 61,000 vehicles per day traveled on I-985 south of Wade Orr Road in 2014 — the latest available data — compared to 53,710 in 2004 and 33,600 in 1994, according to the Georgia Department of

I-985 traffic counts

South of Wade Orr Road

1994: 33,600

2004: 53,710

2014: 61,000

North of Exit 17

1994: 34,100

2004: 51,850

2014: 54,400

Transportation.

Farther north, just past Oakwood's Exit 17, the traffic numbers

■ Please see TRAFFIC, 4A



SCOTT ROGERS / THE TIMES

Interstate 985 traffic, like the area's population, has increased significantly over the years, particularly in South Hall, where counts have nearly doubled in the past 20 years.

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPROVE GAINESVILLE CONNECTION SERVICE

- **Extend operating hours from 12 hours (6 am - 6 pm) to 16 hours (4 am - 8 pm)**
- **Decrease headway to 30 minutes during peak hours**
- **Extend Routes 10 and 50 and add new Route 60 (along SR 60)**
- **Provide Saturday service**
- **Improve customer amenities**
- **Make use of technology**
- **Establish Downtown Circular/Shuttle**
- **Establish commuter service**

BARRIERS TO PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

**SMALL LOCAL MATCH =
LEAVING FEDERAL \$ ON THE TABLE**

**Gainesville-Hall County
Census Designation
Changed from Rural to
Small Urban**

Year	FTA Section 5307 Apportionments for Hall Area Transit	Section 5307 Local Match Provided	Section 5307 Unused Funding
2004	\$ 704,205	\$ 237,250	\$ 466,955
2005	\$ 737,998	\$ 300,541	\$ 437,458
2006	\$ 770,821	\$ 269,514	\$ 501,308
2007	\$ 805,000	\$ 284,201	\$ 520,800
2008	\$ 873,913	\$ 320,896	\$ 553,018
2009	\$ 375,057	\$ 293,682	\$ 81,375
2010	\$ 383,486	\$ 316,767	\$ 66,720
2011	\$ 392,602	\$ 376,666	\$ 15,937
2012	\$ 926,832	\$ 371,002	\$ 555,830
2013	\$ 1,482,376	\$ 389,067	\$ 1,093,309
2014	\$ 1,534,619	\$ 368,476	\$ 1,166,143
2015	\$ 1,531,289	\$ 367,713	\$ 1,163,576
2016			
TOTAL	\$10,518,198	\$ 3,895,772	\$ 6,622,426

MONEY LEFT ON THE TABLE

PREDICTION & IMPLICATIONS OF “ LARGE URBAN” STATUS (ABOUT TWO YEARS FOLLOWING 2020 CENSUS)

- **Prediction:**

- By 2020 Census, Hall County will have reached a population of 200,000+
- The US Office of Management & Budget will designate us as a “Large Urban Area” after urban area boundaries are changed (around 2022)

- **Transit Implications:**

- Transit Matching Funds for Operation will decrease significantly
 - *US Section 5307 Table 3A may offer some relief*

WHAT'S NEXT FOR HALL AREA TRANSIT?

RETHINK – REPACKAGE – REINTRODUCE PUBLIC TRANSIT

- **Build innovative public-private partnerships to alleviate financial burden on local governments**
- **Integrate mobility technology to create a more pleasant ridership experience**
- **Blend traditional and innovative transit models to maintain existing riders while attracting new riders. Think M-I-C-R-O-T-R-A-N-S-I-T**

SUGGESTIONS REGARDING HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSIT GOVERNANCE



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Increase local match via advertisement sales, fares, public-private partnerships, general funds, and use of TSPLOST proceeds

STATE

- Go Transit! - current limitation- capital projects must have a 10-year life (to use state bonds)

SUGGESTIONS REGARDING HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSIT GOVERNANCE (cont'd)

■ METRO ATLANTA REGION

- HB 390: *The ATL* – Limitation-largest focus is on metro area
- Counties outside of the “non-attainment” area may join together for a two-county sales tax to finance transit using TSPLOST. Barrier: many counties resistant to new “tax”.
- Consolidate fixed route, demand response, and coordinated transportation funding under one entity with highly experienced transit practitioners who can address regulatory and operating issues equally.



