

Connecting Rural Residents to Resources Through an Eastern Georgia Rural Transit Hub

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Draft Report

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Executive Summary

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Council (CSRARC) consists of thirteen counties, two of which are urban and eleven of which are rural. At the start of this project, the primary focus was to investigate the feasibility of creating rural public transit hubs that would ultimately connect rural county travelers with services to Augusta, Georgia. However, after the initial site visit, fewer of the administrators of rural county public transit systems reported the need for traveling into Augusta, Georgia than originally expected. In addition, at least one county reported that its vans were full. Therefore, the project team shifted the focus of the research to better understand the origins and destinations of travelers, obtained through surveys of current riders, along with surveys of the general public to better understand potential unmet demand. Furthermore, on-site video testimonials of riders were planned. However, with the coronavirus pandemic, the original objectives of the project were modified. To maintain the health and safety of all involved, videos and surveys of riders were cancelled as tasks. As a result, the researchers conceptualized whether or not coordination was possible amongst neighboring counties, even if they were outside of CSRARC. Three specific coordination opportunities were developed and proposed. Furthermore, the researchers sought to develop a forum for peer exchange amongst the rural counties. Finally, the researchers investigated and proposed some tools that the rural county transit systems may deploy for increased marketing of the services, including the creation of transit system flyers for each county. This report contains the output of the aforementioned tasks.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|---|
| APTA | American Public Transportation Association |
| CDC | Centers for Disease Control |
| CRS | Coastal Regional Commission |
| CSRA | Central Savannah River Area |
| CSRARC | Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| GDOT | Georgia Department of Transportation |
| GTFS | General Transit Feed Specifications |
| HIRTA | Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency |
| HOPWA | Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS |
| IMPLAN | Impact Analysis for Planning |
| LEP | Limited English Proficiency |
| NADO | National Association of Development Organizations |
| NAICS | North American Industry Classification System |
| NRTAP | National Rural Transit Assistance Program |
| NTD | National Transit Database |
| OWPT | One-way Passenger Trip |
| RTAP | Rural Transit Assistance Program |
| RVRC | River Valley Regional Commission |
| SRS | Savannah River Site |
| SWGRC | Southwest Georgia Regional Commission |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats |
| TDP | Transit Development Plan |
| TIA | Transportation Investment Act |

| | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| Tri-CAP | Tri-County Action Program, Inc |
| TRC | Transportation Resource Center |
| TRRC | Three Rivers Regional Commission |
| VISTA | Volunteers in Service to America |
| VRM | Vehicle Revenue Miles |

1 Introduction

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRARC), covering approximately 6,500 square miles, was established in 1961 to serve thirteen member counties and more than forty cities in east-central Georgia (Figure 1) ([1], [2]). Two of CSRARC's thirteen counties are urban (Columbia, Richmond) while the rest are rural (Burke, Jefferson, Jenkins, Hancock, Glascock, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes).

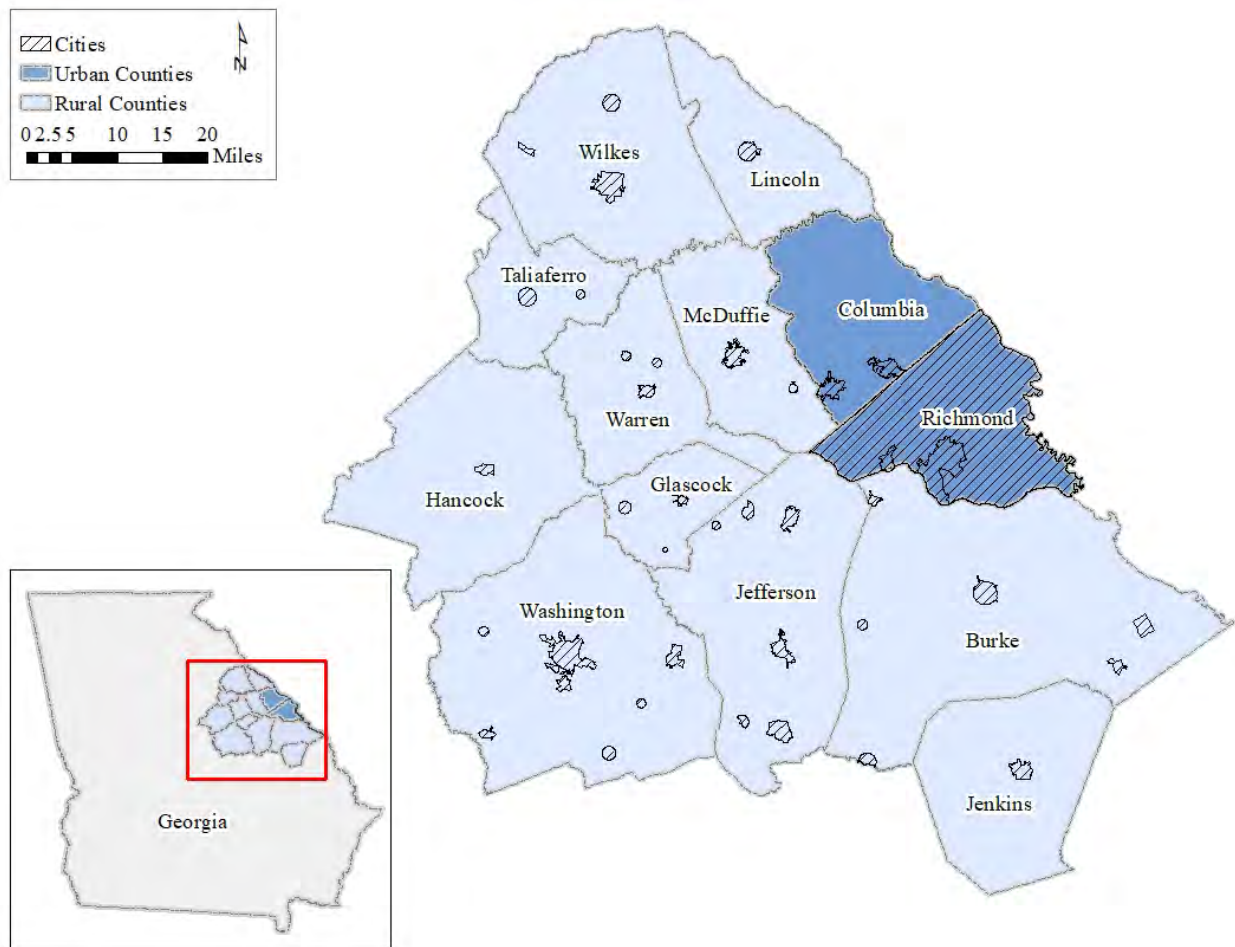


Figure 1. CSRARC Thirteen-County Region

CSRARC is interested in facilitating the creation of a transit hub or hubs for its eleven rural counties that would improve convenience and access to Augusta, Georgia and the services available within the city. Coordination of transit service and the creation of a transit hub(s) would enable more comprehensive access to medical care, employment, education, and other services for rural CSRARC residents. Currently, each county operates its own transit system (or contracts this service out) independent of one another. (Note: The rural county of Washington does not currently provide public transit.) CSRARC expected that most of the rural county residents would need to travel into the region's largest urban area of Augusta in the morning and return at the end of the day. One of the concerns with this proposal

would be that the buses (locally called vans) would then be out of service until the return trip at the end of the day. As a result, CSRARC is interested in understanding the feasibility of this and other options.

For this technical assistance project, the primary objective was to work with the CSRARC to examine the feasibility of creating a coordinated public transportation system through the use of rural transit hubs. This project is part of a larger contract with the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation, *Technical Assistance for Rural Transportation Systems: Connecting Rural Transportation with Economic Opportunity*. The research and technical assistance was led by the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University.

When the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic hit the United States in March of 2020 and lockdowns began to take place, this project faced many changes to the scope of work in order to maintain the health and safety of all involved. In particular, planned tasks like transit rider surveying, resident surveying, and creation of video testimonials that could be used to improve marketing of the transit systems were put on hold, and the rider surveys and video testimonials were ultimately cancelled. As travel restrictions continued into 2021, the scope of work for this project was updated to reflect more immediate needs of the transit systems.

This report summarizes the main tasks of the project and presents conclusions, organized into the following sections: Background Information, On-Site Data Collection Highlights, Current and Potential User Surveys, Expanding and Adding Rural Transit to CSRARC Counties, Marketing, Peer Exchange, Rural Transit Coordination Opportunities, Connection to Economic Development, and Conclusion.

2 Background Information

This section presents background information that informed the tasks and findings of this project:

- CSRARC & Georgia Planning,
- Key CSRARC Demographics,
- Existing Rural Transit Service within CSRARC,
- Rural Transit Coordination Literature,
- Rural Transit Workforce Literature, and
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Transit Resources.

2.1 CSRARC & Georgia Planning

This section details highlights from four planning documents at the state and CSRARC planning levels:

- Georgia Statewide Transit Plan: Improving Access and Mobility through 2050 (STATE)
- Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 1 (STATE)
- Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 2 (STATE)
- Central Savannah River Area Regional Plan 2040 (CSRARC)

Georgia Statewide Transit Plan

The following sections highlight key points that relate to the project at hand from the *Georgia Statewide Transit Plan: Improving Access and Mobility through 2050 (Plan)* [3]: overarching Georgia findings, beyond rural county-only service examples, performance measures, technical assistance for pursuing grants, thinking beyond on-demand only service, key qualitative origin and destinations, key findings from the survey, marketing, ridership, coordination, key strategies, urban goals that may be of interest to rural service providers, and CSRARC-specific highlights found in the *Plan*.

The *Plan* presented several overarching findings across the State of Georgia. First, the *Plan* noted that approximately 88.5% of Georgians live within a public transportation service area. The *Plan* indicated that it wanted to emphasize the transit needs of rural and small urban communities within Georgia. The *Plan* reported that a statewide application was being developed; to support the application's deployment, the *Plan* identified the need to develop and maintain General Transit Feed Specifications (GTFS) data for all Georgia transit providers. The *Plan* identified a general need for the development of marketing tools and website templates, noting that many providers may have limited technical capabilities to produce them in-house. It also identified a goal of installing on-board security features (i.e. cameras) on twenty-nine rural vehicles annually. The *Plan* proposed the creation of a statewide mobility management program, although the discussion of the deployment suggests that it is focused on urban counties.

While limited, there were a few examples of rural transit systems in Georgia that move beyond county-only focused service (with the possibility of occasional trips to large, urban areas (i.e., Augusta). In particular, expanded service and partnerships that extend service beyond the county borders push the typical rural Georgia paradigm. Clay County Transit and Wayne County Transit are two *rural* transit systems that offer twenty-four-hour, seven day a week service. The *Plan* noted that, in contrast, many

rural providers do not have the service hours necessary to meet trip demand. Furthermore, the *Plan* identified the problem of most rural transit systems requiring a trip to be scheduled days in advance. Finally, the *Plan* also highlighted the five regional rural transit services that presently exist in Georgia.

Several performance measures were identified within the *Plan*. Some that may be of interest to rural counties within CSRARC include: 1) rural transit providers that cross service area boundaries, 2) development of transit development plans (TDPs), 3) agencies that have provided GTFS data, and 4) number of transit provider websites.

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) identified within the *Plan* that it offers rural and small urban transit providers technical assistance to pursue grants. The agency is pursuing a five-year pilot program intended to reduce the local funds needed to match federal grants.

When comparing the State of Georgia to other states, the *Plan* noted, “Unlike Georgia, rural transit providers in many other states offer rural fixed-route and deviated fixed-route transit in addition to demand response transit, helping to meet their rural trip demand.”

As a part of the *Plan*, an analysis was performed on one month of trip data (from April 2019) provided by forty-four agencies. More details were discussed within, *Existing Conditions and Future Trends Analysis Part III – Rural Transit Trip Data Analysis Report, Final Report* [4]. As a result of this data, it was concluded that the most common origins and destinations for transit services were: 1) senior centers (18%), 2) dialysis and renal care (6%), 3) behavioral/mental health (6%), 4) vocational training (5%), and 5) retail (5%).

In addition to many outreach opportunities conducted by GDOT in developing the *Plan*, GDOT also collected survey from Georgians over a period of two-months, from June 18 through August 16, 2019. GDOT made the surveys available online and sent paper surveys to rural transit agencies for distribution. A total of 2,971 surveys were collected. Based on the survey responses from outside of the Atlanta area, a key finding stated that, “Improving access to employment and educational opportunities was identified as the most important reason to provide transit service.”

The *Plan* provided some commentary and a suggestion related to marketing. Taking data from the aforementioned survey, the *Plan* identified that “506 respondents said their primary reason for not taking transit is that service is not available in their community, even though 86% of these people live in communities with public transit systems.” Recommendations in the *Plan* also suggest that vehicle exteriors be viewed as a “rolling billboard,” advertising the services offered. In other words, more than just text should be written on the side.

Regarding ridership, the *Plan* offered several recommendations and conclusions. First, it concluded that budget controls were less effective than identifying ways to increase ridership. In addition, it suggested that looking to engage riders for trips beyond medical appointments, which may be influenced by the service hours offered by many rural transit providers, could result in an increase in ridership and therefore efficiency.

The *Plan* also spoke to coordination throughout. It identified that many “transit providers are unable to meet the demand for transit due to limited service hours, limited funding, and the lack of general transportation options in their region...suggest[ing] the possibility of regionally coordinated systems between counties in order to expand service areas.” Drawing on content from transit development plans, the *Plan* noted a need for “regional coordination to accommodate cross-county employment opportunities that are not currently served.” Another coordination idea offered was that “Neighboring systems may enter into agreements to share their existing transit fleets as needed. This could be as simple as loaning a bus to another system to cover a temporary vehicle shortage, or full fleet consolidation, with consolidated maintenance and dispatching.” Going further, it noted that, “Transit providers that have formed partnerships have found it to be helpful. Coordinated transit in rural areas, with operations provided by the regional commission, have helped to minimize administrative burdens for county or municipal staff.” The *Plan* did note that a barrier to coordination was related to insurance, which may not allow rural transit providers to travel outside their county. The *Plan* identified that approximately thirty-five percent of home-based-work trips cross county boundaries, and as such, it concludes that public transit is a “critical link to connect businesses with both their workforce and new markets.” The *Plan* suggests that a consolidated regional transit workforce or the ability to share employees, like a large pool of drivers and mechanics, can assist with addressing shortages.

During a Regional Transit Planning Focus Group, participants identified key strategies that included: 1) “Improving transit connections to employers, major hubs, and other trip generators,” 2) “Minimizing administrative costs for counties,” 3) “Improving coordination across municipalities, counties, and regionally,” 4) “Educating the public and local leaders as to the availability and benefit of transit service,” 5) “Providing better transit data...”, and 6) “...identifying partners, public outreach and engaging new riders, assessing new technology, improving customer relationships, new apps and data analysis, coordinating with state departments, long-range planning, and better connecting with LEP [Limited English Proficiency] communities.”

Goals identified by the Urban Provider Focus Group that may be of interest to rural CSRARC transit providers include: 1) working with chambers of commerce to promote transit, and 2) highlighting transit success stories. In fact, a need for “rural transit success stories” was also specifically identified elsewhere in the *Plan*.

The *Plan* presented several findings specific to CSRARC. First, higher level CSRARC findings are identified, followed by CSRARC-specific needs, an employment summary for CSRARC, and a high-level demographic summary. (Note: More detailed demographics are presented later in the report.)

When considering all of the regional councils, CSRARC had the lowest operational costs at \$14.46 per trip. Two intercity bus stations were identified within the rural CSRARC counties: one in Wilkes County and one in McDuffie County. They are served by Southeastern Stages.

The *Plan* also identified several needs that may be relevant to CSRARC. One task that GDOT emphasized was the need for transit development plans (TDPs); the *Plan* noted that few existed in Georgia’s rural counties. The primary components of a TDP are: 1) overview of an area’s demographics, 2) existing

transportation network, 3) projection of future needs (including a budget), and 4) a series of strategies to enhance public transit. GDOT has indicated that it is going to facilitate the development of regional TDPs, with a goal of three annually.

The transit provider questionnaire identified a need that may resonate with some CSRARC counties: “Recruiting personnel with transit expertise is difficult due to limits on ability to pay market wages needed to attract qualified candidates. Retaining qualified personnel has proved difficult. Our experienced staff often leave the area to pursue more lucrative opportunities in larger cities.” To add to that, “Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents identified the transit workforce as a top administrative challenge, including attracting, training, and/or retaining qualified personnel.”

In a map of top employers by industry, only three rural CSRARC counties (Burke, McDuffie, and Washington Counties) had employers shown. Burke County had top employers in both the information, professional and business sector; and natural resources and agriculture. Both McDuffie and Washington Counties had retail as their top employers.

The following were primary demographic findings. As a region, CSRARC has one of the three largest minority populations, with Hancock, Taliaferro and Warren Counties having the largest percentage of minority populations. The Plan identified four low-income percentage categories: 1) less than 16.9%; 2) 16.9% to 21.1%; 3) 21.2% to 25.4%; and 4) 25.5% to 41.5%. Of the rural CSRARC counties, Glascock County was the only county that fell within the first category. Lincoln County fared second best, falling within the third category. All other rural CSRARC counties, fell within the third category, the worst category. Limited-English Proficiency (LEP) populations are not a factor for rural CSRARC counties, nor are youth populations. Many rural CSRARC counties (Hancock, Jefferson, Taliaferro, Warren, and Wilkes) had 10.2% or greater zero-car households. The northern rural CSRARC counties seemed to have the highest representation of elderly populations by county, with Hancock, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes all having 27.6% or greater. All of the remaining rural CSRARC counties had 18.3% or greater elderly populations.

This section provided highlights of the recently released *Georgia Statewide Transit Plan*. The *Plan* has a lot of interesting summaries and good ideas. The rural counties within CSRARC should reach out to GDOT to see how they can take advantage of being a part of pilot programs, whether for the development of a TDP for their county, piloting a region-wide driver pool, reducing the need for local match for federal grants (and engaging the identified technical assistance), and ensuring that CSRARC county vehicles receive security features. The *Plan* itself was extensive at about one hundred and fifty pages. In addition, numerous supporting reports are available, which are also lengthy. Some of the supporting plans that may be of interest to CSRARC include: *Existing Conditions and Future Trends Analysis Part I – State Profile Report, Final Report* [5]; *Existing Conditions and Future Trends Analysis Part II – Best Practices Report, Final Report* [6]; and *Existing Conditions and Future Trends Analysis Part III – Rural Transit Trip Data Analysis Report, Final Report* [4]. (Note: There is also a report on performance measures, a transit needs assessment, investment strategies, and an outreach and public involvement summary.)

Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 1

The report, *Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 1* [7], “quantifies the economic impacts in the rural and small urban areas that fall under GDOT’s responsibility.” To deduce the magnitude of impacts, the researchers analyzed data from FY16, FY17, and FY18 for eighty-three rural transit agencies and nine small urban transit agencies. The researchers used the Impact Analysis for Planning (IMPLAN) model for their analysis with statewide multipliers. They noted that statewide multipliers were chosen instead of county level multipliers, as the latter “capture a smaller percentage of economic activity.”

The report highlighted some interesting facts. First, it noted that all of Georgia’s rural transit systems are demand-response. There are no fixed route rural transit systems in Georgia. In FY2017, Georgia had eighty-three rural transit providers, more than any other U.S. state. With the exception of four, all of the rural transit systems were managed by individual counties.

In Georgia, for every dollar invested in public transit, \$2.05 in economic benefits are generated.

The researchers found that in small urban and rural transit systems in Georgia, more jobs resulted from the indirect effect than direct effect. They ultimately concluded that, in Georgia, for every dollar invested in transit, economic benefits of \$2.05 were generated. From their analysis, the authors also identified approximately 2,600 jobs created annually as a result of rural and small urban transit systems throughout the state. However, the analysis did not take into account social and environmental benefits that may also be found as a result of rural and small urban transit in Georgia.

Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 2

The report, *Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 2* [8] was reviewed. Collectively, Volume 1 and Volume 2 were created to better understand the economic impact of transit on the Georgia economy. The second volume “conducts an analysis of mobility and accessibility in rural areas in Georgia using a database of rural transit trips and provides a high-level assessment of costs of expanding and initiating service from 6am to 4pm, Monday through Saturday, in all Georgia counties with rural populations.”

The authors of this report (Garrow et al.) highlighted several overall findings or factual information related to Georgia of interest to this research project. First, considering all U.S. states, Georgia has the greatest number of rural transit providers at eighty-three. They also identified that Georgia has the sixth-largest rural population in the United States.

Garrow et al. also identified several interesting facts associated with Taliaferro County, one of CSRARC’s rural counties. First, they identified that Taliaferro has only two transit vehicles. They also suggested that almost all of the destinations for users of the system were outside of the county. They noted that

within the county, there exist only a few churches, a restaurant and an assisted living center. Garrow et al. also identified that the nearest hospital is 20 miles away in Wilkes County, making it clear that there is a need for trips that cross county lines. The authors also highlighted that because there is no cooperation between the CSRARC counties, residents from Taliaferro County that travel to the hospital for treatment cannot use the public transit system in Wilkes County.

Garrow et al. also highlighted some innovative rural transit delivery paradigms. The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC) and the Coastal Regional Commission (CRS) are the only two entities that offer regionalized services. Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) and River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) "offer limited multi-county service." In Vermont, a single entity provides service for nine regions, and the state also has memorandums of understanding with neighboring states (Massachusetts and New Hampshire) to allow cities on the border to coordinate service. The authors note that only limited service is offered during the weekdays, limiting the ability for the service to address educational and employment trips.

These researchers also analyzed some demographic data that highlight the need for public transit in rural CSRARC counties. Taliaferro, Warren, Hancock, and Jefferson have 13, 13, 13, and 17 percent of households without a vehicle, respectively. Hancock County has the largest population loss at -16.2%. The researchers identified 16 focus counties, those where 1) by 2030 the poverty rate is expected to hit 45%, 2) there is a negative change in population, and 3) the elderly population will grow by at least 5%. Five of these counties (Burke, Hancock, Lincoln, Taliaferro, and Washington) (31.2%) are in CSRARC.

Garrow et al. also highlighted some challenges of providing rural transit. For example, they noted that, "Transit need is heavier in rural areas, but these areas do not lend themselves to the fixed routes commonly offered in more urban areas." Another challenge was "little to no coordination at the region commission level."

