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 Nowack
Phillippa Lewis-Moss, MPA, MSCM
Director
Gainesville-Hall County Community Services
Gainesville, GA
Jamie Cochran, FAICP
GA Institute of Technology
School of City and Regional Planning
EMPOWER – ENCOURAGE – RETHINK - SUCCEED

DO BETTER FOR GEORGIA
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
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)
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’s traffic to travel to his Hall County farm.

“When I’d get off I-85 and hit 1985, I couldn’t see a car until I’d get to Gainesville,” he said.

That hasn’t changed in the years since Moses set up his tire store, Fred’s Tires, off Mundy Mill Road at Interstate 85 in Oakwood in 1989.

“This is a very, very thriving community now,” he said.

The Hall County area’s growth has turned I-85 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 81,000 vehicles per day traveled on I-85 south of Wade Orr Road in 2014 — the latest available data — compared to 33,710 in 2004 and 33,690 in 1994, according to the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Further north, just past Oakwood’s Exit 17, the traffic numbers have significantly over the years, particularly in South Hall, where traffic counts have nearly doubled in the past 20 years.

Please see TRAFFIC, 4A

INTERSTATE 85 TRAFFIC COUNTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>South of Wade Orr Road</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>33,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>33,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>51,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

North of Exit 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North of Exit 17</td>
<td>84,110</td>
<td>54,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interstate 85 traffic, like the area’s population, has a

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

**TOTAL** | **$10,518,198** | **$3,895,772** | **$6,622,426**

**Small Local Match = Leaving Federal $ on the Table**

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

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Laws and Regulations (FTA)</th>
<th>State Laws and Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ 29 distinct funding programs (all area types)</td>
<td>▪ Areas of State Compliance – can be audited at any time – Usually financial audits done of State Program annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ 2018 Certifications and Assurances – 44 pages of detailed requirements</td>
<td>▪ Performance Audits (organization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Master Agreement between FTA and all direct recipients (State and other entities)</td>
<td>▪ Financial audits (i.e. contracts, projects, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ “Super Circular” – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements</td>
<td>▪ Expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ 16 major “guidance documents” for individual programs – hundreds of pages of “rules” – size of transit system is NOT considered in terms of the requirements</td>
<td>▪ Financial control (i.e. processes and performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Triennial reviews (states and transit systems)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COMPLIANCE AREAS FOR FEDERALLY-FUNDED PUBLIC TRANSIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTA COMPLIANCE AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Award Management (5010.E)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Americans with Disabilities Act (4710.1)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State of Good Repair (5300.1)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Area Formula Grants (9030.1E)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Improvement Program (9300.1B)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Funding Grant Agreements (5200.1A)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Super Circular” (2 CFR Part 200) describes administrative, financial and audit requirements.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10 Mil.</th>
<th>2 Mil.</th>
<th>112</th>
<th>81+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total State Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2017)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People living in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rural counties (20% of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of rural counties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in GA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of rural transit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>systems receiving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federal/state funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

GDOT DISTRICTS

COUNTY-CENTRIC SERVICE DELIVERY (80+ SYSTEMS)
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”)

Figure 1: Number of Persons 65+, 1900 to 2060 (numbers in millions)

[Graph showing trend of state funding over years 1995 to 2020, with values in millions of dollars.]

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND SOURCE</th>
<th>RURAL SYSTEMS</th>
<th>SMALL URBAN SYSTEMS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>% OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal (FTA)</td>
<td>$ 19.5</td>
<td>$ 12.1</td>
<td>$ 31.6</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of GA</td>
<td>$ 0.6</td>
<td>$ 0.5</td>
<td>$ 1.1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Sources</td>
<td>$ 15.4</td>
<td>$ 8.0</td>
<td>$ 23.4</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$ 35.5</td>
<td>$ 20.6</td>
<td>$ 56.1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House Committee on Transit Governance/Funding - Presentations to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deloitte (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatham Area Transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTA Region 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARTA (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRTA/SRTA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Georgia's Rural Transit Needs**

**Working on Statewide Transit Plan + NTD Data?**

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WHAT IS MISSING TO ASSESS REAL RURAL TRANSIT NEEDS?

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)

Where are the other 82%?
ADDITIONAL VOICES THAT MUST BE AT THE TABLE:

- K-12 Schools
- Colleges
- Veterans Groups
- Military Families
- Current Riders
- EMS
- Health Care Firms
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))

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

ORIENT RURAL SERVICES TO LINK URBAN

Rural Transit Service Area

Amtrak/Intercity Rail

Intercity/Regional Bus

Rural Transit Service Area
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....”

Phillippa Lewis-Moss, MPA, MSCM
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