GROWING URBANIZATION: WHAT PLANNERS CAN DO



- Create mixed-use developments: **LIVE-SHOP-PLAY**
- Ask developers about transportation needs first!
- Create deceleration lanes and bus bays
- Utilize intelligent technology
- Create /improve streetscaping and lighting to support pedestrians and for ADA accessibility

THE INSTITUTIONAL AND MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN TRANSIT WORLD

PUBLIC TRANSIT IS ARGUABLY THE MOST REGULATED MODE OF SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN THE U.S.

Federal Laws and Regulations (FTA)	State Laws and Regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 29 distinct funding programs (all area types)▪ 2018 Certifications and Assurances – 44 pages of detailed requirements▪ Master Agreement between FTA and all direct recipients (State and other entities)▪ “Super Circular” – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements▪ 16 major “guidance documents” for individual programs – hundreds of pages of “rules” – size of transit system is NOT considered in terms of the requirements▪ Triennial reviews (states and transit systems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Areas of State Compliance – can be audited at any time – Usually financial audits done of State Program annually▪ Performance Audits (organization)▪ Financial audits (i.e. contracts, projects, etc.)▪ Expenditures▪ Financial control (i.e. processes and performance)

COMPLIANCE AREAS FOR FEDERALLY-FUNDED PUBLIC TRANSIT

FTA COMPLIANCE AREAS

Award Management (5010.E)	Joint Development (7050.1A)	Equal Employment Opportunity (4704.1A)
Americans with Disabilities Act (4710.1)	Bus and Bus Facilities (5100.1)	Research, Technical Assistance, and Training (6100.1E)
State of Good Repair (5300.1)	Rural Transit Grants (9040.1G)	Mobility for Seniors and Disabled People (9070.1G)
Urban Area Formula Grants (9030.1E)	Third-Party Contracting (4702.1B)	Environmental Justice (4703.1)
Capital Improvement Program (9300.1B)	MPO Planning, State Planning, and Research (8100.1C)	Safety and Security Management (5800.1)
Full Funding Grant Agreements (5200.1A)	Intergovernmental Review of FTA Grants (9500.1)	“Super Circular” (2 CFR Part 200) describes administrative, financial and audit requirements)

THE “NUMBERS” CHALLENGE

10 Mil.

Total State Population
(2017)

2 Mil.

People living in
rural counties
(20% of total)

112

Number of
rural counties
in GA

81+

Number of
rural transit
systems receiving
federal/state funds

Source: Deloitte, GDOT

THE “SIZE” CHALLENGE

50%

Share of GA
rural transit
systems operating
1-3 vehicles

48%

Share of GA
rural transit
systems operating
4-15 vehicles

2%

Share of GA
rural transit
systems operating
16+ vehicles

Source: GDOT, Georgia Tech

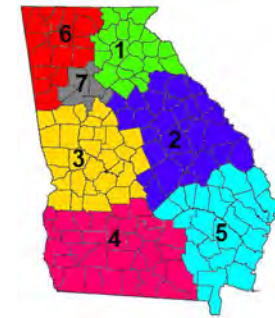
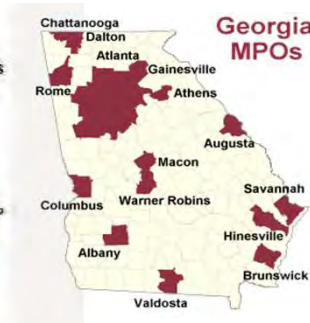
THE “BOUNDARIES” CHALLENGE



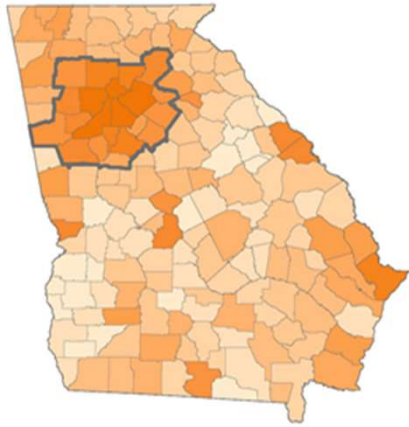
“METRO ATLANTA”
MULTIPLE ADJACENT
RURAL SYSTEMS
(GDOT)