Another key challenge described in detail was the software previously used by GDOT to record ridership data. In particular, the authors noted the following limitations for the 2011 through 2018 versions of the software that GDOT used to track ridership for the 5311 Rural Transit Formula Program: 1) inconsistent reporting by year, 2) inconsistent reporting by provider, 3) inconsistent reporting of field entries, 4) possibility that several riders that traveled from the same origin to destination at the same time were treated as one, not several (i.e. maybe from a senior center to an activity and back), and 5) inconsistent trip purpose. Overall, for the best year in which trips were reported (2015), only 48.7% were reported. Notably, Jefferson and Burke only reported 20% of their trips (other CSRARC counties reported none), whereas the larger, regionalized services reported 60%. From the data available, the researchers identified the following trip information. Of the trip purpose types (daycare/education; employment; medical; nutrition; shopping/personal; social/rec; blank), medical (22.3%) is still the most frequently reported trip purpose. The researchers further separated out medical trips using North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code classification into: 1) medical centers and hospitals, 2) federally qualified health centers, and 3) local doctor's offices. (Note: There is a separate NAICS code for Kidney Dialysis Centers: NAICS Code 621492.) They noted that the transit service hours in the dataset did not match the hours identified during the standard service operating hours,

suggesting that, "service providers are flexing their current hours to meet existing demand." Burke County was identified as operating 6am-6pm (but not on Tuesday or Thursdays), having an overnight ridership (12pm-5am) of 2.08%, having late night and early morning ridership (9pm-12am; 5-7am) of 4.18%, and having 6.27% total off peak ridership. Jefferson County operated from 6am to 6pm, with 0.01% of overnight ridership, 14.53% of late night and early morning ridership, 1.35% of evening service (5pm-9pm), with a total of 15.88% of off-peak ridership. After analyzing the reported trips (as compared with the reported service hours), the researchers concluded that: 1) there is a need for service starting at 5am, 2) service after 6pm is not as important as other extensions of service, 3) regionalized service results in a greater demand for evening service. Regarding (1), the researchers noted, "Dialysis visits may also account for a sizeable portion of early morning trips." In a specific review of Burke County's service, they noted that service started as early as 4am. Furthermore, they noted that 0.85% of service occurred on Saturdays. An important conclusion that Garrow et al. made is, "It is important to caution against using the existing ridership data for route planning purposes." Ultimately, based on the data that they did have, Garrow et al. concluded that the major destinations are: 1) county offices, 2) large discount shopping areas, and 3) regional medical centers.

Finally, this document discusses the Rural Accessibility Index, which is "intended to address gaps that occur in places that offer service, but where it may be inadequate." Ridership data is not used to create the index. Washington, the only county without transit service, was identified as having only 10% and 20% destination accessibility. It was the lowest in the CSRARC region, except for Glascock County.

Central Savannah River Area Regional Plan 2040

The *Central Savannah River Area Regional Plan 2040* is the "long-range plan for the management of the region's projected growth by local governments and the CSRA [Central Savannah River Area] Regional Commission" [2]. While the vision is for the next twenty years, the plan is to be updated every five.

The document notes that the quality-of-life of rural residents in the region may have been impacted by the migration from rural residents to urban areas, impacting, in particular: 1) the availability of high speed internet, 2) the availability of health care, 3) the availability of affordable housing, and 4) options for work commutes. It also notes that while the region has ten hospitals and an "expanding network of prompt care centers," many rural hospitals are closed or just hanging on. The document highlights the Transportation Investment Act (TIA), which passed in 2012. It defined TIA as, "a 10-year, one percent (1%) sales tax to fund regional and local transportation improvements such as replacing bridges, widening roads and adding sidewalks."

The document identified six regional goals: 1) economic development, 2) natural and cultural resources, 3) community facilities and services, 4) housing, 5) land use and transportation, and 6) intergovernmental coordination.

Another regional goal that could be directly supported by a robust public transportation system is the "Economic Development Goal." This goal includes objectives to expand job opportunities.

For “Economic Development” needs, the document discusses “More options for dining, shopping and other services, particularly in rural areas,” “Better qualified workers,” and “Improved broadband access and quality.” As an opportunity, it notes “charming small towns in rural areas.”

The document also discusses as a “Community Facilities and Services Goal” to improve and expand water, sewers, and sidewalks. This goal notes the desire to create “walkable, mixed use communities.”

Under “Community Facilities and Services,” the document identifies as a need “Foster local quality of life improvements to address barriers to health, wellness and workforce development within the region to improve overall quality of life.” A need identified under “Land Use and Transportation” is “Better public transit access in some areas.” For “Excellence Standards,” under “Transportation,” the plan requires those counties trying to achieve the Excellence Standards to “Address more than one kind of transportation activity,” and have “a local transit assessment or transit development plan.” Under “Intergovernmental Coordination,” related to “shared regional issues,” transportation was identified as an issue for which regional coordination would benefit. It also says, “Mitigate transportation issues within communities surrounding Fort Gordon.” Similarly, it notes, “Increase accessibility to Fort Gordon.” The document suggests “Re-establish the TIA roundtable and hold regional stakeholder meetings.” For the priority, “Foster local quality of life improvements to address barriers to health, wellness and workforce development within the region to improve the overall quality of life,” transportation should be stated as a coordinated aspect of this. Transportation was the top bullet point as part of the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The plan notes, under “Transportation Options,” “Car travel is the predominant mode of transportation for most residents. Limited access to public transit exists through local bus systems.”

The “Land Use and Transportation Goal” states, “to effectively utilize existing infrastructure to ensure the coordination of land use and transportation planning in support of improved resident quality of life, including provisions for pedestrians, trails and bicycles, housing, access to recreation and green space, and protected natural and historic areas.” Within the sub-text, “Include multiple modes of transportation in transportation plans and investments” and “Adjust public transit availability to improve access to employment as conditions change” are the only two references to public transportation. Under “Rapid Development” and “Recommended Development Patterns,” the planning document discusses the need for “narrower streets and raised pedestrian crossings,” “walking between destinations,” and reducing parking requirements in concert with the availability of public transportation. The document highlights that “residential and commercial activities should not be separated from each other.” Under “Redevelopment” and “Recommended Development Patterns,” the planning document suggests, “New industry or other major employers located close to town, making jobs accessible to all residents by way of transit, walking or bicycling.”

Under “Intergovernmental Coordination Goal,” the plan identifies a need “to create a culture of collaborative planning and government decision-making wherein communities join together to define commonalities and development strategies that benefit multiple jurisdictions to further effective growth, increase access to resources, generate cost savings, and promote healthy, active residents.” One strategy specifically identified community food systems.

Most of the population growth for the region, at 94 percent, was in the urban counties within the region. Jefferson County lost the greatest number of residents (1,034); Taliaferro had the greatest percentage of residents lost (10.13%). Of the rural counties, Burke, Glascock, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, and Washington had gains in population when comparing 1990 to 2015. Hancock, Jefferson, Taliaferro, Warren, and Wilkes had losses in population when comparing 1990 to 2015. The document notes that, “a number of rural jurisdictions may be harmed by outmigration as an anticipated increase in job opportunities in the urban areas may draw residents away from rural places, particularly those of child-bearing age.” The document notes that “61 percent of the region’s population is under 45 years of age.” “The rural areas face a different challenge – how to increase their attractiveness to younger populations while simultaneously striving to meet the needs of aging residents, particularly those who want to age in place.” The document notes that there has been an overall increase in jobs, although they are primarily in the two urban counties.

The regional plan notes several major employers in the region. Fort Gordon spans four counties, two of which are rural (Jefferson and McDuffie), and two of which are urban (Columbia and Richmond), and hosts the Army Cyber Center for Excellence. The Savannah River Site (SRS), although in South Carolina, is an employer of the region. In Burke County, Plant Vogtle is an expanding nuclear power site. These could serve as key public transportation destinations to improve access to employment. When talking about business lay-offs and closures, the document notes that it is a “critical problem for residents with limited transportation.”

Tennille, Georgia, in Washington County, is the only rural area that is designated in the document as displaying “pervasive poverty, underdevelopment, general distress, and blight.”

Federal qualified opportunity zones, based on poverty and income, were found in nine of the counties: Burke (in three Census Tracts), Hancock (one), Jefferson (two), Jenkins (one), Lincoln (one), McDuffie (two), Taliaferro (one), Warren (one) and Washington (two).

Three communities within the focus counties were identified as Enterprise Zones: City of Camak (Warren County), City of Thomson (McDuffie County), and City of Washington (Wilkes County).

The planning document mentions a “Quick Start” program (which offers companies the ability to screen potential workers and specific training, none of which comes at a cost to the employer), as well as a “Job Training Partnership.”

Regarding human services, the plan identified several entities that provided support for those who experienced domestic violence: SafeHomes of Augusta (with locations in Burke, Glascock, Jefferson, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes); Circle of Love Center, Inc. (Hancock); and Citizens Against Violence, Inc. (Washington and Jenkins). The plan also identified entities that assist those who are homeless: Family Promise of Augusta; Mercy Ministries; and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

The CSRA Regional Plan presents a particularly notable statistic: the percentage of monthly income that residents spend on housing and transportation costs (Table 1). The shaded CSRARC counties are the

urban counties. The counties that are in bold have residents that spend more than seventy percent of their income on housing and transportation costs.

Table 1. Average Housing and Transportation Costs as a Percentage of Monthly Income

| County | Percent (%) of Monthly Income |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Burke | 52% |
| Columbia | 66% |
| Glascocock | 58% |
| Hancock | 76% |
| Jefferson | 83% |
| Jenkins | 78% |
| Lincoln | 58% |
| McDuffie | 54% |
| Richmond | 52% |
| Taliaferro | 86% |
| Warren | 76% |
| Washington | 63% |
| Wilkes | 73% |

The plan identifies several causes of high transportation costs, including “working outside of the region or state” and “lack of access to public transportation or a vehicle for personal use.”

The document also notes that “What little growth has occurred in rural CSRARC counties has been in unincorporated areas.” It adds that this will result in increased infrastructure costs (water and sewer lines).

There are six library systems, many of which serve more than one county: 1) Bartram Trail (McDuffie, Taliaferro, Wilkes); 2) Greater Clarks Hill (Burke, Columbia, Lincoln, Warren); 3) Jefferson County (Jefferson), 4) Oconee (Glascocock & Washington); 5) Screven-Jenkins (Jenkins); and 6) Uncle Remus (Hancock).

Six hospitals are located within the eleven rural counties of CSRA (Burke Medical Center; Jefferson Hospital; Jenkins County Hospital; McDuffie Regional Medical Center; Washington County Regional Medical Center; and Wills Memorial Hospital).

Only three rural CSRARC counties (McDuffie; Taliaferro and Warren) have an interstate running through them.

Fixed-route public transit is noted as only being available in the urban Richmond County. The report identifies that, “The rest of CSRA is served with demand-response service, paid for by state and federal agencies that provide transportation benefits, such as Medicare and Medicaid.”

In one more topic of interest, the plan discusses rural regional mobility. It identifies a need for transportation to the areas outside of a rural community, as well as between cities (intercity). For these communities, the most frequent regional trip needs are for: 1) regional medical centers and 2) commuting-based trips to colleges. Demand response transit services (paratransit, community volunteer drivers and transportation voucher programs) have not yet addressed the need for broader regional mobility. The plan highlights how such services may mostly benefit the “transportation-disadvantaged,” as their need for regional trips are not met by specialized services. Rural regional mobility service was also called rural regional transit.

The study defines rural regional mobility service based on the following characteristics:

1. Provides transportation for the general public
2. Provides service from a rural area across a jurisdictional boundary (e.g. a county)
3. Provides access to destinations with services that are not available at origin (e.g. medical, employment, retail, government)

Summary of CSRA Regional Plan & Georgia Planning Documents

The CSRA Regional Plan identified an economic development goal that included improving the region’s ability to expand job opportunities. Public transportation can support the expansion of job opportunities. Jobs are often clustered in one area and potential employees clustered in another, not necessarily within the same jurisdictional boundary. As such, coordinating public transportation can help to facilitate employee access to expanded job opportunities. Within the same goal, the CSRA Regional Plan spoke to the need for better qualified workers. This often implies some post-secondary education, whether at a four-year university and/or a community college. Public transportation can help to connect those seeking higher education to such institutions. Without such a cost-effective connection, there may be a barrier to achieving such goals.

Within the CSRA Regional Plan, one of the goals under community facilities and services included improving and expanding sidewalks. As first mile/last mile access can present some challenges for people that may want to access public transportation, the presence of sidewalks and/or bicycle facilities can help support connections to public transportation. Furthermore, within this goal, the plan identified a desire to make library services and education programs more accessible to those within the CSRA. It also noted a desire to promote access to healthy, local food. Again, public transportation can help provide these connections to residents. Public transportation is also cost-effective for the user, and therefore can ensure these services and healthy food are accessible to those who may have more limited income. This goal also specifically speaks to barriers in access; public transportation can directly address such barriers.

The CSRA Regional Plan discussed two programs, a “Quick Start” and “Job Training Partnership.” However, it is unclear if there is a transportation component offered as part of these programs, similar to that done in the Arrowhead Region of Minnesota (to read more about this program, see Section 2.4).

The CSRA Regional Plan named several entities that support individuals and families that have experienced domestic violence. The plan also identified two entities assisting those who are homeless. Surveys regarding public transportation needs should be shared with individuals who need these resources which may best be facilitated by agencies that assist them, as it may provide them with affordable transportation options.

Table 1 was particularly notable in that it identified many counties where residents spend more than seventy percent of their monthly income on housing and transportation, leaving them with little for food and other necessities. If some of these costs can be reduced, like by making public transportation within these counties efficient and appealing, economic benefits will be brought to both the individual and the region as a whole, as it would spur more spending within the local economies.

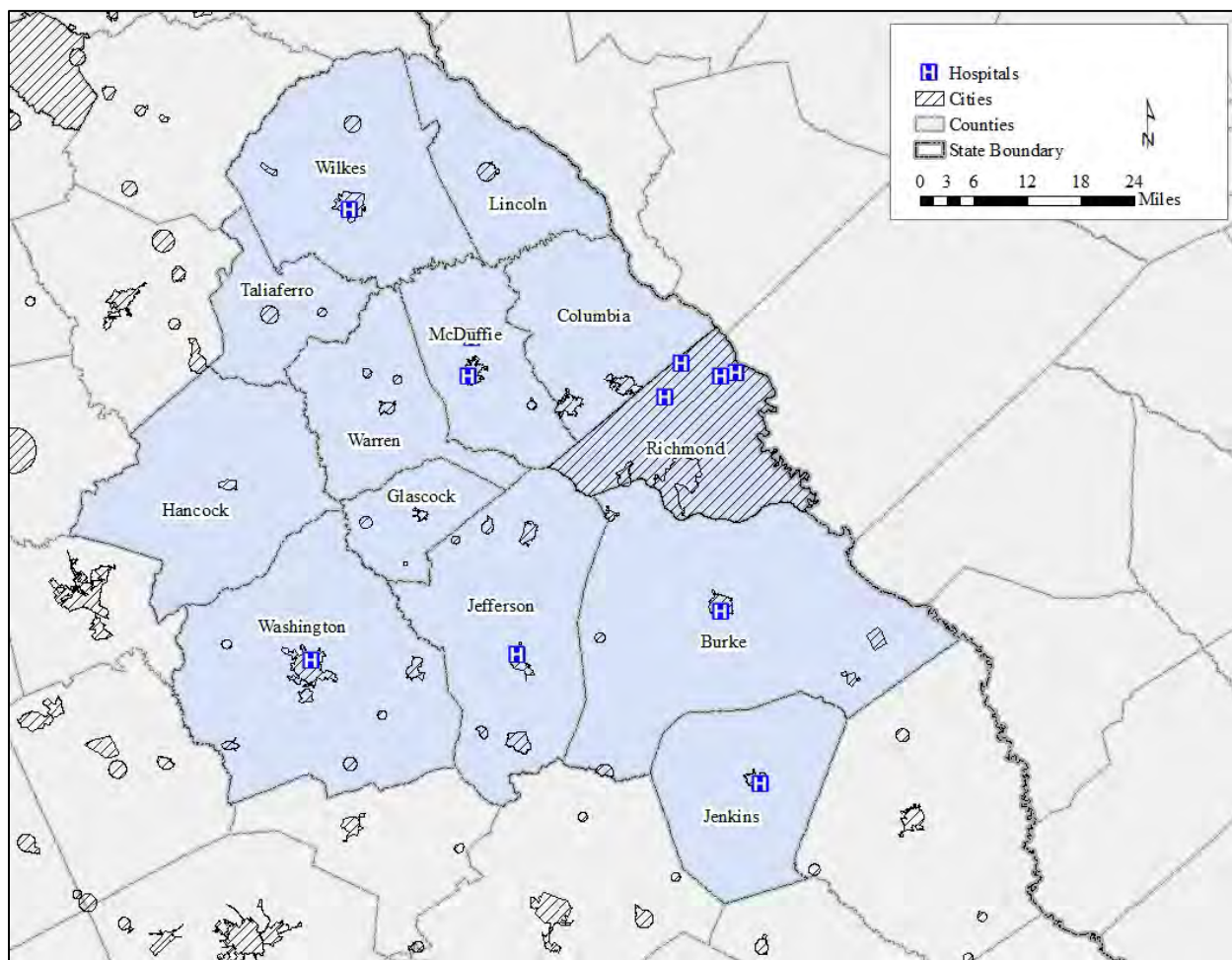


Figure 2. Hospitals Located Within the CSRARC region

Considering that the plan noted that there has been additional growth in unincorporated areas of the county, there will likely continue to be a need to expand public transportation. With a primarily aging population, as identified by a review of the demographics, there is a good likelihood that those relocating to the unincorporated areas may need public transportation at some point in the future.

The regional and state planning documents reviewed in this section highlighted several key findings for improving transportation within the CSRARC rural counties.

- Improving access to public transportation opportunities could help the CSRARC reach several goals set in the *Central Savannah River Area Regional Plan 2040*.
- In Georgia, for every dollar invested in public transit, \$2.05 in economic benefits are generated.
- Residents within every rural county of the CSRARC region are spending at least 52 percent of their income on housing and transportation.
- The most common origins and destinations for public transportation providers were: 1) senior centers, 2) dialysis and renal care, 3) behavioral/mental health, 4) vocational training, and 5) retail.
- There is a need to improve access to employment opportunities within the region. Several major employers are located within the CSRARC region and provide an opportunity for key public transportation destinations including Fort Gordon Savannah River Site (SRS), and Plant Vogtle.
- Public transportation systems in the region are offering service Monday through Friday; while additional services may be beneficial, they are currently not feasible.
- There is a concern that many residents are not aware that public transportation service is available in their region.

Of note, these documents highlight several key opportunities:

- Consolidate the regional transit workforce or enhance the ability to share employees. For example, the creation of a large pool of drivers and mechanics could assist with addressing driver shortages.
- Create marketing materials aimed at the general public to improve visibility of and access to public transportation systems. Additional efforts to improve visibility could include creating GTFS data which would allow residents to access information about the public transportation systems via Google Maps, Apple Maps, and other software applications.
- The GDOT plan identified that the agency offers technical assistance to rural and small urban transit providers to pursue grants. GDOT is also pursuing a five-year pilot program intended to reduce the local funds needed to match federal grants. These efforts provide potential opportunities for rural public transportation systems to improve or expand service.

2.2 Key CSRARC Demographics

Demographic data from the US Census Bureau’s 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) Five Year Estimates [9] was used to analyze key demographic subgroups within the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) region that may benefit from a coordinated public transportation system. Rural CSRA has many transportation-disadvantaged population subgroups including low income individuals, senior citizens, minority communities, and zero vehicle households (Table 2). In general, when compared to the urban counties of Columbia and Richmond, rural CSRA residents tend to be older, lower income, and have less access to a vehicle (see Figure 3 and Table 2). Additionally, rural counties within CSRA face high housing and transportation cost burdens. Having access to transportation options, like a rural coordinated public transportation system, could improve mobility and access to employment, education, and other opportunities for rural residents. A more detailed demographic analysis can be found in Appendix A – Demographic Analysis.

Table 2. Selected Demographic Characteristics ([9], [10])

| County | Population | Median Age | 65 and Older | Minority | People with a Disability | Low Income | Zero Car Households | Housing + Transport Costs as % of Monthly Income |
|------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------|--|
| Burke | 22,645 | 37.4 | 14.1% | 51.6% | 15.3% | 29.2% | 7.3% | 52% |
| Columbia | 143,723 | 36.4 | 12.3% | 22.1% | 11.2% | 8.6% | 2.6% | 66% |
| Glascocock | 3,027 | 42.9 | 17.0% | 11.8% | 14.3% | 11.5% | 6.3% | 58% |
| Hancock | 8,667 | 44.3 | 20.6% | 75.5% | 17.7% | 30.0% | 10.8% | 76% |
| Jefferson | 15,954 | 38.6 | 16.9% | 56.7% | 15.6% | 26.9% | 15.8% | 83% |
| Jenkins | 8,929 | 40.6 | 15.6% | 38.8% | 14.2% | 30.7% | 9.6% | 78% |
| Lincoln | 7,768 | 47.9 | 21.7% | 33.6% | 18.2% | 23.0% | 6.0% | 58% |
| McDuffie | 21,488 | 37.8 | 16.3% | 45.2% | 13.0% | 26.0% | 8.4% | 54% |
| Richmond | 201,568 | 33.7 | 12.8% | 59.6% | 16.7% | 24.2% | 9.9% | 52% |
| Taliaferro | 1,844 | 43.3 | 21.3% | 63.0% | 22.5% | 31.0% | 13.0% | 86% |
| Warren | 5,410 | 44.2 | 20.5% | 62.8% | 12.4% | 26.8% | 16.8% | 76% |
| Washington | 20,506 | 40.3 | 16.2% | 54.1% | 16.9% | 27.1% | 8.0% | 63% |
| Wilkes | 9,905 | 45.5 | 22.1% | 47.2% | 17.4% | 26.5% | 13.1% | 73% |

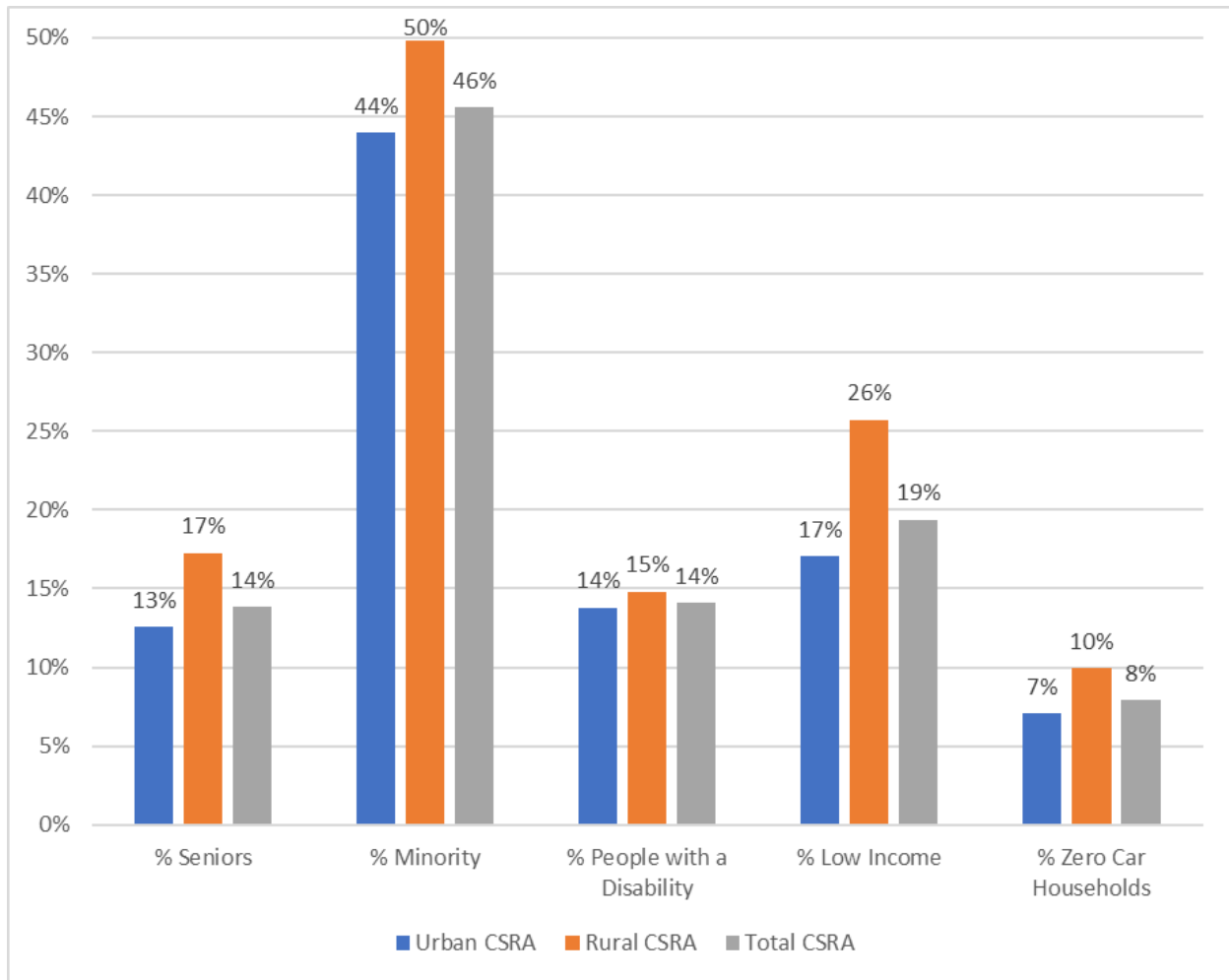


Figure 3. Urban vs. Rural Demographic Characteristics [9]

Table 3. Urban vs. Rural Demographic Characteristics [9]

| Area | Population | Median Age | 65 and Older | % Seniors | Minority | % Minority | People with a Disability | % People with a Disability | Low Income | % Low Income | Total HH | Zero Car HH | % Zero Car HH |
|------------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|----------|------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|---------------|
| Urban CSRA | 345,291 | 35.05 | 43,457 | 13% | 151,914 | 44% | 47,689 | 14% | 58,961 | 17% | 118,184 | 8,374 | 7% |
| Rural CSRA | 126,143 | 42.07 | 21,778 | 17% | 62,853 | 50% | 18,687 | 15% | 32,472 | 26% | 47,226 | 4,698 | 10% |
| Total CSRA | 471,434 | 40.99 | 65,235 | 14% | 214,767 | 46% | 66,376 | 14% | 91,433 | 19% | 165,410 | 13,072 | 8% |

2.3 Existing Rural Transit Service within CSRARC region

This section summarizes information gathered about existing rural transit service within CSRA. First, a summary of the rural transit service is provided based on information obtained through the Georgia Department of Transportation and the National Transit Database (NTD) data. This data includes a summary of the service, and operational and funding characteristics (Table 4 through Table 6). Then after, available information found on each county's website (as of April of 2021) is summarized. Transit service is not provided in one rural CSRARC county: Washington.

In addition, information is presented from Southeastern Stages, Inc., an intercity bus transit provider, as well as from Airport Connections, which provides an airport van service.

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) & National Transit Database (NTD)

The following tables summarize the data available for each rural county (Burke, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes) in the CSRARC region, as extracted from both the GDOT summaries, which correspond with NTD data (see Appendix B – CSRARC Rural Transit Data for more details).

Table 4. Overall CSRARC Rural County Transit System Characteristics

| Rural County | Service Area (sq mi) | Population | Service Type | Advanced Notice Needed | Days of Operation | | | | | | | Hours of Operation |
|--------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|---|---|----|---|-----|-----|------------------------------------|
| | | | | | M | T | W | Th | F | Sat | Sun | |
| Burke | 835 | 22,645 | Demand Response | 36 hours | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 7am to 6pm |
| Jefferson | 530 | 15,954 | Demand Response | 18 hours | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 6am to 5pm |
| Jenkins | 352 | 8,929 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 8am to 5pm |
| Glascock | 144 | 3,027 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, Th, F: 8am to 5pm; W: 8-12pm |
| Hancock | 479 | 8,667 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 8am to 5pm |
| Lincoln | 257 | 7,768 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 9am to 3pm |
| McDuffie | 266 | 21,488 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 8am to 5pm |
| Taliaferro | 195 | 1,844 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | T, W, Th, F: 8am to 4pm |
| Warren | 287 | 5,410 | Demand Response | 1 business day | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 4:30am to 4pm |
| Washington | - | 20,506 | - | - | | | | | | | | - |
| Wilkes | 474 | 9,905 | Demand Response | 24 Hour Advance | | | | | | | | M, T, W, Th, F: 7:30am to 4pm |

Table 5. CSRARC Rural County Transit Operations/Ridership

| Rural County | Operations/Ridership | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | Annual Trips | Cost Per Trip | Cost Per Hour | Cost Per Mile | Revenue Vehicle Miles | Peak Vehicle Count | Trips Per Capita | Revenue Hours | Hours Per Capita | Standard Fare | Fare Type |
| Burke | 16,990 | \$15.40 | \$31.70 | \$1.72 | 152,110 | 8 | 0.75 | 8,251 | 0.36 | \$3.00 | Stop Based |
| Jefferson | 28,265 | \$11.84 | \$25.71 | \$1.58 | 211,663 | 7 | 1.77 | 13,018 | 0.82 | \$3.00 | Destination Based |
| Jenkins | 2,216 | \$24.10 | \$36.45 | \$3.59 | 14,887 | 1 | 0.25 | 1,465 | 0.16 | \$1.50 | Destination Based |
| Glascock | 5,434 | \$14.56 | \$19.27 | \$1.91 | 41,447 | 3 | 1.80 | 4,104 | 1.36 | \$2.00 | Destination Based |
| Hancock | 17,124 | \$8.99 | \$18.91 | \$1.06 | 144,859 | 3 | 1.98 | 8,137 | 0.94 | \$5.00 | Destination Based |
| Lincoln | 9,833 | \$8.71 | \$14.20 | \$1.62 | 52,838 | 3 | 1.27 | 6,030 | 0.78 | \$5.00 | Destination Based |
| McDuffie | 34,578 | \$7.14 | \$30.14 | \$1.98 | 124,742 | 5 | 1.61 | 8,187 | 0.38 | \$5.75 | Destination Based |
| Taliaferro | 4,541 | \$13.95 | \$22.92 | \$2.02 | 31,378 | 2 | 2.46 | 2,764 | 1.50 | \$3.00 | Destination Based |
| Warren | 4,866 | \$22.04 | \$29.74 | \$2.20 | 48,708 | 2 | 0.90 | 3,607 | 0.67 | \$1.50 | Destination Based |
| Washington | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Wilkes | 13,380 | \$13.90 | \$34.04 | \$2.04 | 91,071 | 3 | 1.35 | 5,463 | 0.55 | \$3.00 | Flat Fare |

Table 6. CSRARC Rural County Transit Funding

| Rural County | Funding | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| | Avg. Fare Revenue Per Trip | Annual Operating Expenses | Federal | Local | Fares and Other | Annual Capital Expenses |
| Burke | \$0.98 | \$266,000 | 65% | 6% | 29% | \$56,000 |
| Jefferson | \$1.30 | \$324,000 | 56% | 33% | 11% | \$83,000 |
| Jenkins | \$1.76 | \$46,000 | 45% | 48% | 7% | \$16,000 |
| Glascock | \$0.75 | \$72,000 | 45% | 50% | 5% | \$14,000 |
| Hancock | \$1.41 | \$149,000 | 49% | 35% | 16% | \$40,000 |
| Lincoln | \$0.27 | \$75,000 | 51% | 46% | 3% | \$0 |
| McDuffie | \$0.37 | \$234,000 | 50% | 45% | 5% | \$45,000 |
| Taliaferro | \$0.79 | \$60,000 | 45% | 49% | 6% | \$0 |
| Warren | \$0.80 | \$101,000 | 53% | 43% | 4% | \$26,000 |
| Washington | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Wilkes | \$1.21 | \$184,000 | 45% | 46% | 9% | \$29,000 |

County Transit Websites

County transit websites were reviewed in April of 2021 (Table 7). Limited data was available on each county's website. However, what follows is a listing of the websites that were used (Table 7) along with the types of information that were available (Table 8). All transit system websites provided contact information in the form of a phone number. Most provided information on their hours of operation and

Title VI and ADA accommodation information. To view what the various transit system websites look like, check out Appendix C – Transit System Website Screenshots.

Table 7. Transit System Websites

| County | Transit System Website |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Burke | https://burkecounty-ga.gov/departments/burke-transit/ |
| Glascock | http://glascockcountyga.com/commissioners/countyoffices/transit/ |
| Hancock | https://hancockcountyga.gov/senior-center-transit-department/ |
| Jefferson | http://www.jeffersoncountyga.gov/218/Transit |
| Jenkins | http://www.jenkinscountyga.com/transportation.php http://www.jenkinscountyga.com/resident-resources_14_3090971483.pdf |
| Lincoln | https://www.lincolncountyga.com/leisure-services |
| McDuffie | https://www.thomson-mcduffie.com/parksrec-leisure/page/rural-transportation |
| Taliaferro | http://taliaferrocountyga.org/index.php?page=government |
| Warren | https://www.warrencountyga.com/transit.html |
| Washington (no transit system) | |
| Wilkes | https://www.wilkescountyga.org/transit |

Table 8. Information Available on County Transit System Website

| County | Information Available on Website | | | | | | | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|--------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| | Hours | Contact Info | Advance Notice Requirements | Information Needed to Schedule a Ride | Fares | Destinations | Attendant/Chaperone Info | Title VI | ADA Info |
| Burke | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| Glascock | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | x |
| Hancock | | x | | | | | | | |
| Jefferson | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| Jenkins | x | x | | x | x | x | | | |
| Lincoln | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| McDuffie | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x |
| Taliaferro | x | x | | | | | | x | |
| Warren | | x | | | | x | | x | x |
| Washington | | | | (no transit system) | | | | | |
| Wilkes | x | x | | | | | | x | x |

Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus service, operated by Southeastern Stages, Inc.,¹ runs from the Atlanta, Georgia to Augusta, Georgia, stopping in Thomson, Georgia (McDuffie County) and Washington, Georgia (Wilkes County) along two different routes. Below are the exact addresses for each stop:

McDuffie County
BP & Dairy Queen
1850 Washington Road
Thomson, GA 30824
706-595-7532

Wilkes County
Uptown Texaco
117 E. Robert Toombs
Washington, GA 30673
706-678-4479

Airport Connections

Thomson, Georgia is the only community within the focus counties that has an identified connection to an airport, the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. There are two service providers, Groome Transportation² and A-Best Airport Shuttle & Limo.³

Summary

The various sources of data and information (GDOT, NTD, county websites) provide some consistent and differing information. As an example, for Burke County, if the GDOT/NTD standard fare information is one-way, it is consistent with the \$6.00 per roundtrip ride cost found on Burke County's website. In contrast, the destinations are not identified in the GDOT/NTD information, but they can be found on Burke County's website.

It is unknown how many residents are aware of the availability of intercity bus service that stops in both McDuffie and Wilkes County. In the future, it may be useful to better understand the level of awareness of both existing riders and the broader residents of rural CSRARC. Intercity bus service could potentially provide more opportunities to connect to Augusta, Georgia. However, it is unclear if some residents may be aware of the service but find the level of service and cost less appealing than existing options.

¹ <https://southeasternstages.com/tickets/locations/>

² https://groometransportation.com/?&sd_client_id=26151cbd-912f-4098-9454-1e8ec35e700a

³ <http://www.abestairportshuttle.com/>

2.4 Rural Transit Coordination Literature

Limited information was available on rural transit hubs. By contrast, extensive information was available regarding coordination of rural transit services. This section highlights three pieces of literature that focus on rural, provide case studies of how coordination was done, and identify lessons learned. The three reviewed documents are as follows:

- Successful Local Transportation Coordination Case Studies
- Coordination: Community Models, Outcomes & Lessons Learned
- Successful Coordinated Transportation Services in Rural Communities

Successful Local Transportation Coordination Case Studies

Successful Local Transportation Coordination Case Studies [11] identifies eight coordination strategies:

- contract between agencies,
- coordinate agency schedules,
- contract with common carrier,
- coordinate dispatch,
- share resources,
- establish/enhance volunteer driver programs,
- hire mobility manager, and
- offer customer travel training.

Of particular interest to the study at hand is the Arrowhead Transit example, listed under contract between agencies and as a case study for mobility managers. Arrowhead Transit, which serves Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine and St. Louis Counties, is the largest public rural transit system in the United States. The system was created to address “high unemployment rates, extremely low-income residents, and a need for work-related transportation.” Press releases to radio and local newspapers are used for marketing the system, because one of the largest obstacles is, “Getting the word out and letting people know that this is a service available to them.” The Arrowhead Region of Minnesota has four mobility managers located within their Workforce Centers. The case study noted that, “Mobility managers develop personalized transportation plans and provide temporary support through trip vouchers and volunteer rides.” As a result of the Rural Ride Program, overseen by a mobility manager:

- 1) “79 percent of riders gained or maintained employment,”
- 2) “8 percent advanced in their employment as a result of the program,”
- 3) “18 percent of rides provided were for persons who were homeless, in shelters, or transitional housing (39 percent reported finding permanent housing).”

The overarching value of the Rural Ride Program was best described as supporting “Individuals at risk of losing their jobs because of unreliable transportation [who] were able to continue working.” They also noted that many human services counselors who service these populations lack an understanding of how the “lack of comprehensive public transit between small towns and rural areas” can inhibit “reaching transportation self-sufficiency.”

An example related to the strategy contract with common carrier identified the most common destinations as: 1) medical appointments, and 2) places of employment. The document noted that the cooperation between a private and public entity “took years of meetings and communication to develop a partnership that worked well and met the needs of both providers.”

Hubbard County contracted with Paul Bunyan Transit to coordinate dispatch; as a result, the County leveraged the software that Paul Bunyan Transit was already paying for and because of the new equipment on the buses, the two agencies were able to understand where their buses were traveling, providing a better understanding of origins and destinations. One noted drawback, however, was that riders had to wait longer, as rides were better coordinated.

Senior Medical Travel was presented as an example of shared resources. Senior Medical Travel, a volunteer travel program, uses volunteer drivers to take riders to dialysis or chemotherapy appointments, using funds from the local hospital, in addition to other sources.

VINE (not definition available for the acronym) “provides transportation assistance to older adults (60 years and older), people with disabilities, and people with transportation challenges to access needed activities and social services” [11]. VINE was created to address the identified need: “to help people living in the more rural parts of the counties access medical appointments and shopping.” To do so, “The mobility manager is knowledgeable about local transportation options and focuses on establishing and maintaining relationships with local transportation agencies.” VINE created a guide for use by the mobility manager. One challenge was getting some “people to accept help, especially older adults in rural areas.” The mobility manager has worked to provide information to staff in clinics about transportation options to patients. VINE has also “started a transit advisory committee with many people from different backgrounds and agencies.”

The Transportation Resource Center (TRC), a project of Tri-County Action Program, Inc. (Tri-CAP), serves Benton, Morrison, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright Counties in Minnesota. Initially, a mobility manager helped address the needs of people with disabilities and older adults. However, after receiving numerous calls from people looking for assistance with finding transportation to work, a task force was formed to help address the need. Representatives from these counties were also invited to participate in a transportation summit to look for opportunities for coordination.

A few examples were provided regarding the value of travel training. While from a metro entity, vouchers were provided to individuals who participated in travel training, which allowed the agency to evaluate the effectiveness of the travel training program. For another agency, travel training was developed as a result of input from social service agencies who reported that some of their clients, older adults and people with disabilities, would be unlikely to use transit because they did not know how to ride the bus. It was also noted that travel training can assist with dispelling “the stigma that the bus is only for people with disabilities or older adult riders.” Finally, one entity, Tri-Valley Transit (serving Marshall, Polk, Red Lake, Kittson, Norma, and Clearwater Counties in Minnesota), hired a person to fill the role of both travel training and system marketing.

Coordination: Community Models, Outcomes & Lessons Learned

Coordination: Community Models, Outcomes & Lessons Learned [12] presented several coordination examples. Coordination can mean many things, but notably for the focus of this project: shared vehicles and service consolidation. The coordination example of interest in this document was from the "consolidation of transit services in Minnesota." Goals for consolidation included: 1) improved customer service, 2) increased availability and destinations, 3) combined facilities development, and 4) stronger relationships and shared governance. Service efficiency instead of service duplication was also noted as a benefit. However, the document did note that cost savings were more often realized in the long-term as compared with the short-term. The two main reported barriers to consolidation included: 1) cost, and 2) control over service area. Each local agency also had concerns regarding how changes to service could impact local businesses. The project identified four options for consolidation: a) splitting operations and maintenance by in-house vs. contract management, b) keeping operations and maintenance together under [the] same umbrella but still doing a split between in-house and third-party contract, c) bringing all operations and administration in house, and d) hosting a third-party contract for operations and maintenance and restructuring administration." A uniform fare structure as well as distance-based fares were recommended, as well as "Support for existing staff and succession planning for administrative staff." Suggestions for questions to consider in advance included 1) how would coordination impact logos and messaging about the system; and 2) what will happen to vehicles, facilities and bus stops? The project team also suggested that a website and affiliated media are needed to represent the coordinated system.

Successful Coordinated Transportation Services in Rural Communities

In *Successful Coordinated Transportation Services in Rural Communities* [13], the author provided highlights of findings from a larger Transit Cooperative Research Program study on coordinated rural transit. He noted that one of the challenges of transportation in rural areas, whether for transit or otherwise, is significant less funding when compared with that spent in urban and suburban areas. Regarding transit, he identified as an issue the numerous small organizations providing transit, which can result in: 1) inadequate capital and operating funds, 2) only a few vehicles per organization, and 3) trips can be made using the entities' vehicles only for their clients and organization-specific purposes. Coordination was defined as, "a strategy for managing resources," noting that coordination is appropriate when organizations have common goals. More specific to transportation, the following definition is provided: "a process in which two or more organizations interact to jointly accomplish their transportation objectives." He identifies components of power, which often influence an organization's interest in coordinating, as: 1) responsibility, 2) management, and 3) funding. However, the author also cites an Ohio Department of Transportation quote, "Coordination is the best way to stretch scarce resources and improve mobility for everyone."

This document identifies other agencies (in addition to transit agencies) that should be involved in coordination: 1) public transportation providers, 2) departments of human and social services, 3) departments of health and mental health, 4) area agencies on aging, 5) vocational and developmental disabilities departments, 6) departments of employment, 7) departments of education, 7) local business representatives, and 8) private nonprofit organizations. One of the highlighted benefits of coordination is that it can increase the number of people riding and the number of rides provided, within the current level of resource use. As an example, coordinated service may result in the ability to provide service on weekends. The author also suggested that “coordination efforts breed advocates.” It also allows those involved in the coordination to leverage specialized expertise. It could even benefit human service agencies, which often find themselves providing transportation to their clients, even though they are not interested in adding transportation as part of their primary mission. Several challenges of coordination were also identified, including that many may expect no benefits to be achieved. However, the author notes that challenges can be addressed. He suggests identifying the pros and cons of coordination, noting that the process of coordination may be more expensive initially, may be somewhat difficult, and can be time consuming. He identifies potential roadblocks as falling within one of three P’s: personality, power and politics.

2.5 Rural Transit Workforce Literature

Some counties identified retaining their rural transit workforce as a challenge. The following resources provide ideas and recommendations to address these challenges.

- National RTAP Transit Manager’s Toolkit: <https://www.nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/Transit-Managers-Toolkit/Welcome>
- More specifically from the National RTAP Transit Manager’s Toolkit; Driver Recruitment, Training, and Retention: <https://www.nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/Transit-Managers-Toolkit/Administration/Driver-Recruitment-Training-and-Retention>
- Retaining and Recruiting Quality Bus Drivers (Kansas RTAP Fact Sheet): https://kutresources.ku.edu/storage/1622057058_KTRFS06-Retaining.pdf
- Improving Transit Bus Operator Health, Wellness, and Retention (TCRP Report 169): <http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/171189.aspx>
- Transit Workforce Development Resources: <http://wrtwc.org/category/transit-workforce-development/>

2.6 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Transit Resources

When the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic hit in 2020, most public transportation systems had to pivot operations in order to meet local restrictions and maintain the health and safety of drivers, riders, and the general public. Several resources were compiled to assist local agencies with how to handle travel restrictions, health and safety protocols, and more operational issues. While these resources may continue to evolve, key documents as of the writing of this report include:

- National Rural Transportation Assistance Program's (NRTAP's) Hot Topics section on Coronavirus: <https://nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/Find-Anything-Toolkit/Free-and-Low-Cost-Resources/Hot-Topics#Coronavirus>
- American Public Transportation Association's (APTA's) COVID-19 Recovery Vendor List for Public Transportation: https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Recovery_Vendor_List_Public_Transportation.pdf
- The Federal Transit Administration's Coronavirus (COVID-19) page: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/coronavirus>
- APTA's Answers Based on APTA Members' Coronavirus Questions: <https://www.apta.com/public-transit-response-to-coronavirus/answers-based-on-apta-members-coronavirus-questions/>
- APTA's webinar, Paratransit Operations Response Plan to Coronavirus COVID-19 (from March 19, 2020): <http://apta.vzaar.me/21400141>
- The Eno Center for Transportation's Webinar, Transit Innovation in the Time of COVID (from August 4, 2020): <https://www.enotrans.org/event/webinar-transit-innovation-in-the-time-of-covid/>
- The U.S. Department of Transportation's FTA COVID-19 Recovery Listening Sessions: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/safety/fta-covid-19-recovery-listening-sessions>
 - Supporting the Health, Safety, and Confidence of Transit Riders (July/2020)
 - Maintaining Healthy Operations and Keeping Transit Workers Safe (Aug/2020)
 - Managing Vehicles and Facilities in a New Service Environment (Sept/2020)
 - Innovations in Restoring Passenger Confidence and Managing COVID-19 Operational Considerations (Oct/2020)
 - Value-Added Services for Public Transportation as Communities Recover (Nov/2020)
 - Understanding and Addressing Changing Rider Needs (Dec/2020)
- Nelson Nygaard's Paratransit Service During COVID-19: Serving People with Disabilities & Seniors May Require Different Solutions than Fixed-Route Transit Service: <https://nelsonnygaard.com/paratransit-service-during-covid-19-serving-people-with-disabilities-seniors-may-require-different-solutions-than-fixed-route-transit-service/>
- USDOT's FTA COVID-19 Resource Tool for Public Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/safety/fta-covid-19-resource-tool>
 - The COVID-19 Resource Tool organizes and references publicly available information from Federal agencies with designated roles in responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. It is designed to assist public transportation agencies and other users in locating available Federal resources to limit the spread of COVID-19 as local economies reopen. The tool covers 12 topics:
 1. COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan
 2. Hygiene
 3. Physical Distancing
 4. Disinfecting Surfaces Touched by the Transit Operator
 5. Sanitizing Transit Vehicles

6. Sanitizing Transit Stations and Facilities
7. Personal Protective Equipment
8. Worksite Assessments
9. Face Coverings
10. Rideshares and Deliveries
11. Get and Keep America Open

2.7 Summary of Background Information

This section summarized key points found within CSRARC and Georgia Planning documents. In addition, it highlighted some key demographics that were reviewed for the project, which also convey the compelling need for transportation options in addition to the private vehicle. Existing rural transit service within the CSRARC region is summarized. Highlights from rural transit coordination literature, even though possibly dated in some cases, is provided. Sources that can be consulted for additional ideas and opportunities to address rural transit workforce needs are highlighted. Finally, a summary of COVID-19 pandemic transit resources is presented, although this information continues to evolve as more is understood regarding COVID-19.