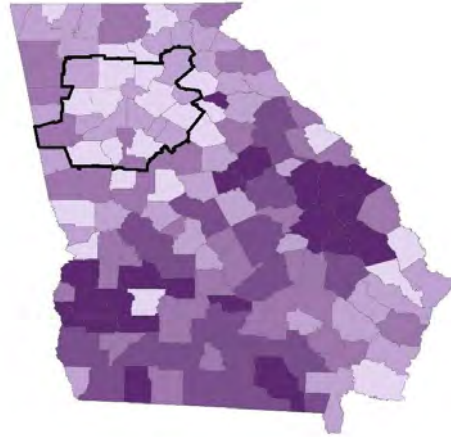
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSIONS
AND MPOs



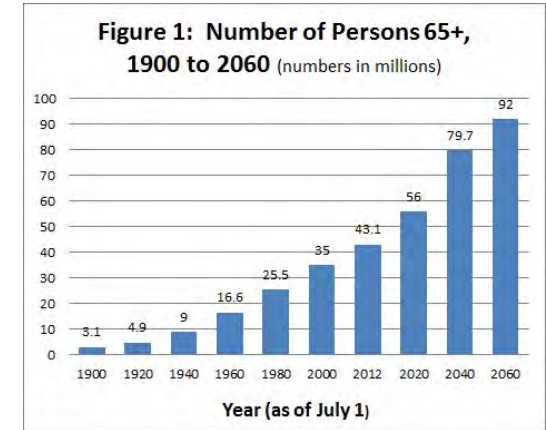
THE “DEMOGRAPHICS” CHALLENGE



State Population in 2040
(from 10+ to 15+ mil.in 2040)

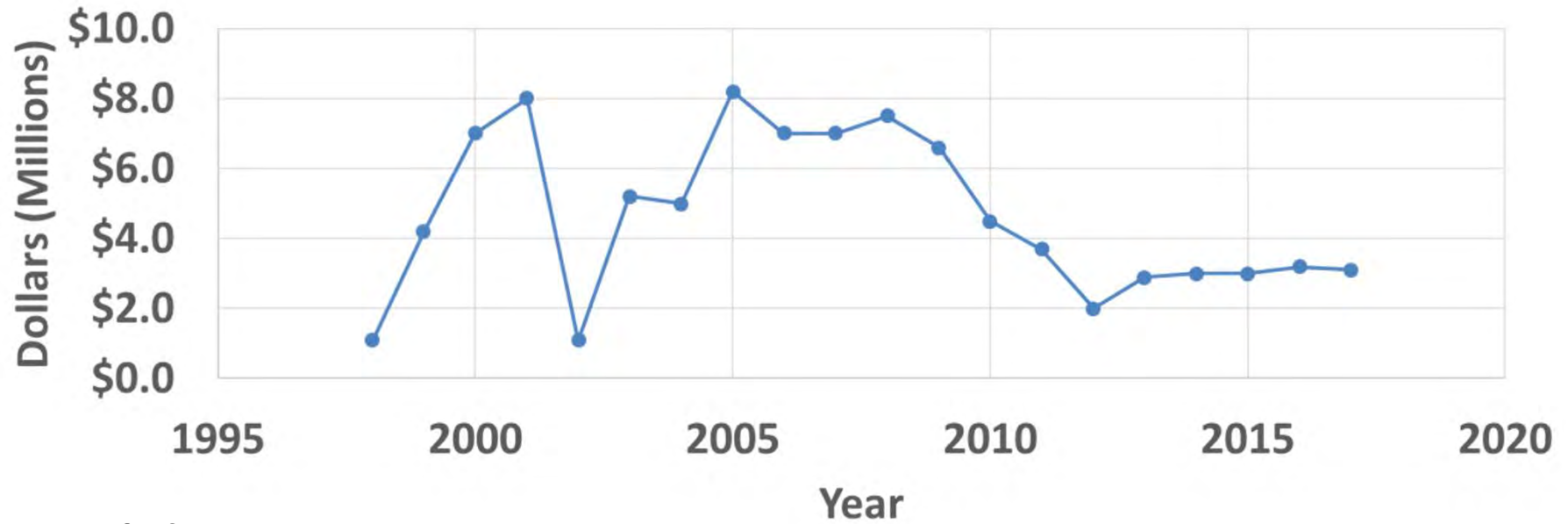


Household Economics
(households in poverty in 2015)