3 On-Site Data Collection Highlights

To kick-off the project, researchers from the Western Transportation Institute traveled to the Central Savannah River Area from October 16, 2019 through October 18, 2019. The researchers met with county administrators from Burke, Jefferson, Lincoln, Hancock, and Warren Counties. In addition, CSRARC invited rural county transit managers and the private transit provider to a meeting in McDuffie County.

The researchers learned about some of the larger employers in each county: the nuclear power plant (Burke), Coastal Processing (Jefferson), U.S. Army Cyber Center of Excellence (Lincoln), Verescence (Hancock), Georgia Pacific (Warren), UPS Distribution Center (Warren), and a foundry for brake castings (Warren). They also heard about the closures of a significant employer (a textile company in Lincoln).

Transportation to dialysis (Hancock, Jefferson, Warren), to senior centers (Jefferson, Lincoln, Warren), to grocery stores, and to the bank were identified as mobility needs for most rural counties. Jefferson County's transit system noted regularly going to Augusta, GA; however, system representatives indicated that the vehicles were often running at full or near full capacity. Therefore, they suggested there was no opportunity to coordinate with other rural CSRARC counties. Most of the transit providers were currently providing service primarily to seniors. This may indicate a need to improve marketing of the system to ensure that residents understand that the service is open to all residents.

Rural counties reported different experiences regarding the ability to find drivers. At least one county reported that finding and retaining drivers is a challenge. One county reported employing a driver from a neighboring rural county. As a result, since system began operating at 4am, the driver reportedly left home at 2am. At least one other county indicated that finding drivers is not an issue.

A significant concern suggested by one county's leadership regarding the lack of interest in coordination is the belief, seemingly by leadership, that it would take away jobs. Furthermore, while the region has funding from the Transportation Investment Act (TIA), it was expressed that political will would not allow any of this funding to be put towards transit. It was reported by local leadership that TIA funding should be used almost solely for the repair of roadways.

The original intent of this project was to examine the feasibility of a transit hub that would provide access into Augusta, GA. However, discussions with several rural counties indicated that while they do provide longer distance trips into a nearby urban area, many were not traveling into Augusta but instead into closer urban areas. Two of the counties suggested greater coordination with counties outside of the CSRARC region made more sense. Hancock County suggested that the majority of its riders traveling over county lines were heading towards Macon, Georgia. Similarly, Jefferson County suggested that it would make more sense to coordinate with Emmanuel County (located to the south) than a county within CSRARC.

4 Current & Potential User Surveys

Early in this project, it was understood that limited information was available about the views of transit users and residents, or about the use of the public transit in their counties. For current transit users, limited information was available that described origin and destinations. Regarding residents, limited information was available regarding their opinion of transit, and whether they knew the service was available to all. As such, surveys were developed and were intended to be deployed.

When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, public transit service was shut down for a period of time and survey distribution did not occur. However, because of the delay, the GDOT released its statewide transit plan in December of 2020. As a part of the transit plan, the agency collected more than 2,000 surveys from residents and transit users across the state, a portion of which were from respondents in the CSRARC counties. Therefore, this section first discusses the transit rider and resident surveys developed by the research team and details on how this survey could be deployed in the future. Then after, it discusses the GDOT surveys collected within the CSRA region.

4.1 Internally Developed CSRARC Surveys

The resident survey was made available to CSRARC on April 12, 2021. The survey instrument and previously developed surveys can be found in Appendix D – Survey Instruments. A check-in meeting was held on May 5, 2021. It appears that at that point, the survey was shared, although CSRARC did not provide details on the extent of the distribution. For example, it was originally discussed that the surveys would be distributed via utility bills. Unfortunately, as no data was provided via this avenue, the researchers' understanding is that this did not occur. Online surveys were completed between May 5, 2021 and May 7, 2021.

A total of fourteen individuals entered the survey; only thirteen provided full information. Respondents were from the following counties: Burke (1), Glascock (4), Hancock (1), Jenkins (1), Lincoln (1), Taliaferro (2), Warren (1), Washington (1), and Wilkes (1). Therefore, no response was received from Jefferson and McDuffie Counties.

Survey respondents were asked a total of fifteen questions. First, they were asked what best describes their use of the bus/van within their county. All but two survey respondents reported, "I own or have access to a vehicle that takes me to where I need to go." Therefore, unlike the GDOT survey respondents, almost all of the survey respondents as a part of this effort were not public transit users. The other two survey respondents reported, "The bus/van does not meet my schedule," and "Other."

Survey respondents were then asked if someone, whether a family member or friend, relied on the survey respondent for transportation. Five of the thirteen survey respondents indicated yes. Eight survey respondents indicated no. Of those providing transportation, one indicated daily, two weekly, and two periodically.

All survey respondents reported having driver's licenses. Even so, one of these survey respondents reported limiting a job search as a result of transportation concerns. This survey respondent reported being a homemaker. In addition, this survey respondent reported arriving late to a medical

appointment because she could not find transportation. None of the other survey respondents reported issues with limiting a job search or not being able to find transportation to a medical appointment.

Six survey respondents reported being employed full-time; one survey respondent reported being employed part-time; one survey respondent reported being retired but still employed part-time; one survey respondent reported being self-employed; three survey respondents reported being retired; and one survey respondent reported being a homemaker.

The majority of survey respondents were female (nine of thirteen survey respondents). Two survey respondents reported being between the ages of 18 and 35; two survey respondents reported being between 36 and 53 years old; and nine survey respondents were between 54 and 72 years old.

Three survey respondents reported completing high school/GED; two survey respondents reported completing an associate's degree; one survey respondent reported completing a vocational or technical school certificate; six survey respondents reported completing a bachelor's degree; and one survey respondent reported completing a graduate degree or professional degree.

Three, three, two, one, and four survey respondents reported a household income of \$12,500 to less than \$25,000; \$25,000 to less than \$50,000; \$50,000 to less than \$75,000; and \$100,000 or more, respectively. Therefore, no survey respondents reported making \$75,000 to less than \$100,000.

Regarding the racial group that the survey respondents identify with, two survey respondents reported Black or/African American, one chose "Prefer not to answer," and ten survey respondents selected White. No survey respondents indicated that they were of Hispanic or Latino descent.

Only three survey respondents provided additional comments. One survey respondent indicated, "Need transportation for doctor's appointments." This survey respondent was from Taliaferro County. A second survey respondent indicated that, "we have a great transit system in Glascock County. It is used by many people thru out the county." This survey respondent was from Glascock County. The third survey respondent indicated, "Please continue to support. There is a great need in our community." This survey respondent was from Hancock County.

4.2 GDOT Distributed Surveys

GDOT collected 2,971 total surveys across the state of Georgia [3]. One hundred twenty surveys (4.0%) were from within the counties of CSRARC; only seventy-five of these surveys (2.5%) were within the rural counties. This represents only 0.059% of the 126,143 people living in the eleven rural counties. Furthermore, the surveys collected across the rural counties were not evenly distributed; no surveys were collected from Lincoln County. The following number of surveys were collected from Burke (10 surveys), Glascock (4 surveys), Hancock (1 survey), Jefferson (12 surveys), Jenkins (3 surveys), McDuffie (18 surveys), Taliaferro (15 surveys), Warren (1 survey), Washington (6 surveys), and Wilkes Counties (5 surveys).

The GDOT survey asked 16 questions. The following sections present each question and a summary of the responses.

Which best describes your use or potential use of transit?

The majority of respondents from the CSRARC counties reported using transit on a regular basis (Figure 4). A few survey respondents from Washington County reported not being interested, even if transit was provided. There were also a few survey respondents from Jenkins and McDuffie who reported not being interested, even if transit was provided. This suggests that they are not aware of the current system within their counties. Another finding of note from this response is that there were survey respondents from Burke and Jenkins Counties who reported that they were interested in using transit, but it was not available within their counties.

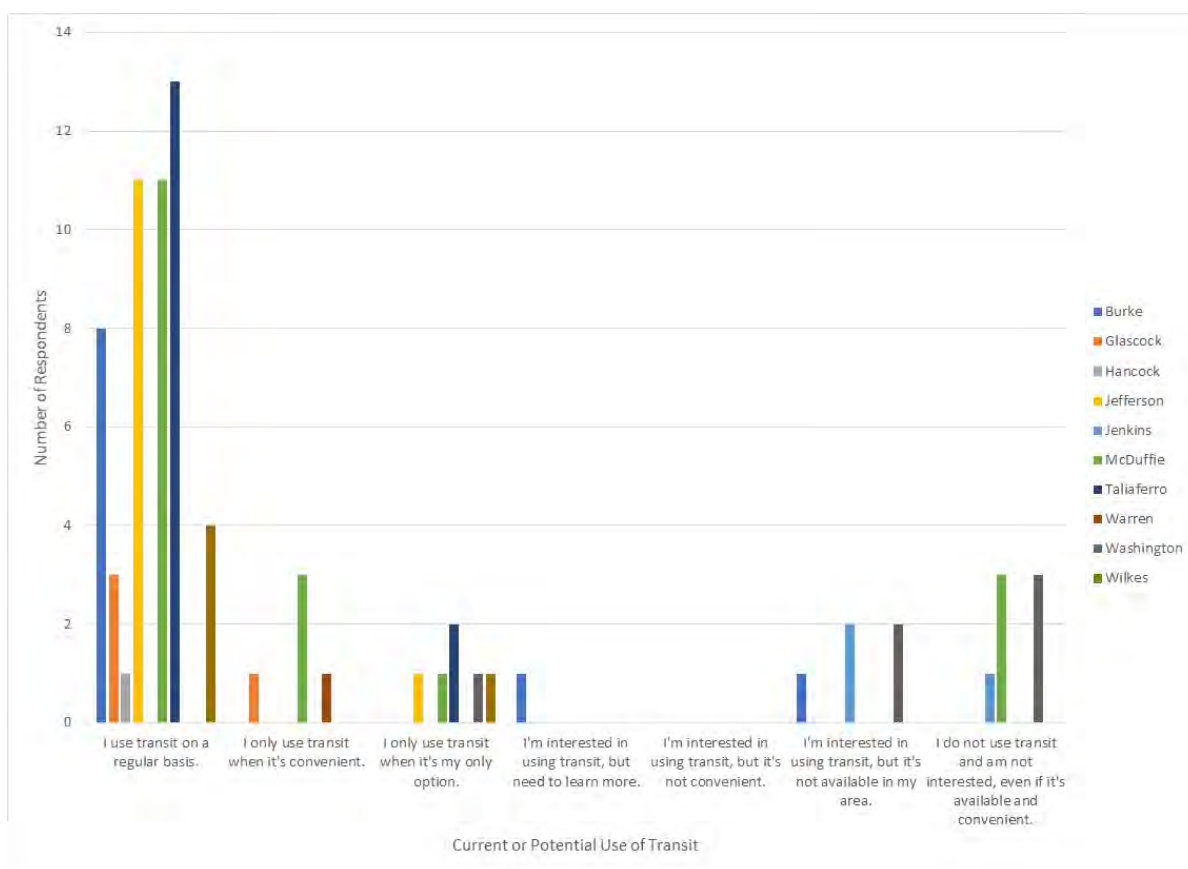


Figure 4. Current or Potential Use of Transit

How often do you ride transit?

When comparing categories, the largest number of survey respondents reported using transit 3 to 4 days a week. In addition, Figure 5 shows that all of the Taliaferro County respondents ride transit. Similarly, all but one Burke County resident reported using transit, with Burke County survey respondents reporting some of the greatest weekly usage of transit.

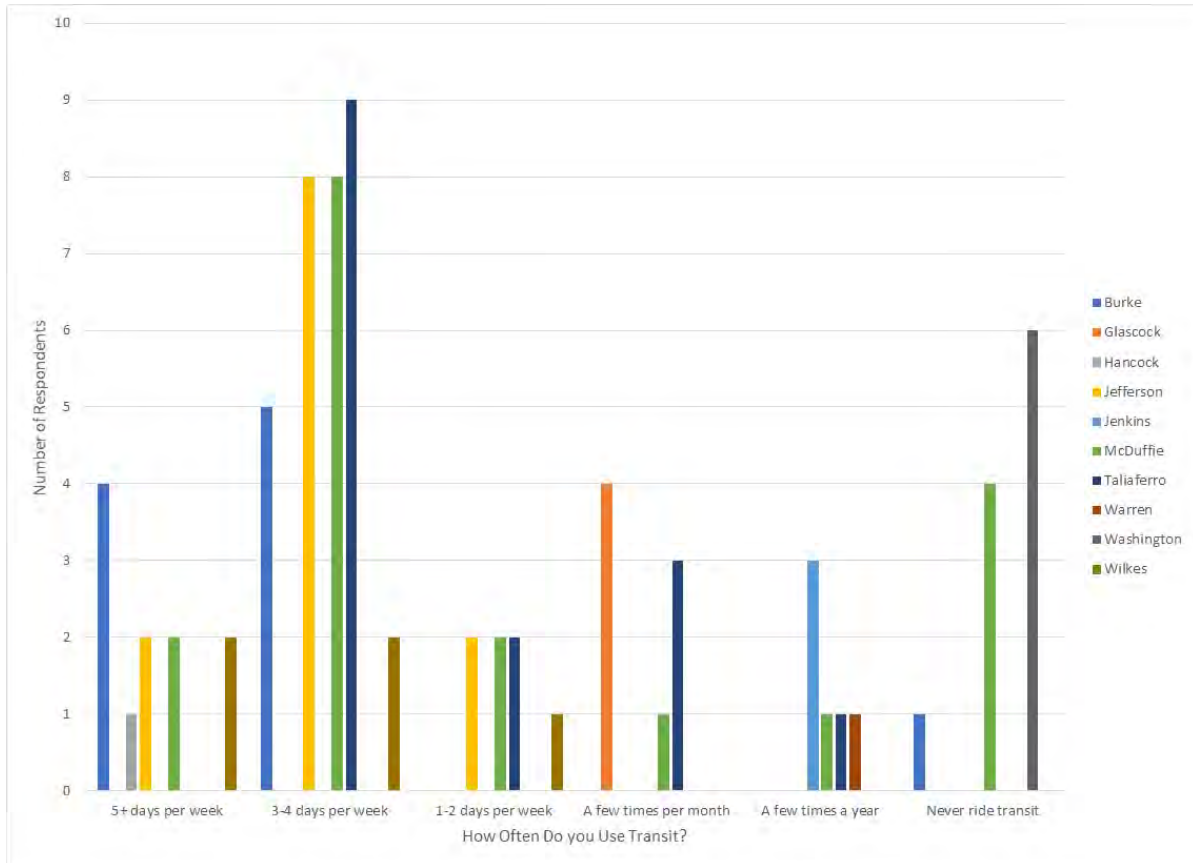


Figure 5. Frequency of Transit Use

What type of transit service do you typically use?

The majority of survey respondents reported that they use a local bus route or demand response/dial-a-ride (Figure 6). The surveys did capture some intercity and train use.

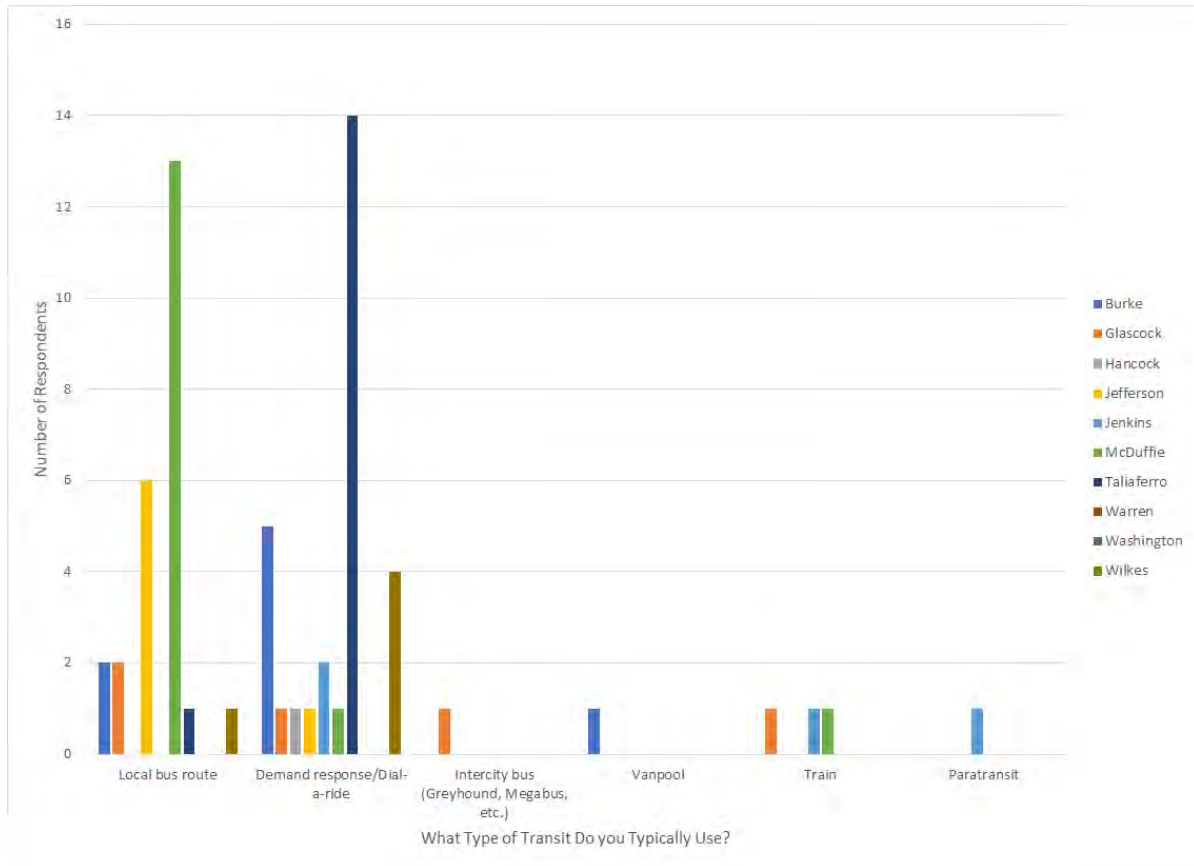


Figure 6. Type of Transit Used

What is your main reason to take transit?

The majority of survey respondents reported that they take transit because they do not drive or have access to a vehicle (Figure 7).

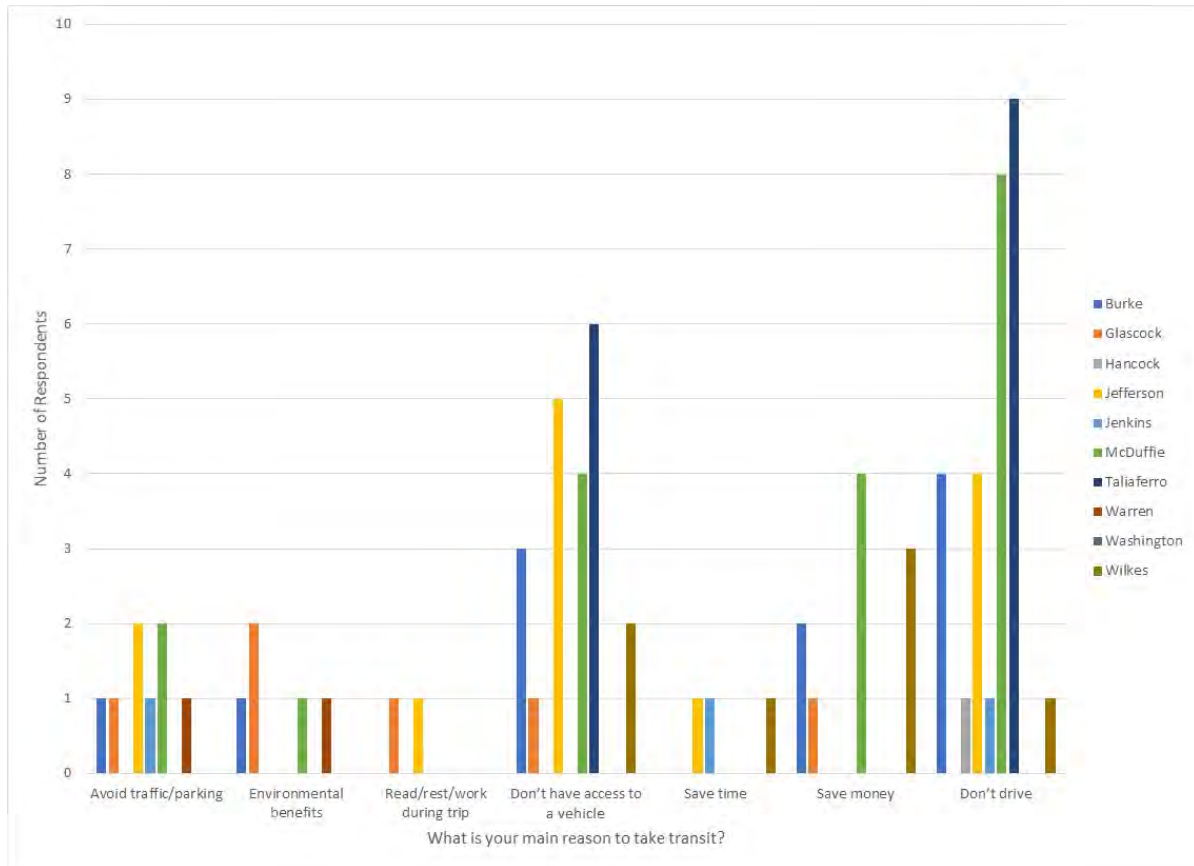


Figure 7. Why Transit?

Where does transit usually take you?

The majority of survey respondents reported that transit takes them to the senior center (Figure 8). The second most frequent response was a healthcare provider.

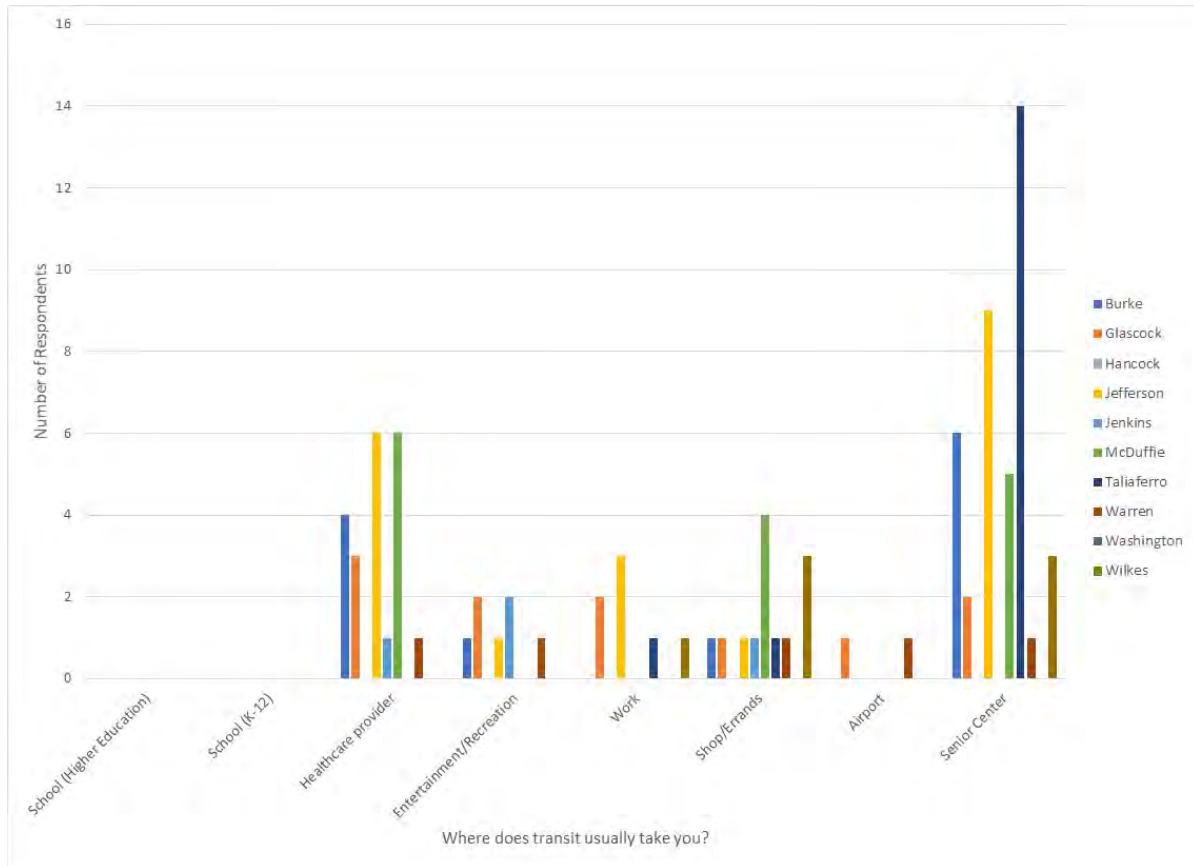


Figure 8. Where Does Transit Usually Take You?

Where do you usually start and end your trip?

This question appeared to be a bit confusing to survey respondents. Not everyone answered the question. This could reflect confusion, or it may also reflect a survey respondent's preference to not provide what may be perceived as more personal information.

The majority of survey respondents reported travel within their county, which is possible (they may be going to and from a senior center), but otherwise the survey captured very few inter-county trips. However, this question does reflect the current provided service, not service that a rider may prefer, as it asks the survey respondent to identify where they current start and end their trip. As identified in the preceding section, whereas the statewide survey focused on higher level questions, the survey that was developed for this project would seek to uncover unmet demand.

For those responses which did provide information about origin and destination that were not the same (e.g. Louisville to Louisville), with the minimal data available, there is some suggestion that Jefferson County, in particular, has a lot of intra-county travel. Jefferson County may benefit from the development of a feasibility plan that would determine if fixed routes could be provided between some of the communities within the county (i.e. Avera to Louisville and Wrens to Louisville). The minimal amount of data did not suggest that Jefferson County residents were traveling to counties around them, or that residents from the counties around them were traveling to their county; however, any feasibility study should also consider these possibilities.

In addition, while more limited, there was at least some suggestion of intra-county transit travel within Wilkes County. Therefore, it might be of value to develop a feasibility plan for a fixed route between Rayle and Washington. Furthermore, there may be some opportunity to connect with the primary community within Taliaferro County.

On average, how much time does it currently take you to travel one-way to/from your most frequent destination on transit?

The vast majority of survey respondents reported that it took them less than fifteen minutes to get to their most frequent destination (Figure 9).

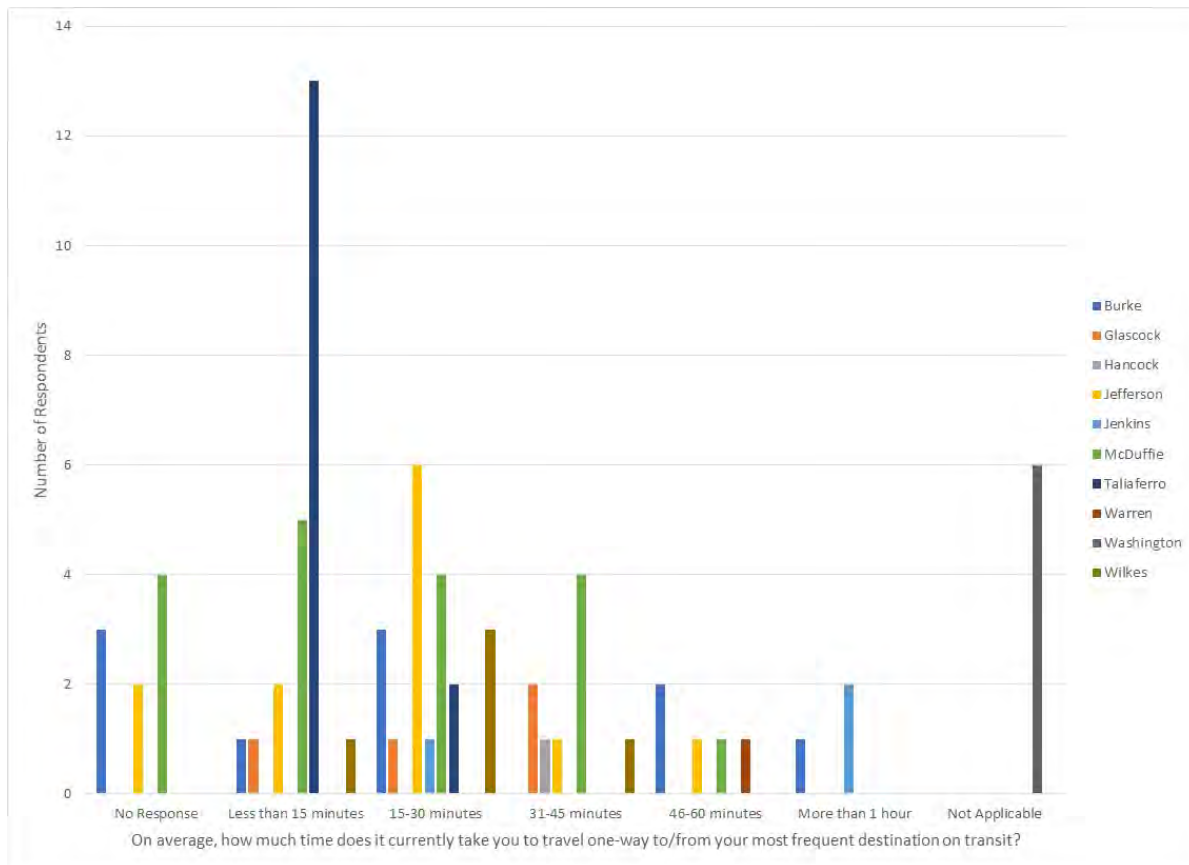


Figure 9. How much time does it take you to travel to your most frequent destination on transit?

How would you make the trip if transit was not available to you?

The majority of survey respondents reported that they would get a ride from family or friends if public transit was not available (Figure 10).

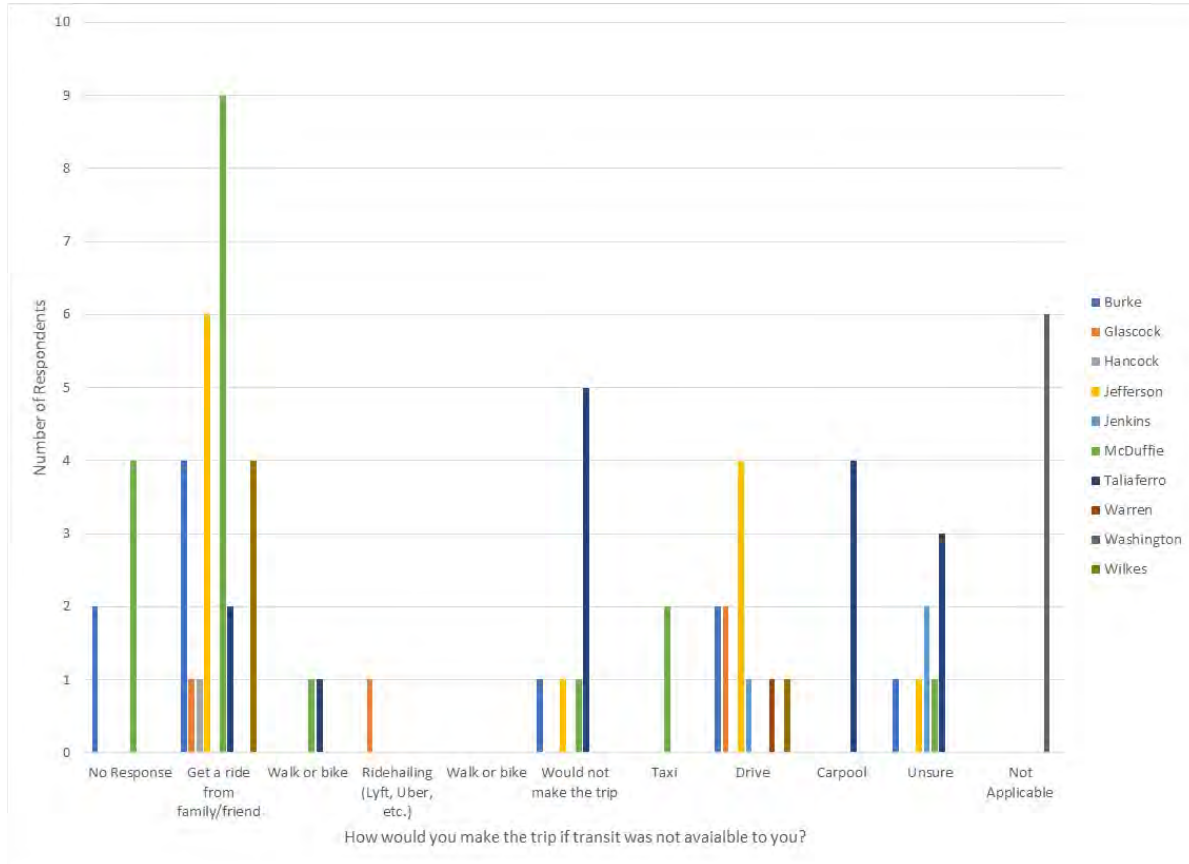


Figure 10. How would you make the trip if transit was not available to you?

Which of the following are challenges for you when using transit or prevent you from using transit?

The most frequently identified challenge by all survey respondents was that transit was not available the days and times that the user desired (Figure 11).

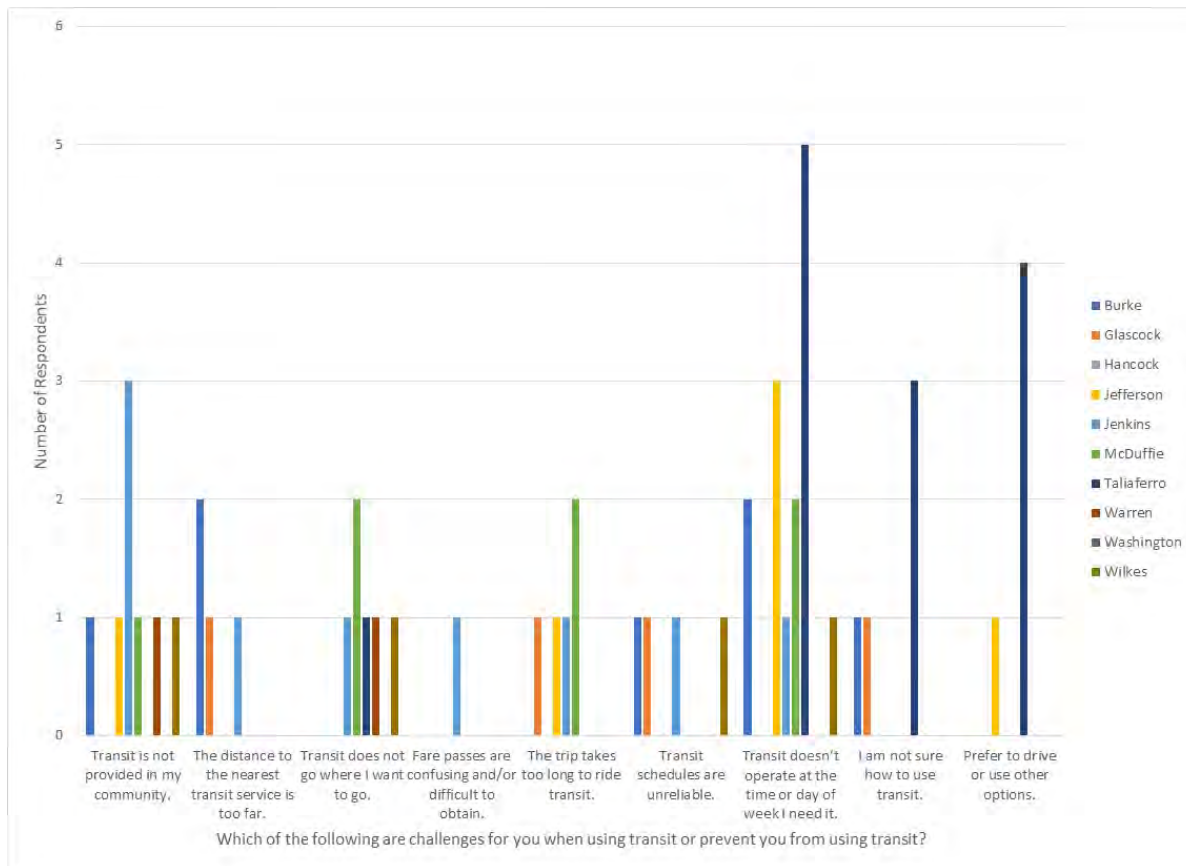


Figure 11. Challenges with using transit

Also of interest, at least one survey respondent from Burke, Jefferson, Jenkins, McDuffie, Warren and Wilkes reported that transit was not provided in their community, even though these communities do have public transit systems.

Rank on a scale of 1 to 4 the most important reasons to you for providing public transit.

When considering all survey respondents, by far, the majority reported that improving mobility for people who cannot get around on their own as the most important reason for providing public transit (Figure 12).

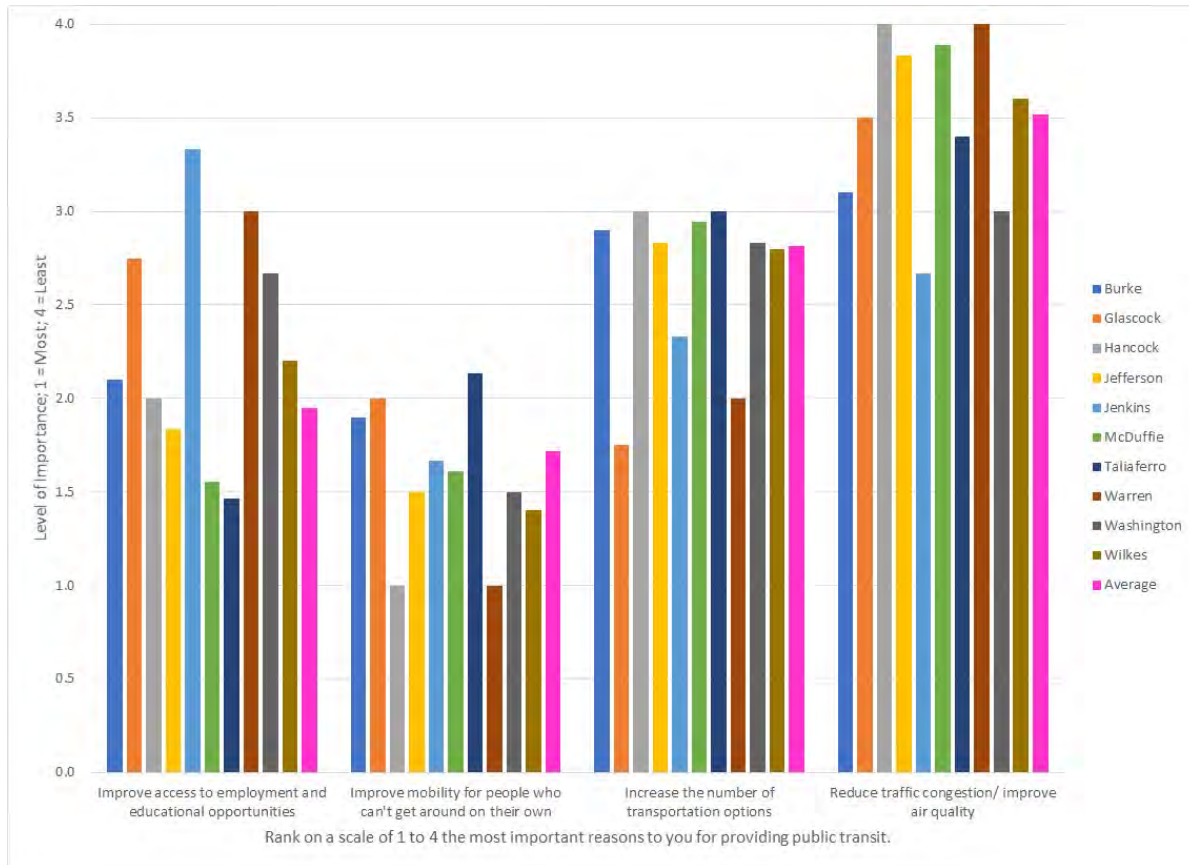


Figure 12. Most Important Reason for Providing Public Transit

When considering improvements to transit, how important are each of the following to you?

Overall, the importance of improvements appeared to be relatively consistent among respondents. However, ensuring transit is safe and providing access to healthcare seemed to hold a slightly stronger level of importance (Figure 13).

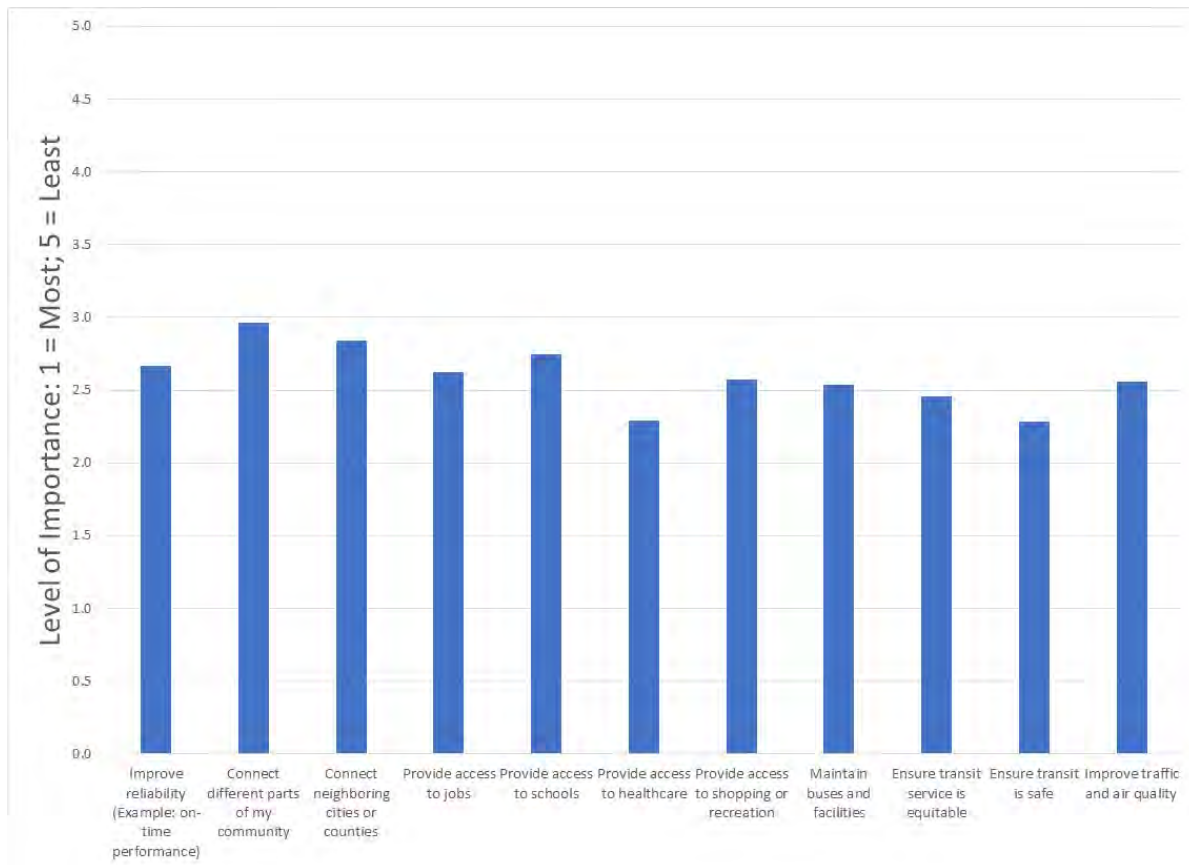


Figure 13. Level of Importance of Potential Transit Improvements

How important are each of the following technologies to you?

The two most important technologies identified by survey respondents were real-time arrival information at stops and traffic signals that prioritize buses at congested intersections (Figure 14). It is interesting that these two are chosen considering that none of the services operate fixed routes.