Rapid Increase in Seniors
(“Silver Tsunami”)

THE “STATE FUNDING” CHALLENGE (1995-2017)



Source: GDOT

THE “COST-SHARING” CHALLENGE (FY 2016 PUBLIC TRANSIT EXPENDITURES (IN MILS.*))

** Rural and Small Urban (under 200K in population only)*

FUND SOURCE	RURAL SYSTEMS	SMALL URBAN SYSTEMS	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Federal (FTA)	\$ 19.5	\$ 12.1	\$ 31.6	56%
State of GA	\$ 0.6	\$ 0.5	\$ 1.1	2%
Local Sources	\$ 15.4	\$ 8.0	\$ 23.4	42%
TOTAL	\$ 35.5	\$ 20.6	\$ 56.1	100%

THE “MULTIPLE LEADERS” CHALLENGE

NO CLEAR STATEWIDE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE



Oversight of small urban and 80 rural transit systems
– all FTA programs except Sec. 5311 (seniors/disabled)



Oversight of FTA Section 5310 (seniors/disabled services – NOT considered public transit by FTA)



GRTA/SRTA/New ATL – Oversight of 13 counties in Metro Atlanta region – Governor’s “Go-To” State Agency for Transit (?)

THE “TRANSIT NEEDS” CHALLENGE



Working on
Statewide Transit
Plan + NTD Data?

House Committee on Transit Governance/ Funding - Presentations to Date		
Deloitte (2)	DHS	ARC (3)
Chatham Area Transit	GA Mobility	Lyft
Uber	Transit Commute Solutions	Boothe Consulting
FTA Region 4	GRA	HSR
Ontario Transit	RTD	GDOT (2)
MARTA (2)	NCSL	Transportation 4 America
GRTA/SRTA	Hall Area Transit	



**GEORGIA'S
RURAL
TRANSIT
NEEDS**



WHAT IS MISSING TO ASSESS REAL RURAL TRANSIT NEEDS?

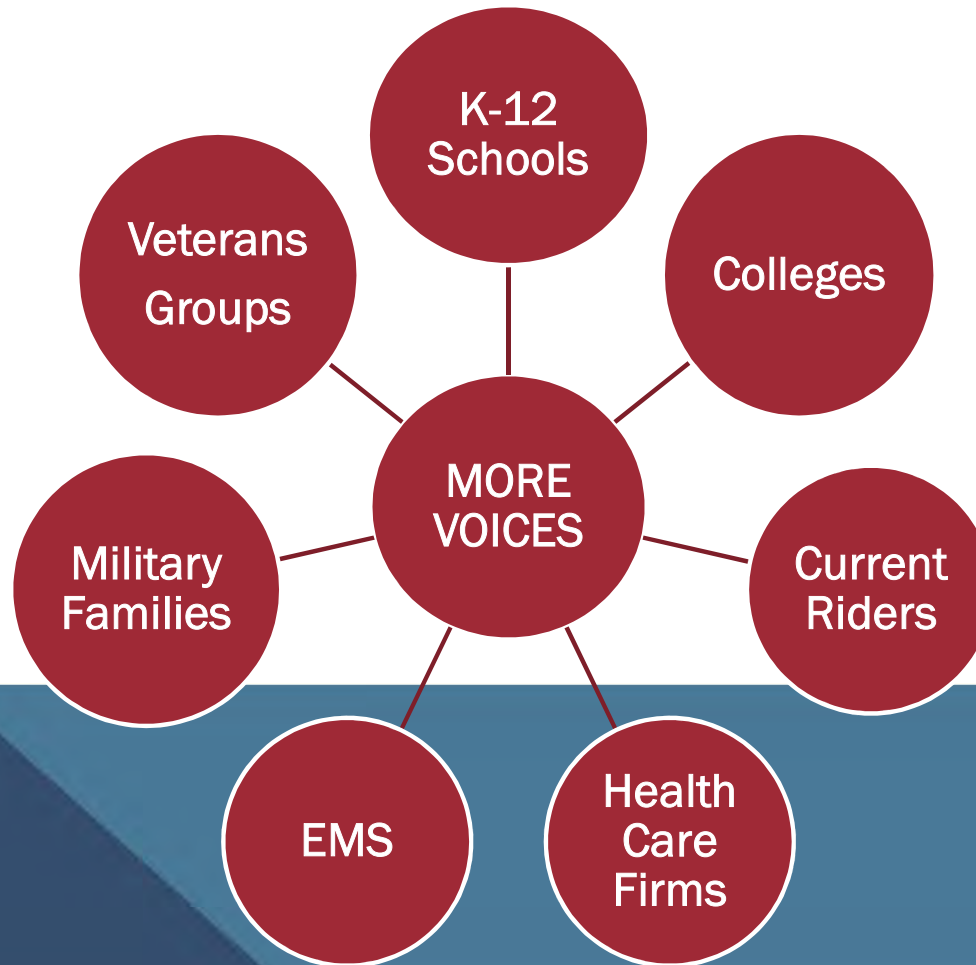
Where are
the other
82%?