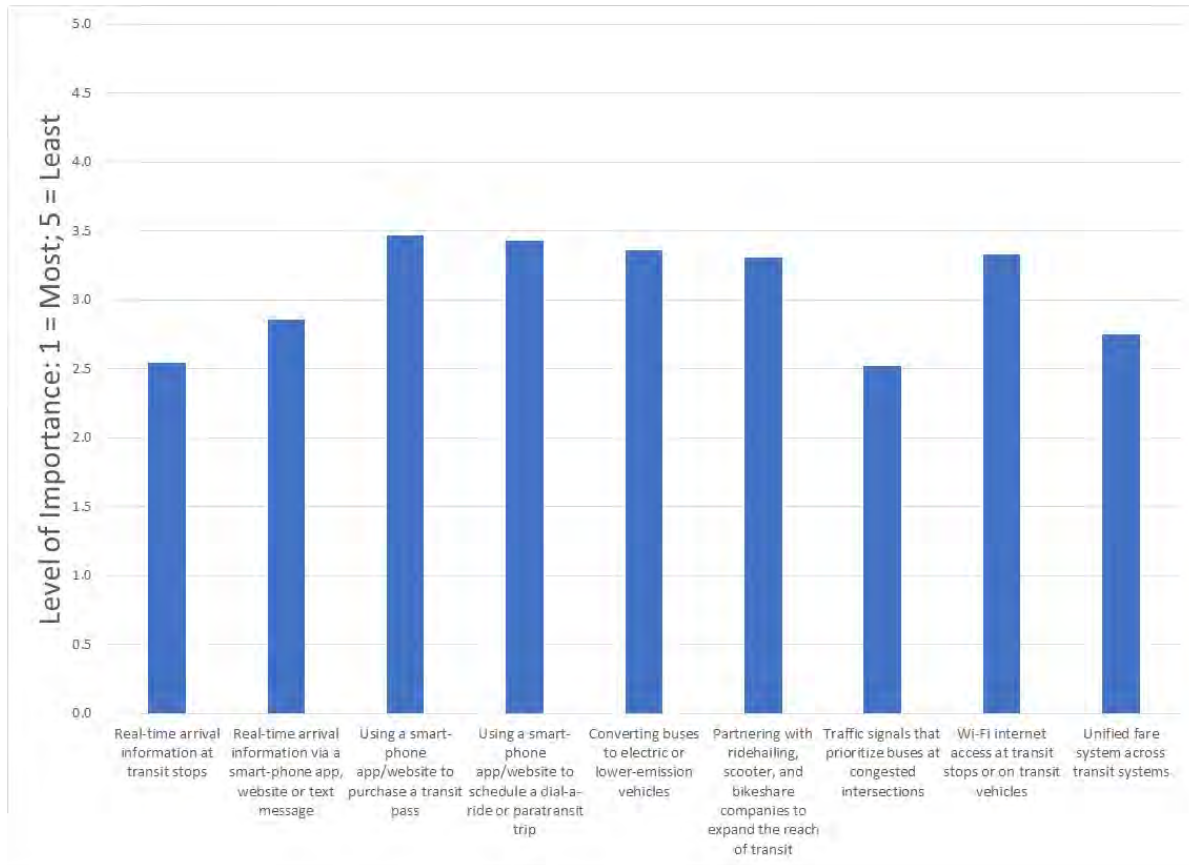


Figure 14. Importance of Technologies

What is your age group?

The majority of survey respondents were sixty-five years and older (Figure 15).

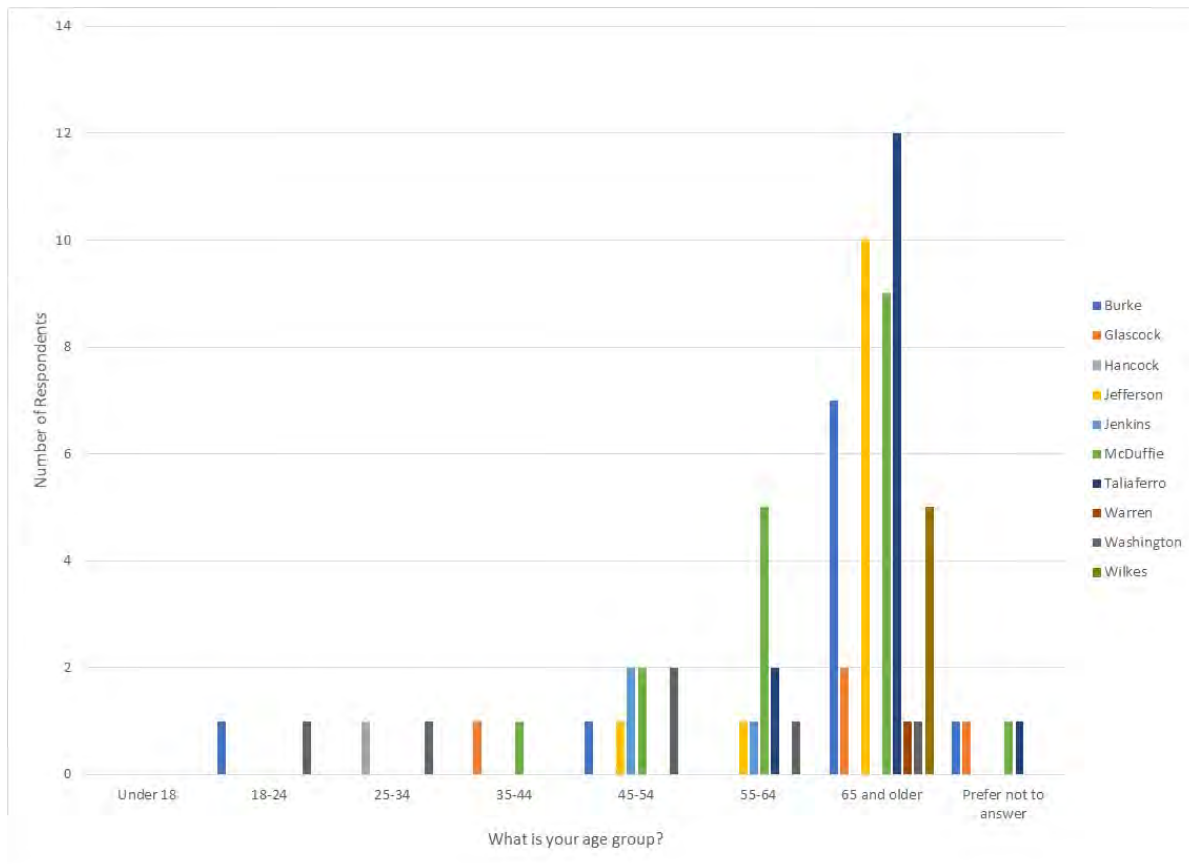


Figure 15. Age Group

What is your employment status?

The majority of survey respondents were retired (Figure 16).

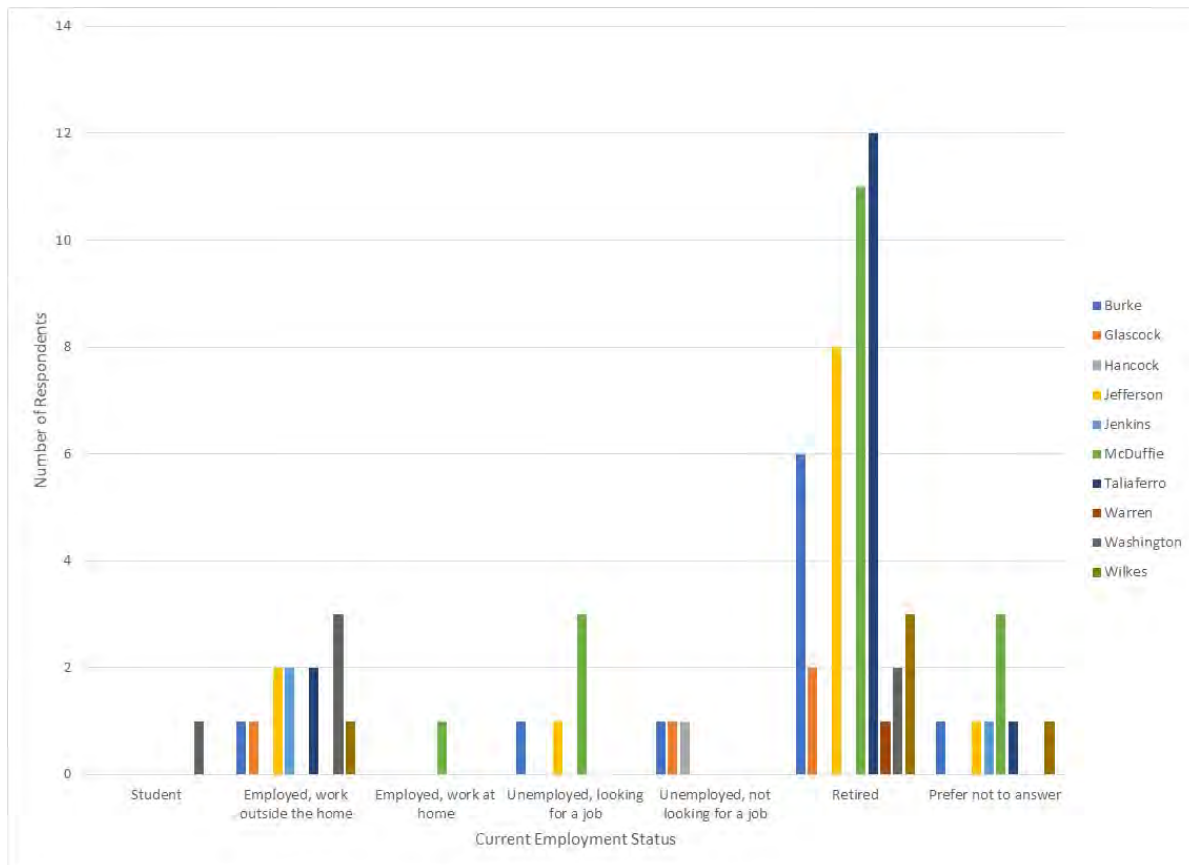


Figure 16. Employment Status

4.3 Survey Summary

Just over a half percent of all residents in the CSRARC region were captured in the GDOT survey conducted as part of the statewide plan. Therefore, as a part of this effort, the researchers sought to work collaboratively with both the regional council and individual counties in distributing a survey intended to obtain more detailed information about origins and destinations of riders and the sentiment of non-users within the region. Unfortunately, with just thirteen surveys collected via the effort as a part of this project, the available information is still lacking.

Several key points were identified from the findings of the GDOT survey:

- The results suggest that some rural county residents are not aware of the availability of public transportation in their community. The extent to which this result can be extrapolated to the larger population is unknown; however, if this represents a large proportion of the broader population, it is a missed economic opportunity for the region – residents could make better use

of the existing service and access more opportunities for higher education and employment, which would economically benefit the individual and the region.

- Those that do use public transportation in the communities use it frequently, with the most frequently reported use at three to four days a week.
- If public transportation was unavailable, those who use it regularly would likely have significant barriers to making the trip, as a majority of survey respondents reported that they use public transportation because they do not drive and/or do not have access to a vehicle.
- Senior centers and healthcare providers were identified as the most frequent destinations. The former can be considered instrumental for one's mental as well as physical health (senior centers often serve meals that may be a primary source of nourishment). Ensuring that a user has access to a healthcare provider can reduce more costly trips by ambulance, thereby reducing the broader economic burden that would otherwise be borne by society and also ensuring a greater quality of life.
- Few intercounty trips were represented in the survey. However, this may not reflect latent demand. The rider survey developed as a part of this study sought to uncover if there is such a demand and provide some measure of how much.
- Based on the information obtained for Jefferson County, it may be of value to Jefferson County to investigate the possibility of piloting fixed routes within the county, potentially between Avera and Louisville and Wrens to Louisville. Similarly, for Wilkes County, piloting a fixed route between Rayle and Washington could be considered.

5 Expanding and Adding Rural Transit to CSRARC Counties

The *Georgia Statewide Transit Plan* [3] established that providing public transit in all Georgia counties and expanding capacity to ensure that all needs are met are key priorities. As such, the researchers leveraged the recently released *Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 2* [8], to estimate the costs associated with 1) expanding existing service to the desired service hours (Monday through Saturday, 6am to 4pm, daily), and 2) adding service in Washington County.

5.1 Expanded Service

To compute the costs of additional service, the researchers used National Transit Database (NTD) Reported, Unlinked Passenger Trips and service hours, Monday through Saturday (Table 9).

Table 9. Rural CSRARC Service Hours

| Rural Counties | NTD – Reported, Unlinked Passenger Trips (2019) | Service Hours | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|-----|
| | | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat | Sun |
| Burke | 18,283 | 6-6pm | - | 6-6pm | - | 6-6pm | - | - |
| Glascocock | 6,098 | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | - | - |
| Hancock | 15,171 | 4am-6pm | 4am-6pm | 4am-6pm | 4am-6pm | 4am-6pm | 4am-4pm | - |
| Jefferson | 27,913 | 6-6pm | 6-6pm | 6-6pm | 6-6pm | 6-6pm | - | - |
| Jenkins | 3,946 | 8-3pm | 8-3pm | 8-3pm | 8-3pm | 8-3pm | - | - |
| Lincoln | 11,246 | 9-5pm | 9-5pm | 9-5pm | 9-5pm | 9-5pm | - | - |
| McDuffie | 36,507 | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | 8-5pm | - | - |
| Taliaferro | 5,978 | 8-4pm | 8-4pm | 8-4pm | 8-4pm | 8-4pm | - | - |
| Warren | 4,684 | 4am-12pm | 8-4pm | 4am-12pm | 8-4pm | 4am-12pm | - | - |
| Washington | Presently No Service | | | | | | | |
| Wilkes | 15,271 | 7:30-4pm | 7:30-4pm | 7:30-4pm | 7:30-4pm | 7:30-4pm | - | - |

The following steps show how to calculate the additional costs of expanding service in Burke County, using the methodology identified in the *Economic Impact Analysis of Georgia's Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems, Volume 2* [8].

Step S-1: Number of Desired Service Hours Not Currently Served

Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday are not currently served. For the other days of the week, Burke County has the minimum desired service hours (6am-4pm). In fact, the service hours on the existing days extended beyond the minimum desired service hours.

Tuesday: 10 hours, additionally

Thursday: 10 hours, additionally

Saturday: 10 hours, additionally

Total number of additional hours = 10 + 10 + 10 = 30 hours

Note: This would only bring additional service on the days currently not served (e.g. Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday) from 6am to 4pm, not the longer service time frame that Burke County offers on the other days.

Table 10. Step S-1, Unserved Number of hours

| County | Step S-1 Unserved Number of Hours | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | Days Not Served | 6-7am | 7-8am | 8-9am | 3-4pm | Saturdays | TOTAL |
| Burke | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 30 |
| Glascock | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 20 |
| Hancock | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jefferson | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| Jenkins | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 10 | 25 |
| Lincoln | 0 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 10 | 25 |
| McDuffie | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 20 |
| Taliaferro | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 20 |
| Warren | 8 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 22 |
| Wilkes | 0 | 2.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 12.5 |

Step S-2: Calculate the Operating Expense Per Hour

Operating Expense per Hour = Total Operating Costs / Total Number of Vehicle Revenue Hours
= \$399,526 / (12,133 vehicle revenue hours)
= \$32.92 / hour (2019)

Table 11. Step S-2, Hourly Operating Expense

| County | Step S-2 Hourly Operating Expense | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| | Total Operating Costs (2019) | Total Number of Vehicle Revenue Hours (2019) | Operating Expense Per Hour |
| Burke | \$399,526 | 12,133 | \$32.93 |
| Glascocock | \$88,936 | 3,828 | \$23.23 |
| Hancock | \$258,122 | 7,949 | \$32.47 |
| Jefferson | \$365,308 | 14,443 | \$25.29 |
| Jenkins | \$66,635 | 1,876 | \$35.52 |
| Lincoln | \$89,421 | 5,408 | \$16.53 |
| McDuffie | \$277,390 | 8,447 | \$32.84 |
| Taliaferro | \$53,584 | 2,807 | \$19.09 |
| Warren | \$114,806 | 3,277 | \$35.03 |
| Wilkes | \$188,357 | 5,128 | \$36.73 |

Step S-3: Calculate the Annual Operating Expenses Associated with Service Expansion

Annual Operating Expense = [(Operating Expense per Hour)x(Number of Hours of Service Not Offered Per Week)*(52 weeks/year)] – [(Operating Expense per Hour)x(Hours of Service per Day)x(Number of Holidays per Year with No Service)]

= (\$32.9/hr)(30 hours)(52 weeks/year) – ((\$32.9/hr)(10 hours)(5 holidays (New Years; Easter; 4th of July; Thanksgiving; Christmas)))

= \$49,722.60

The 10 holidays identified in the method are assumed to be the following: 1) **New Year's**, 2) Martin Luther King, Jr., 3) President's Day, 4) **Easter**, 5) Memorial Day, 6) **4th of July**, 7) Labor Day, 8) **Thanksgiving**, 9) day after Thanksgiving, and 10) **Christmas**. Because some of the holidays fall on days where service currently exists, the hours for every holiday do not need to be subtracted. Those shown in bold are the hours that are subtracted from the additional estimated expenses. For Glascock, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes County, where the minimum service (6am to 4pm) is not provided, all 10 holidays are impacted. No additional service is needed for Hancock County; they provide the minimum recommended service. Jefferson County has the desired service hours from Monday through Friday, so only the holidays that can occur on Saturdays, where the new service hours would be added, are subtracted.

Table 12. Step S-3, Annual Operating Expenses for Service Expansion

| County | Step S-3 Service Expansion Operating Expenses |
|------------|---|
| Burke | \$49,722.60 |
| Glascokk | \$21,839.04 |
| Hancock | \$0.00 |
| Jefferson | \$11,887.75 |
| Jenkins | \$42,623.67 |
| Lincoln | \$19,841.94 |
| McDuffie | \$30,868.55 |
| Taliaferro | \$17,944.05 |
| Warren | \$36,575.36 |
| Wilkes | \$20,202.10 |

Step S-4: Calculate Ridership Gains for New Hours

OWPT = one-way passenger trip

$$\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} = \text{OWPT}_{\text{CURRENT}} + 0.06x(\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}, \text{ between 6am and 7am}) + 0.11x(\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}, \text{ between 7am and 8am}) + 0.11x(\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}, \text{ between 8am and 9am}) + 0.08x(\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}, \text{ between 3pm and 4pm}) + 0.06x(\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}, \text{ Saturday})$$

$$= 18,283 + (0.06)x(2/5)x\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} + (0.11)x(2/5)x\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} + 0.11x(2/5)x\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} + 0.08x(2/5)x\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} + 0.06x\text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}}$$

Even though it was not shown in the method, the researchers added the (2/5) to account for only 2 of the 5 days (Tuesday and Thursday) when additional hours were added.

$$\text{OWPT}_{\text{INCREMENTAL}} = \text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} - \text{OWPT}_{\text{CURRENT}}$$

$$= 4,686 \text{ new rides}$$

Table 13. Step S-4, Ridership Gains

| County | Step S-4 Ridership Gains | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| | OWPT _{CURRENT} | OWPT _{NEW} , 6-7am | OWPT _{NEW} , 7-8am | OWPT _{NEW} , 8-9am | OWPT _{NEW} , 3-4pm | OWPT _{NEW} , Saturday | OWPT _{NEW} | OWPT _{INCREMENTAL} |
| Burke | 18,283 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 1 | 22,969 | 4,686 |
| Glascock | 6,098 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7,919 | 1,821 |
| Hancock | 15,171 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15,171 | 0 |
| Jefferson | 27,913 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 29,695 | 1,782 |
| Jenkins | 3,946 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5,719 | 1,773 |
| Lincoln | 11,246 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 14,605 | 3,359 |
| McDuffie | 36,507 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 47,412 | 10,905 |
| Taliaferro | 5,978 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7,764 | 1,786 |
| Warren | 4,684 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5,684 | 1,000 |
| Wilkes | 15,271 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 18,510 | 3,239 |

Step S-5: Calculate Additional Number of Vehicle Revenue Miles

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Additional VRM} &= \text{OWPT}_{\text{INCREMENTAL}} \times \text{Average Miles per OWPT}_{\text{CURRENT}} \\ &= 53,185 \text{ additional vehicle revenue miles} \end{aligned}$$

Table 14. Step S-5, Additional Vehicle Revenue Miles

| County | Step S-5 Additional Number of Vehicle Revenue Miles | | |
|------------|---|---|----------------|
| | Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles | Average Miles per OWPT _{CURRENT} | Additional VRM |
| Burke | 207,527 | 11 | 53,185 |
| Glascock | 39,638 | 7 | 11,840 |
| Hancock | 170,092 | 11 | 0 |
| Jefferson | 203,207 | 7 | 12,971 |
| Jenkins | 27,747 | 7 | 12,466 |
| Lincoln | 61,966 | 6 | 18,509 |
| McDuffie | 117,343 | 3 | 35,051 |
| Taliaferro | 35,144 | 6 | 10,498 |
| Warren | 43,192 | 9 | 9,225 |
| Wilkes | 97,915 | 6 | 20,770 |

Step S-6: Calculate Additional Number of Vehicles Required

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Additional Vehicle} &= \text{Round}(\text{Additional VRM}/\text{Average miles per vehicle}) \\ &= 53,185 \text{ miles} / (207,527 \text{ miles} / 8 \text{ vehicles}) \\ &= 2.1 \\ \text{Rounded} &= 2 \text{ vehicles}\end{aligned}$$

Table 15. Step S-6, Additional Vehicles Needed for Expanded Service

| County | Step S-6 Additional Vehicles | | |
|------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Number of Vehicles | Additional Vehicles | Additional Vehicles (Rounded) |
| Burke | 8 | 2.1 | 2 |
| GlascocK | 2 | 0.6 | 1 |
| Hancock | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Jefferson | 6 | 0.4 | 0 |
| Jenkins | 1 | 0.4 | 0 |
| Lincoln | 4 | 1.2 | 1 |
| McDuffie | 6 | 1.8 | 2 |
| Taliaferro | 2 | 0.6 | 1 |
| Warren | 2 | 0.4 | 0 |
| Wilkes | 3 | 0.6 | 1 |

Step S-7: Calculate Annual Vehicle Costs

$$\text{Annual vehicle cost} = \# \text{ additional vehicles} * \$9,000 = 2 * \$9,000 = \$18,000$$

Table 16. Step S-7, Additional Vehicle Cost

| County | Step S-7 Annual Vehicle Costs |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Burke | \$18,000 |
| Glascocock | \$9,000 |
| Hancock | \$0 |
| Jefferson | \$0 |
| Jenkins | \$0 |
| Lincoln | \$9,000 |
| McDuffie | \$18,000 |
| Taliaferro | \$9,000 |
| Warren | \$0 |
| Wilkes | \$9,000 |

5.2 Adding Service to Washington County

The following methodology, taken from [8], was used to calculate service for Washington County, the only rural CSRARC county that currently does not have service. The methodology used Statewide Rural Transit Averages, which are provided below:

Table 17. Statewide Rural Transit Averages [8]

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Operating Costs per Capita | \$6.14 |
| Passenger Trips per Capita | 0.29 |
| Number of Miles per Vehicle | \$25,393.00 |
| Revenue Miles per Trip | 9.88 |

Step NS-1: Calculate annual operating costs

The population of Washington County is 20,506 (Table 2).