Input from actual rural transit riders + TRANSIT professionals directly responsible for delivering transit service in rural areas is a CRITICALLY NEEDED element for fixing rural transit in Georgia

“Rural Greenhouse Lab”

- Total of 32 participants (agencies, firms, etc.)
- Only 6 or 18% of lab participants represented entities directly connected to rural transit users (i.e. technical schools, universities, Adult Learning Center, and Goodwill (2))

ADDITIONAL VOICES THAT MUST BE AT THE TABLE:



WHAT WE KNOW FOR SURE:

- **Boundaries are established for political, governmental, or legal convenience – none of these factors result in efficient transportation networks.**
- **Boundaries are serious impediments to transit effectiveness.**
- **No one builds roads that don't connect – why do we do this with transit?**
- **Other parts of the U.S. have figured out innovative fixes – let's talk.**
- **Research has been done over the past 20 years documenting innovative ways to help rural transit succeed – we should do our homework!**
- **Maybe we need a NEW way of thinking about transit in Georgia.**

INNOVATION LIVES IN SMALL TOWN AMERICA

(TCRP SYNTHESIS REPORT 94 (2011))

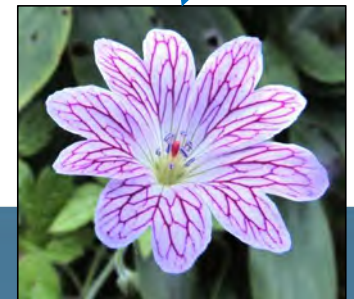
RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEM	INNOVATION	RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEM	INNOVATION
Treasure Valley Transit (ID)	Reinvented services lines and marketed to adjacent communities	Estuary Transit District (CN)	Markets to “active” seniors in addition to seniors with mobility constraints
Oregon DOT	Procures intercity bus routes in rural areas	SE Transit (OH)	Serves single, working moms – trips to Early Start Centers and provides attendant to ride with kids for safety
OATS (MO)	31-county service area governed by a private-non-profit organization – 40+ year-old operation.	TRAX (TX)	Reinvented itself from demand response provider to multimodal provider

Slide 38

- A6** 87 counties (3/4 of Missouri) are served by OATS; America's largest rural public transportation operator. An additional 20 counties in southeastern Missouri are served by Southeast Missouri Transportation Service (SMTS).
Author, 8/25/2018

SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING TRANSIT IN GEORGIA

- **State a clear STATE INTEREST in public transit throughout Georgia and find a reliable long-term source of MONEY to support it – State’s interests are: economic development, public safety, workforce development, access to education, access to health care, veterans care, and emergency response support.**
- **Establish the GEORGIA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION reporting directly to a state agency CEO that combines the GDOT Transit Office and the DHS Coordinated Transportation Unit. This entity would work across city and county boundaries throughout the state with a special emphasis on rural and communities. The ATL would handle Metro Atlanta.**



SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING TRANSIT IN GEORGIA

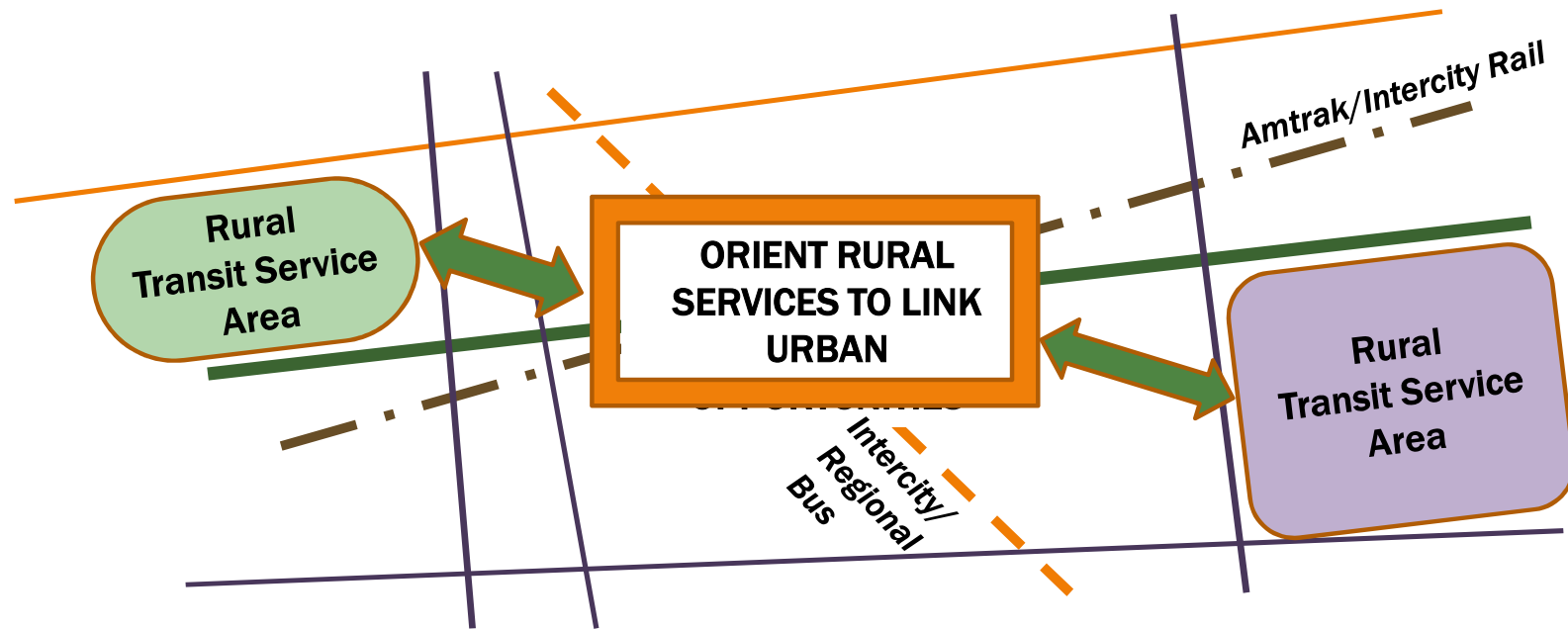


- **Minimize the significance of administrative boundaries and structures and focus on CONNECTING NETWORKS** – link smaller communities to larger ones - minimize the number of individual struggling local systems.
- **Dedicate state resources for transit training** at the state and local levels so the strong transit skills sets are sustained across Georgia. Federal funding now only allows funds to be used for state agency training.