Annual operating costs = Per capita operating cost x Rural population in the county currently not served

$$= \$6.14 \times 20,506$$

$$= \$125,906.84$$

$$= \$125,907$$

Step NS-2: Calculate ridership gains for new service

Since there is currently no service in Washington County, $OPWT_{NEW} = OWPT_{INCREMENTAL}$. Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{OWPT}_{\text{NEW}} &= \text{OWPT}_{\text{INCREMENTAL}} \\
 &= \text{Passenger trips per capita} \times \text{rural population in the county currently not served} \\
 &= 0.29 \times 20,506 \\
 &= 5,946.74 \\
 &= 5,947 \text{ new trips}
 \end{aligned}$$

Step NS-3: Calculate additional number of vehicle revenue miles

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Additional VRM} &= \text{OWPT}_{\text{INCREMENTAL}} \times \text{Statewide average VRM per trip} \\
 &= 5,947 \text{ new rider} \times 9.88 \\
 &= 58,756.36 \\
 &= 58,756 \text{ VRM}
 \end{aligned}$$

Step NS-4: Calculate additional number of vehicles required

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Additional vehicles} &= \text{Max}(1, \text{Round}(\text{Additional VRM} / \text{Average miles per vehicle})) \\
 &= \text{Max}(1, \text{Round}(58,756 / 25,393)) \\
 &= 2.314 \\
 &= 3 \text{ vehicles}
 \end{aligned}$$

Step NS-5: Calculate annual vehicle costs

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Annual vehicle cost} &= \# \text{ additional vehicles} \times \$9,000 \\
 &= 3 \text{ vehicles} \times \$9,000/\text{vehicle} \\
 &= \$27,000
 \end{aligned}$$

This would provide service Monday through Saturday from 6am through 4pm.

5.3 Summary of Additional Service Costs

The additional costs of ensuring that residents in all rural CSRARC counties have service from 6am through 4pm, Monday through Saturday, would cost an additional estimated \$251,505 annually in operational costs and an additional \$72,000 for capital costs (i.e. new vehicles), for counties with

existing service. It would cost an estimated \$125,907 for annual operating costs and \$27,000 for capital costs (i.e. new vehicles) to establish service in Washington County. This would provide for an estimated 30,351 annual trips in the rural CSRARC counties with service and an estimated 5,947 annual trips in Washington County.

6 Marketing

This section details marketing resources created for the county transit systems. Many planning documents created by GDOT and CSRARC highlighted a need to improve marketing of public transportation services. In fact, some responses from the GDOT transportation survey highlighted that while some rural residents in the region would ride transit, they were unaware that service existed in their region, further indicating a need to increase marketing efforts. These marketing efforts could work to increase transit ridership.

Marketing could be done on many fronts including websites, social media, and print media like flyers or posters that could be posted at key destinations around town. Effective marketing should provide concise information on the transit system including hours of operation, where the system operates, and how to schedule a ride.

Increasing marketing efforts can be a struggle for rural transit agencies who often face tight budgets. Unfortunately, without some marketing efforts, rural transit agencies can be less visible to rural residents, or many may assume the service is not available to the general public. Ensuring that basic information about the system is up-to-date and easily accessible can work to improve ridership. These marketing efforts can start small (keeping current website information up-to-date) and grow over time (flyers at key destinations, social media, radio, other outreach).

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) has created a free [Marketing Toolkit](#). This toolkit provides a how-to guide to improve a transit agency's marketing strategy as well as templates that can be used to create everything from a flyer to newspaper ads to brochures. The toolkit provides a graphics library which consists of photos and graphics that can be used to create visually appealing marketing. In addition, National RTAP provides a [Web Builder](#) which allows users to create a website that can be hosted on the National RTAP server for free. The project team used these tools to create draft marketing materials for the rural counties within the CSRARC.

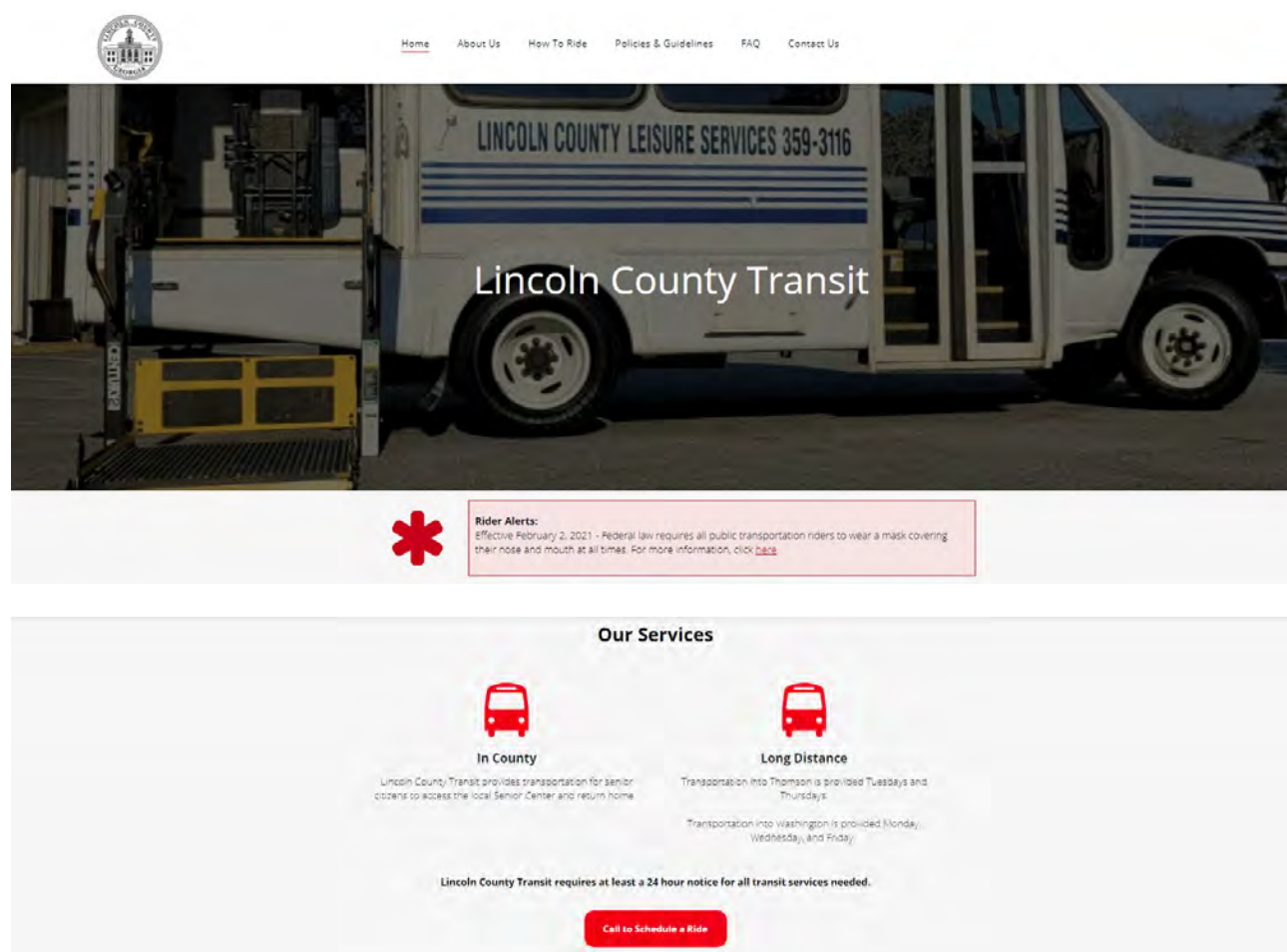
Understanding that rural transit agencies are often working with tight budgets and employees are often wearing multiple hats, marketing often takes the backseat to more critical needs of the transit system. Another opportunity to improve marketing materials is to collaborate with local college students. The Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) had success partnering with Drake University; HIRTA worked with students taking a marketing class, who created newspaper and radio ads, social media, direct mail campaigns, and a marketing budget in order to improve awareness of HIRTA's service [14]. This agreement provided HIRTA with a marketing strategy and provided the local college students with real-world marketing experience and an understanding of their local transit service and needs. Augusta Technical College (located in Augusta, Thomson, Waynesboro, and Grovetown) provides programs in marketing management, graphic design, and design and media production. These programs could provide an opportunity for future collaboration efforts.

6.1 Websites

Transit system websites were reviewed for each rural county within the CSRARC to gather information about service characteristics (recall Table 7 and Table 8). At the time, all of the transit system websites

were hosted on their county government webpage. Available information about each system varied. All websites did provide contact information including a phone number, but many were missing information on where the system operated, fares, how to schedule rides, and hours of service. Providing this information via website could make the public more aware of the transit system while also potentially reducing the number of phone calls to the transit system asking about service characteristics.

The National RTAP Website Builder was used to create a streamlined website for Lincoln County's consideration (Figure 17). Data was taken from the current Lincoln County website and put into the Website Builder to create an updated looking website that streamlined information on how to access the service.



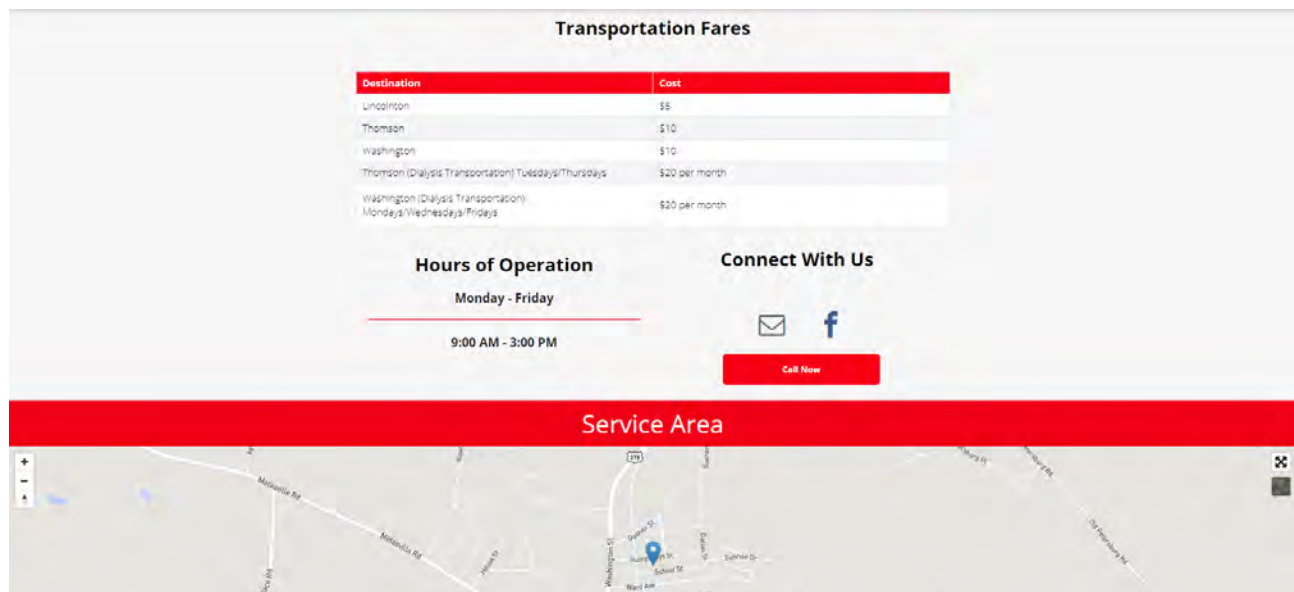


Figure 17. Draft Lincoln County Transit Website

6.2 Flyers

Marketing flyers were created for each rural county utilizing the information provided on the current transit system websites and free resources and graphics available from the National RTAP Marketing Toolkit. These flyers represent drafts using available information, so the types of information provided varies from county to county. The team made preliminary efforts to reach out to several rural counties to improve the information provided on these flyers, but this will be an ongoing process. All marketing material files were provided to the CSRARC so that the transit systems can take these draft flyers and make desired changes and ongoing updates.

6.2.1 Burke County

Serving Burke County

Burke Transit

Burke Transit provides transportation within Burke County and to Richmond County. Transportation is provided for medical appointments, pharmacy visits, school, work, & shopping.



| Hours | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Office Hours for Scheduling Appointments | M-F, 7:00am to 5:00pm |

| Destination | Fares |
|----------------------|---|
| Seniors (60+) | |
| Within Burke County | \$3.00 each trip \$2.50 extra stops |
| Richmond County | \$18.00 roundtrip \$6.00 extra stops |
| Under 60 | |
| Within Burke County | \$4.00 medical trips \$4.50 shopping trips \$5.00 school & work trips \$4.00 DFACS trips \$4.50 other trips \$3.00 extra stops |
| Richmond County | \$22.00 roundtrip \$6.00 extra stops |



| Destination | Schedule |
|-----------------|---|
| Waynesboro | M-F |
| Sardis | M,W,F—Returning from Sardis by 2:30pm |
| Richmond County | M,W,F—Morning Departures Only (Returning from Augusta by 12:00pm) |

To Schedule a Ride

Call 706-554-1660 to schedule a trip.

Burke Transit needs 36 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance



bit.ly/BurkeCoTransit • 706-554-1660

6.2.2 Glascock County

Serving Glascock County

Glascock County Transit

Glascock County Transit provides local and regional transit services to all residents of Glascock County.



| Destination | Fares | Hours | |
|---|---------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Within Glascock County | \$2.00 | Monday—Tuesday | 8:00am to 4:00pm |
| Louisville, Sandersville, Thomson, Warrenton, Wrens | \$5.00 | Wednesday | 8:00am to 12:00pm |
| Augusta | \$10.00 | Thursday—Friday | 8:00am to 4:00pm |

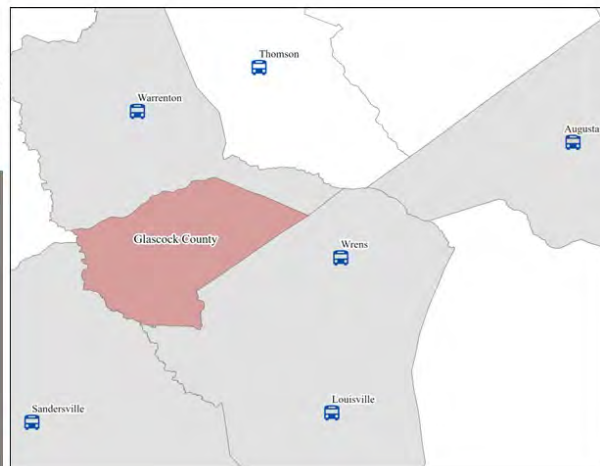
Riders with a disability must be accompanied by an attendant. Attendants may ride free of charge, unless they shop for personal use. Additional companions will be charged the regular fare.

To Schedule a Ride

Call 706-598-3313 to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance



bit.ly/GlascockCoTransit • 706-598-3313

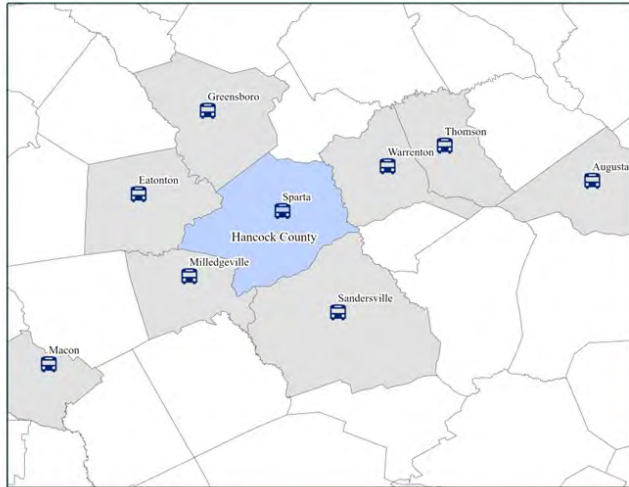
6.2.3 Hancock County

Serving Hancock County

Hancock County Transit System

Hancock County Transit provides local and regional transit services to all residents of Hancock County.

| Hours | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Monday—Friday | 8:00am to 5:00pm |
| Destination | Roundtrip Fare |
| Sparta | \$5.00 daily |
| Sandersville | \$15.00 daily |
| Milledgeville | \$15.00 daily |
| Eatonton | \$15.00 daily |
| Warrenton | \$15.00 when needed |
| Greensboro | \$15.00 when needed |
| Thomson | \$20.00 when needed |
| Augusta/Macon | \$50.00 when schedule permits |
| With Escort | Add \$5.00 to fare |



To Schedule a Ride

Call 706-444-7767 to schedule a trip. Warren County Transit requires 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip. Out-of-town non-emergency medical trips should be arranged at least 72 hours in advance.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance



bit.ly/HancockCoTransit • 706-444-7767

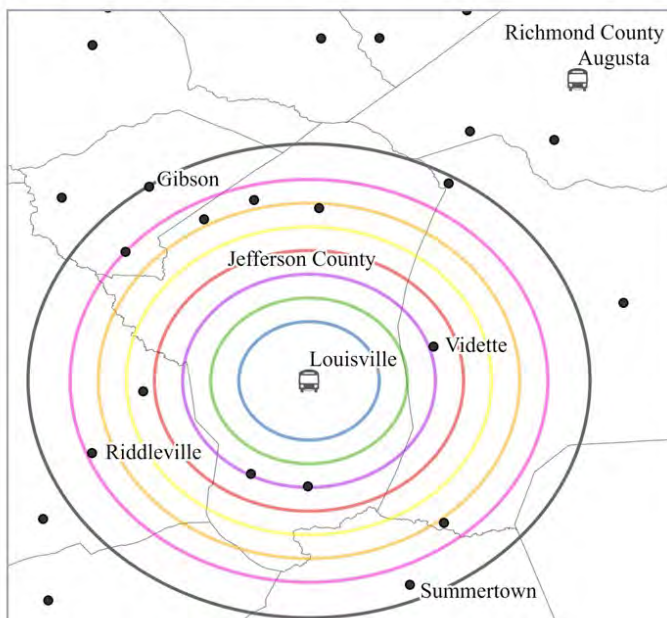
6.2.4 Jefferson County



Jefferson County Transit

Mission: To provide efficient, effective, safe and affordable transportation that will allow riders to access jobs, medical/dental offices, education, social service agencies, government offices, and for shopping/personal purposes.

Jefferson Transit is a public transportation system, owned and operated by the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners and has served Jefferson County since 1987. Public transportation supports our Communities by helping people that cannot drive, seniors and persons with disabilities to fully participate in and contribute to our Communities. Whether you are a first time passenger or a seasonal traveler, this information is provided to answer your questions and make your riding experience with Jefferson Transit positive.



Hours

M-F, 6AM to 5PM
(except county holidays)

| Distance | Fare |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Local and Within 5 Miles | \$3.00 |
| 5-7 Miles | \$3.25 |
| 7-9 Miles | \$3.50 |
| 9-11 Miles | \$3.75 |
| 11-13 Miles | \$4.00 |
| 13-15 Miles | \$4.50 |
| 15-17 Miles | \$5.00 |
| 17-20 Miles | \$5.25 |
| Extra Stops | \$1.00 |

Long Distance Fares

| | |
|---|---------|
| Augusta | \$20.00 |
| Extra Stops | \$2.00 |
| Escorts for Adults | \$10.00 |
| Escorts for Children (required for all children under 18) | Free |

To schedule transportation, call 478-625-8518 prior to 12 PM the day before transportation is needed.

bit.ly/JeffersonCoTransit • 478-625-8518

6.2.5 Jenkins County

Serving Jenkins County

Jenkins County Transit

Hours

M-F, 8:30AM to 4:30PM
(except county holidays)

| Destination | Fare |
|---|------------------|
| Within City of Millen | \$1.50 each way |
| 1-5 miles outside of Millen | \$2.00 each way |
| Over 5 miles outside of Millen | \$3.00 each way |
| Extra stops | \$0.25 |
| Qualified lunch participants in the senior center program | \$8.00 per month |

Call 478-982-2563 to schedule a trip. Jenkins County Transit needs 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:
 Name
 Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
 Destination
 Time
 Any necessary assistance



Jenkins County Transit is open to all riders as long as they live within the Jenkins County and are being transported within Jenkins County. If the passenger is a child (less than 18 years old) they must be accompanied by an adult.







bit.ly/JenkinsCoTransit • 478-982-2563

6.2.6 Lincoln County



Ride Lincoln County in Style

Relax and let **Lincoln County Transit** get you to your destination in comfort. Lincoln County Transit has one 15-passenger van, one 12-passenger van, and one wheelchair accessible van. This system provides rural public transportation services designed to allow for convenient, dependable, and accessible transportation for Lincoln County residents. This is a shared-ride service which means several individuals may be on-board the vehicle and in-route to their appointments.

Transit service is provided daily (Monday through Friday) to the senior center in Lincolnton, GA where seniors can access nutritious lunches and daily activities. Long distance travel is provided to Thomson and Washington on a scheduled basis.

To Senior Center

Monday through Friday

To Thomson

Tuesday and Thursday

To Washington

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Lincoln County Transit requires at least a 24-hour notice for services. Please call 706-359-5502 to schedule a ride.

Transit Fares

| | |
|------------------|---------|
| Lincolnton | \$5.00 |
| Thomson | \$10.00 |
| Washington | \$10.00 |

Monthly Long Distance Fares

| | |
|------------------|---------|
| Thomson | \$20.00 |
| Washington | \$20.00 |



bit.ly/LincolnCoTransit • 706-359-5502

Serving McDuffie County

McDuffie County Rural Transportation



McDuffie County Rural Transportation System operates five vehicles providing both local trips and regional trips to ALL McDuffie County residents.

| Hours | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Office Hours for Scheduling Appointments | M-F, 8:30am to 2:00pm |
| Service within McDuffie County | M-F, 8:30am to 4:30pm |
| Service to Warren County | Thursdays, 8:00am to 2:00pm |



Please note that McDuffie County Rural Transportation System is a shared ride system.

To Schedule a Ride

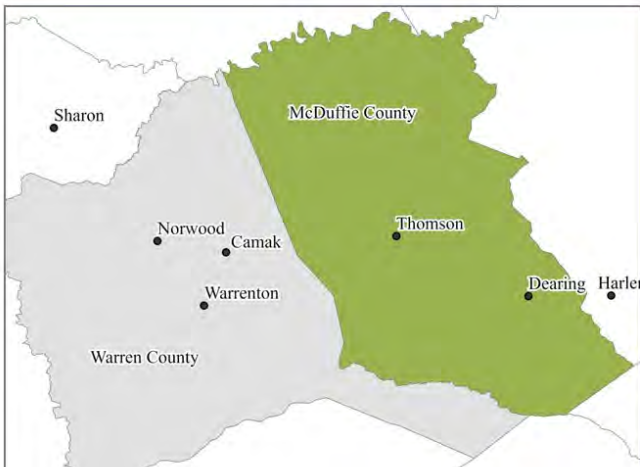
Call 706-595-6683 to schedule a trip. McDuffie County Rural Transportation System needs 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

Name
Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
Destination
Time

| Destination | Fares |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Seniors (60+) | |
| Within McDuffie County | \$2.00 roundtrip \$1.00 one-way |
| Warren County | \$5.00 round-trip \$2.50 one-way |
| Under 60 | |
| Within McDuffie County | \$6.00 round-trip \$3.00 one-way |
| Warren County | \$12.00 round-trip \$6.00 one-way |

*If you are riding as a chaperone to help assist the person that is riding the van, there will be a half price cost according to your age. The person you are assisting must be a person with a disability for you to qualify as a chaperone.



bit.ly/McDuffieCoTransit • 706-595-6683

6.2.8 Taliaferro County

Taliaferro County Transit

Connect with Taliaferro County Transit—Providing service to all Taliaferro County residents.

Call 706-456-2962 to schedule a trip.