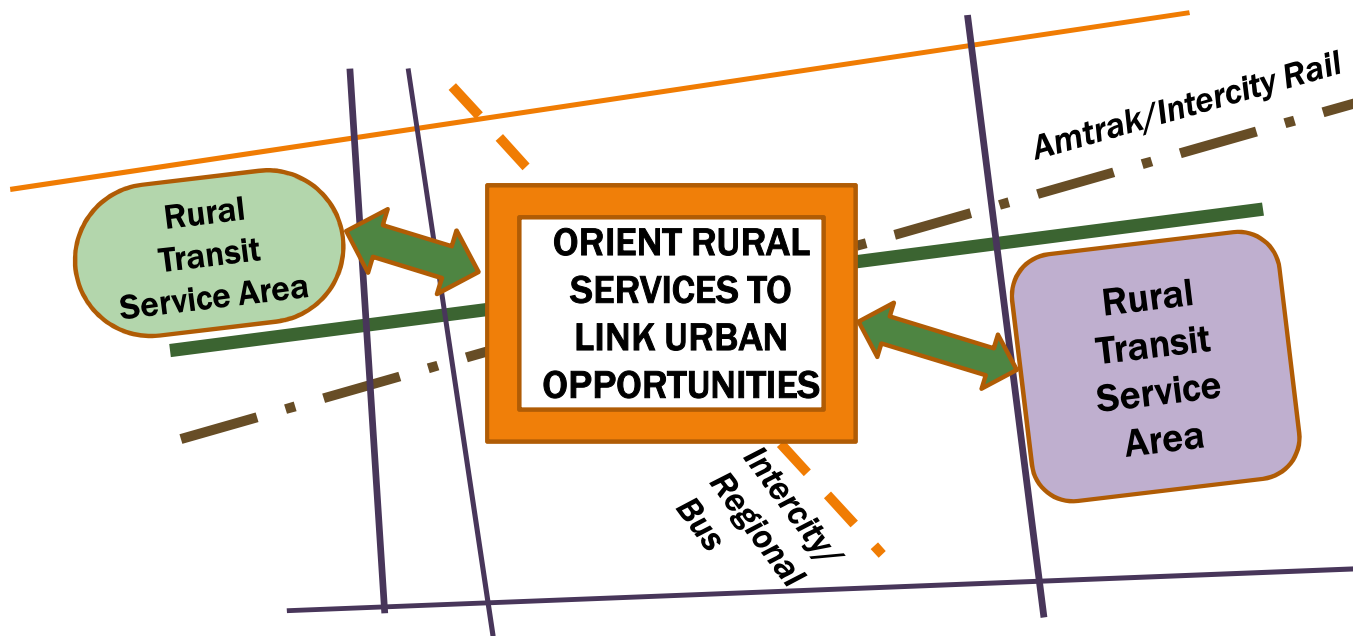
SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING RURAL TRANSIT IN GEORGIA

- Establish NEW organizational structures for community transit that have a component focused on quality and accountability, including private-non-profit organizations with roots in rural areas and transit expertise.
- Assign the responsibility of advocating for, overseeing, facilitating partnerships for, and helping local systems **GROW** and **SUCCEED** to meet our real needs (as we do for improving our state highway system, roadway safety improvements, freight transport, etc.)

FOCUS ON DESIGNING SERVICES THAT MEET THE RIDERS' NEEDS AND MAXIMIZE CONNECTIVITY



BENEFITS OF NEW REORIENTATION OF RURAL TRANSIT



- Integrates transit and improves efficiency
- Connects rural citizens to opportunities outside their community
 - Education
 - Health Care
 - Jobs
 - Social/family
- Span of transit management control improves
- Enables more competition to control costs
- Uses stronger transit skill sets in larger systems
- Improves FTA compliance
- Allows for more and better partnerships

ONE MORE THING: DON'T FORGET THE “LARGE URBAN” SYSTEMS *(Innovation in these medium-sized communities is alive and well, too)*



Chatham Area Transit - free downtown circulator – serves growing downtown; water ferry improvements to docks and vessels; large role in regional evacuation operations



Columbus METRA - first transit system in GA to use TSPLOST funds for transit capital and operating costs



New **Augusta Transit** Maintenance and Operating Facility and Award-Winning Communications and Marketing Program with innovative Public/Private Partnership

INNOVATION IN SMALL URBAN TRANSIT IS HAPPENING TOO!

- ***Athens – Clarke - First hybrid buses***
- ***Albany – Plans for Downtown Transit Center***
- ***Gainesville-Hall – Reinventing Service Lines and Partnerships with Employers***
- ***Liberty Transit (Hinesville Area) – Service area expansion into other communities***
- ***Macon – Electric bus project***
- ***Rome – Strategies for vehicle replacement***



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

“....the power belongs to the problem solvers....”

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