Taliaferro County Transit needs 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance

Hours

Tuesday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm



6.2.9 Warren County

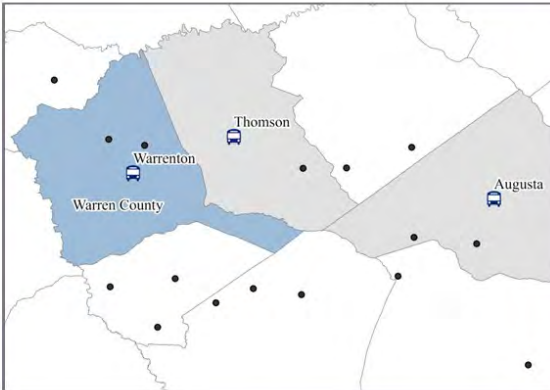
Serving Warren County



| Day of Week | Destination |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Monday | Thomson—Multiple Trips |
| Tuesday | Augusta—Morning Pickup |
| Wednesday | Thomson—Multiple Trips |
| Thursday | Augusta—Morning Pickup |
| Friday | Thomson—Multiple Trips |

| Hours | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Monday—Friday | 4:30am to 4:00pm |

Warren County Transit provides local and regional transit services to all residents of Warren County.



To Schedule a Ride

Call 706-465-3539 to schedule a trip. Warren County Transit requires 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance



bit.ly/WarrenCoTransit • 706-465-3539

6.2.10 Wilkes County

Wilkes County Transit

Wilkes County Transit—Providing cost effective transportation to meet demand requests of all Wilkes County residents.

Call 706-678-4459 to schedule a trip.

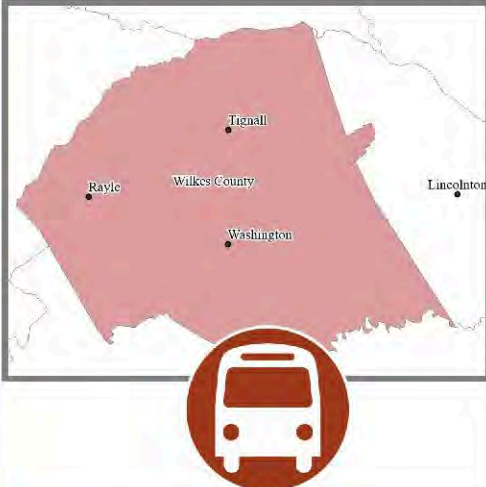
Wilkes County Transit needs 24 hours advance notice to schedule a trip.

Please have the following information ready:

- Name
- Pickup Address with Instructions (if needed)
- Destination
- Time
- Any necessary assistance

Hours

Monday - Friday 7:30 am to 4:30 pm



6.3 Marketing Summary

Marketing efforts do not need to be costly in order to improve awareness of a transit system; instead it is more important that the information provided through marketing materials is current and concise. Information related to how the system operates including destinations and costs, as well as how to schedule a ride should be easy to find. These efforts could help improve ridership in a rural community. Free tools and resources for improving marketing strategy are available online. One example is the Marketing Toolkit available through the National RTAP. There could be opportunities to partner with the local college to find students who can help to create a marketing strategy or materials.

While the examples shown here are meant to improve the information available about the existing services, these templates could be modified as coordination opportunities arise.

7 Outreach & Peer Exchange

This section details the outreach that was conducted to county transit agencies. The goal of this outreach was to identify their limitations and challenges, successes, and future opportunities.

The first outreach effort was conducted by researchers via phone in March 2021. Discussions centered around the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the transit agencies. Example questions used in these phone discussions can be found in Appendix D. Representatives from three counties participated: Hancock County, Lincoln County, and Jefferson County.

For the second outreach effort, researchers set up a peer exchange in hopes that a formal, scheduled meeting with peers might increase the number of counties able to participate. This peer exchange was held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 9:00 AM (CT) with representatives from Warren County and Burke County in attendance. The researchers learned first-hand of the challenges that the counties were facing, with one county noting that they could only join online, as they did not want to tie up the phone lines for any rural transit dispatching needs. The representative from the second county noted challenges trying to train new drivers and perform dispatching duties concurrently as she was participating in the call. This feedback highlights the many hats that those who manage these systems wear, which may make any opportunity for coordination challenging.

For the final outreach effort in May 2021, the team contacted counties via email and by scheduling phone conversations. Example questions used in these phone discussions can be found in Appendix E – Potential Outreach Discussion Questions. Representatives from Burke County and Thomson-McDuffie County participated.

The following sections highlight the feedback from these efforts. Topics include the effects of COVID-19; the limitations and challenges; the successes; and the opportunities ahead. The key takeaway from conducting the outreach was that in some of the counties, there were not enough resources to allow time for coordination or outreach discussions. Additionally, the feedback from some counties was that in-person outreach and coordination would have been useful; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was not an option.

7.1 Effects of COVID-19

In discussing the effect COVID-19 had on their transit services, the county representatives noted that the greatest impacts were in the form of:

- **Health mandates** – the transit services continually updated their protocols based on local health guidance (e.g., wearing masks and gloves, sanitizing vans, and social distancing on vans). Most counties felt that they were provided with an appropriate amount of guidance and support for this change.
- **Closure of senior centers** – with senior centers not open, transit for seniors from their home to the center was not necessary.

- **Schedule changes** – there was a need by many counties to alter their schedules. For example, systems operated for fewer hours or days or removed particular routes. In addition, several counties mentioned that at the beginning, there were a lot of cancellations and rerouting that occurred due to riders rearranging doctor appointment times or cancelling appointments based on restrictions and availability (e.g., if doctors moved elderly appointments to a new time).
- **Number of clients served** – Due to the restrictions on social distancing within vehicles, some counties had to cut back the number of clients that were served, while others had enough resources (i.e., vans, drivers, funding) to increase the number of trips to accommodate the same number of clients. In addition, some counties mentioned challenges when riders would make their doctor appointment without first securing a ride. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, sometimes the van would already be full, and the client would need to reschedule their appointment.

As the vaccine roll-out has changed the restrictions for transit agencies again, the counties were mindful that there would be a need to market their services differently for those elderly who have been following strict quarantine recommendations and may still feel leery about using transit again. The counties felt that guidance and examples would be helpful in this regard. In addition, at least one county felt that because dispatchers have been flexible throughout COVID-19 on taking same day appointments when possible (e.g., when typically, at least 24 hours are required), clients now expect these special accommodations and have higher service expectations. This may cause challenges when there is a need to begin enforcing the previous policies as service/needs expand.

7.2 Limitations and Challenges

In addition to the effects of COVID-19, the counties were asked about any general limitations or challenges they face. The types and number of challenges generally fluctuated based on the size and available resources of the county transit agencies, with smaller systems having more challenges than the bigger ones. Some of the challenges mentioned included:

- **Shortage of time for the administration** – For any service or business, there is a need to balance operations and administration (e.g., only one phone line, wearing multiple hats). For some of the smaller counties, this was harder to accomplish and provides an opportunity for outside assistance such as a mobility manager (discussed later).
- **Cost of trips** - Some counties felt that the roundtrip cost for their longer routes is too high for those clients who are on a fixed income. The counties wished funding was available to supplement these costs on a need basis.
- **Schedule coordination** – In some cases, counties were having a difficult time balancing the needs of clients’ “on demand” schedule/route changes with the pre-scheduled needs (e.g., dialysis, adult daycare) and drivers’ needs (e.g., breaks and downtime).
- **Public awareness** – Several counties indicated a need to make the public more aware of the schedule and duration for the longer trips to the cities. This would allow clients to better time their appointments to match the proposed arrival and departure times at those locations.
- **Drivers pay** – One county provided feedback that staff retention was a challenge and indicated this may be easier if there was the ability to reward or pay staff based on their effort and not

strictly according to their primary position. For example, the pay scale is generally separated based on position (e.g., driver, dispatch, manager, etc.), but many times staff are doing multiple positions or multiple routes/double duty. The ability to reward them and pay a living wage would mean they would not need to seek jobs with a higher pay or work multiple jobs, allowing the county to retain dedicated workers.

- **Driver shortages** – While some counties had additional staff that could fill in as drivers when needed, other counties would need one driver doing two routes due to a lack of staff. Counties mentioned there is always a need for back-up drivers due to family emergencies or sickness. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic left some counties short staffed when drivers had to leave to take care of children or due to COVID-19 concerns.
- **Training** – At least one county stated that more hands-on training for the managers and directors, on topics such as those mentioned above, would be extremely beneficial to improve efficiency of the system and confidence of the manager.

7.3 Successes

The counties were also asked about best practices that have helped to address challenges. These successes could help peers learn from their experiences. Some of the successes shared included:

- **Staff recruitment** - While some counties were having difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, others have had success with marketing for open positions through the use of the county website and local newsletter. In many cases, they have had the best success with word of mouth and replacement recommendations from the driver leaving.
- **Expansion beyond elderly riders** – One county formed a job training partnership with the local technical school and housing authority, for which the county provided the transportation. Additionally, a county mentioned that many younger people viewed their older style vans as senior citizens' transport. When purchasing new vans, the county changed the style of the van, as well as the graphics. Based on these changes, the system has noted an increase in younger riders.
- **QRyde** – Some counties mentioned challenges with learning to use QRyde (a software system that allows the agencies to provide ridership information), especially through virtual training when hands-on training would be more beneficial. However, other counties have seen significant benefits since implementing the newer data system. One county in particular has used the system for two years and stated that while staff members were nervous to make the change at first, it makes scheduling simpler and more efficient, and they are not sure how they got along without it before. While the system provides routes for efficiency and timeliness, sometimes the drivers will allow clients to ask for stops out of the QRyde order or to add additional stops beyond what they are allotted (e.g., 4 stops instead of the 3 they were allowed to ask for), which causes challenges. In addition, these changes must be updated in the system, but QRyde does not allow for adjustments on the same day, which holds up reconciliation to subsequent days.
- **Connections** - At least one county has provided rides to/from intercity bus facilities in the area, allowing riders to travel further than the boundaries of their service. This provides a potential opportunity for that county to offer this as a more intentional service and other counties to also consider offering such a service in their area if applicable.

7.4 Opportunities

Based on the outreach conducted with the various counties, many of the challenges and opportunities for growth or successes could be addressed through a regional coordinator position such as a Mobility Manager or an AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) volunteer (to be discussed in more detail in the section, AmeriCorps VISTA). This coordinator could assist with in-person coordination and exchanging of best practices among the region's counties. While only two counties were able to attend the virtual peer exchange that was held, other counties felt that sharing information with their peers would be extremely beneficial.

Examples could include:

- Meeting with the counties, in-person, one-on-one to identify additional challenges and share solutions from neighboring counties.
- Identification of grants and providing grant writing assistance to obtain funding for supplementing trip cost.
- Identification and sharing of best practices between the counties (e.g., scheduling, administration, pay scales, recruitment techniques, marketing, expansion beyond elderly riders, etc.).
- Creation of guidance and training for the onboarding of new transit directors/managers.
- One-on-one assistance on using the QRYde system.
- Creation of connections between county transit systems and between county systems and intercity bus services.
- Creation of a driver pool especially for the smaller counties with less staff and spare drivers.
- Inputting route information into GTFS for the potential younger riders who are likely to use the apps fed by this information.
- Implementation of a consistent marketing look and feel for the region (e.g., brochures, websites, etc.).
- Creation of transit development plans, as many counties were not aware of these plans or that GDOT suggests their creation.

8 Rural Transit Coordination Opportunities

As noted, based on stakeholder input, this project evolved to focus on coordination opportunities rather than transit hubs. Potential coordination examples are detailed in the following sections.

8.1 Wilkes and Lincoln Counties

Wilkes County shares an eastern border with Lincoln County. While both systems currently indicated that they travel into Thomson, Georgia, both also identified that there was a need for more frequent public transit service from their county into Thomson, Georgia (McDuffie County). Therefore, the researchers investigated the feasibility of alternating which county provided the service into Thomson, looping to pick-up passengers from the neighboring county. This agreement could help free up transit vehicles so that they would be able to provide more service within their county, while also allowing long distance trips into Thomson. As shown in Figure 18, the distance between the primary communities within Lincoln and Wilkes Counties (Washington and Lincolnton) is approximately 20 miles, which is a similar distance between each of those two communities and the destination community of Thomson. There are limited roads between these two communities, possibly an influence of the Savannah River, as shown in Figure 18.

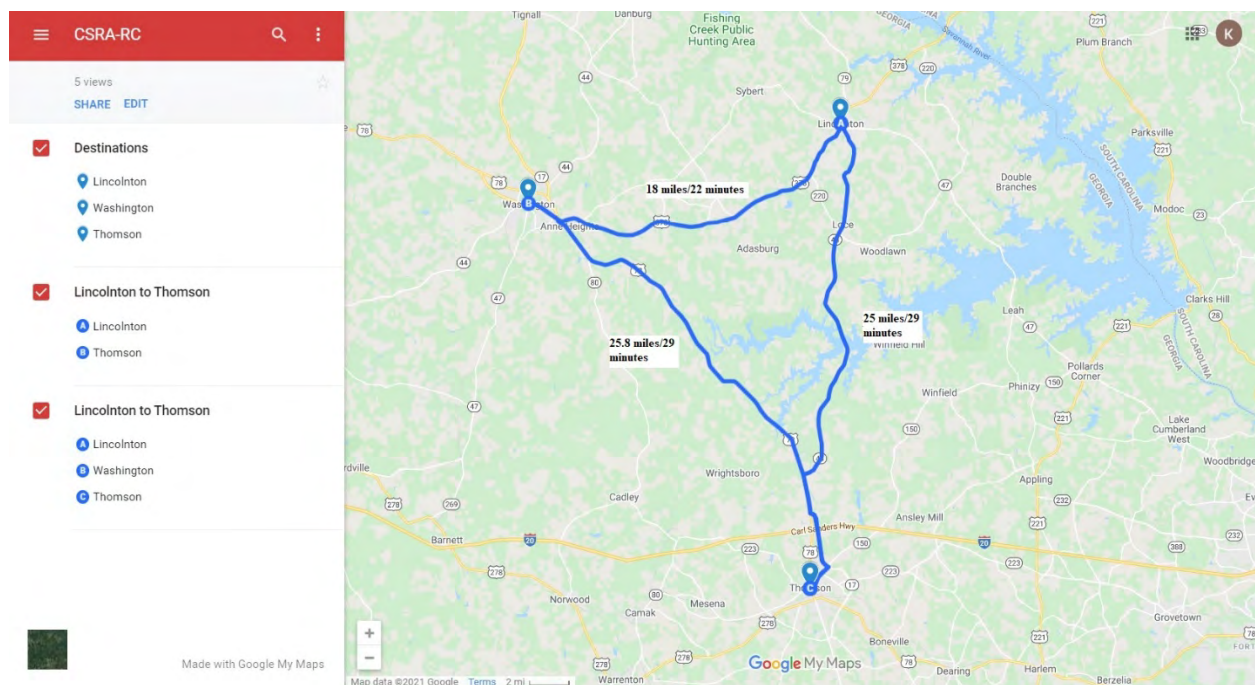


Figure 18. Distance and Time Between Washington, Lincolnton, and Thomson, Georgia

8.2 Intercity Transit: Macon to Sparta to Augusta

The GDOT survey results suggested an interest in a connection between Macon, Georgia and Sparta, Georgia; travel time is expected to be just over an hour between these two communities. Macon, Georgia is within the Middle Georgia Regional Commission. In addition, there was a suggested interest

in a connection between Sparta, Georgia and Augusta, Georgia; travel time is expected to be a little more than an hour and a quarter between these two communities. Because Macon and Augusta are two of the largest cities within Georgia, it may make sense to consider a more consistent connection than on-demand between these two communities, using Sparta, Georgia as a stopping off point in between. The advantage is that Sparta, Georgia would essentially serve as a hub for the rural counties between these two cities.

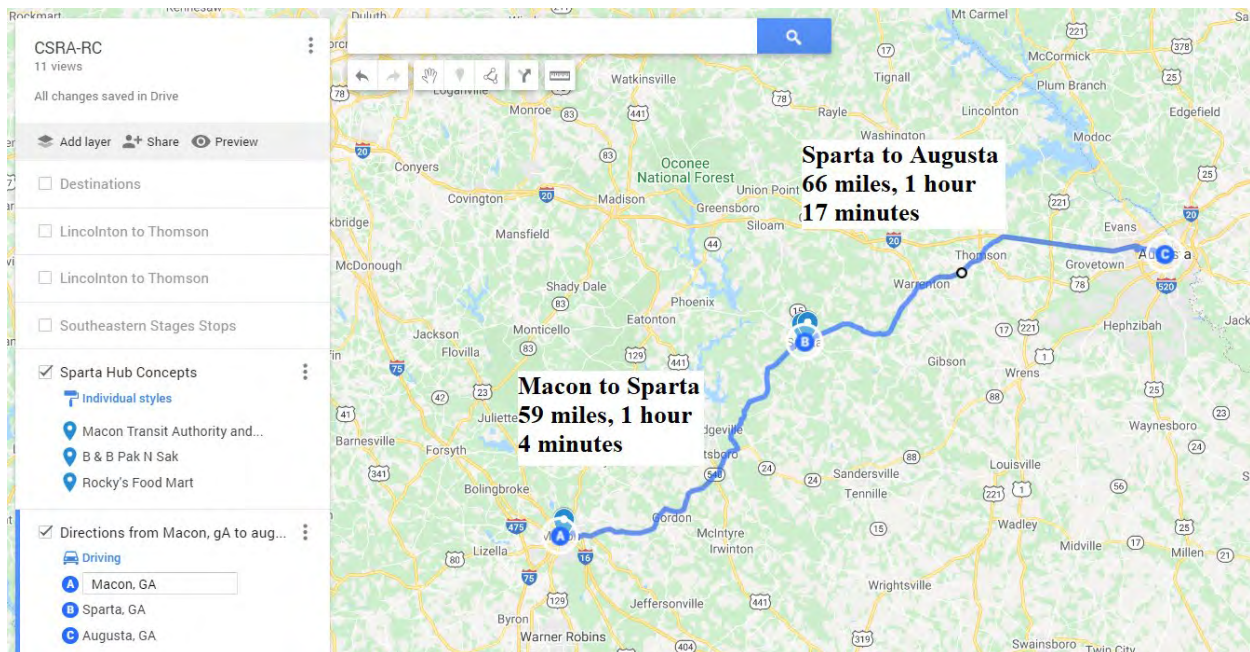


Figure 19. Intercity Travel Concept from Macon to Sparta to Augusta

Depending on travel demand, this intercity route could potentially serve up to two trips a day (see sample schedule below), providing a means for rural residents to access two urban areas. Hubs at the two urban locations could be chosen to coincide with the local transit systems in the area so that passengers could transfer to the local system. This could include the Macon-Bibb Transfer Station in downtown Macon, Georgia and the Augusta Transit Transfer Facility located near downtown Augusta.

Macon to Sparta to Augusta: 6:00am – 7:15am – 8:45am

Augusta to Sparta to Macon: 9:00am – 10:30am – 11:45am

Macon to Sparta to Augusta: 12:00pm – 1:15pm – 2:45pm

Augusta to Sparta to Macon: 3:00pm – 4:30pm – 5:45pm

8.3 AmeriCorps VISTA

The researchers observed that there is an additional need for resources in the community to support improvements to the existing public transit offerings, including potential coordination, and the

implementation of transit service in Washington County. One potential opportunity that provides on-the-ground “people power” is through the AmeriCorps VISTA program. As noted previously, counties are wearing many hats in supporting the day-to-day operations of their transit services. An AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer would help to serve as an extension of staff. The researchers suggest that a northern and southern AmeriCorps VISTA position be created. Their roles would function similar to a mobility manager, essentially to demonstrate the need associated with such a position. The southern AmeriCorps VISTA position would support Burke, Glascock, Jefferson, Jenkins, and Washington Counties and would be based out of the county offices in Louisville, Georgia (Jefferson County). This would allow for more direct integration of the AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer into the needs of the rural counties. However, the AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer would still report to CSRARC. The northern AmeriCorps VISTA position would be based out of county offices in Warrenton, Georgia (Warren County) and would support Hancock, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, and Wilkes Counties.

As identified in Performance Measures, AmeriCorps VISTA, FY2019-2020 [15], AmeriCorps VISTA projects are intended to “help individuals and communities out of poverty.” As identified in the demographics section, the counties being served have a high level of poverty, especially when compared with Georgia’s statewide average. The VISTAs would serve to improve the transit infrastructure within these counties, facilitate partnerships between the counties within CSRARC and to counties in neighboring regional councils, as well as with entities within each county. It is envisioned that CSRARC, along with county staff within each focus area of each VISTA, will “recruit, train, supervise, and otherwise support” the VISTAs. Not only does locating the VISTAs within the regions they serve allow them to obtain an improved contextual understanding of their constituents, it also allows a VISTA to better leverage their “modest living allowance.” The goal of the VISTAs would be to facilitate cooperation between the counties and to identify funding sources that could be used to improve service and begin service in Washington County. As identified in the VISTA information that follows (see “Key Questions to Consider”, a mobility manager position(s) could be created at the sunset of the VISTAs’ time in the CSRARC, absorbing the functions that were created by the VISTAs.

CSRARC will meet, virtually and/or in person, with each VISTA at least an hour per week to check-in. Furthermore, each VISTA will meet at least one hour per week with the County Commissioner and/or the transit director in the county in which they will serve (i.e. Wilkes and Jefferson). CSRARC will provide a computer for the VISTA and other materials. The host county will provide office space.

The following provides some context and direction for “Key Questions to Consider.”

Is there a poverty-focused project my organization would like to start or expand?

Currently, individual transit systems exist within ten of the eleven rural counties of CSRARC. However, with better coordination and identification of additional funding sources, there are opportunities to leverage these transit systems to address the poverty in many of these counties that are above the state threshold. Furthermore, as shown by the demographic analysis, housing and transportation costs account on average for more than seventy percent of residents’ budgets (Table 1). Therefore, having a more robust regional transit system can expand access to employment, higher education, medical care

(which reduces costs when non-emergency medical trips are achieved instead of trips by ambulance), and more affordable and healthier options for food.

What are the long-term goals of the project?

WTI attempted to develop a forum for communication amongst the transit agencies within CSRARC. Unfortunately, existing staff were already wearing too many hats. Furthermore, resources were limited, including few (if more than one) phone lines over which to receive requests for service. Therefore, the VISTAs will identify needs within each of their focus counties and find funding sources that can address them. Furthermore, after these initial needs are addressed, they will facilitate forums for peer exchange amongst their focus counties, with one to two exchanges amongst all of the rural counties. The VISTAs will then seek additional funding sources, potentially through cooperation with health care providers, employers, non-profits and others to improve service, expanding hours during the week and into the weekend. The VISTAs will also seek to make the broader public aware of opportunities for existing intercity connections, and to run service to these connections with the existing county transit systems. Ultimately, through their experience in facilitating the above, the VISTAs will define the role(s) of mobility managers in the region. The VISTAs will also work cooperatively with GDOT, as the above efforts would contribute to recommendations found within its newly released statewide transit plan.

Are the project's goals to help move people and communities out of poverty (not just to make poverty more tolerable)?

Yes, providing more reliable, cost-effective, and extensive transit services can reduce transportation costs for low-income residents. Therefore, users of the transportation system can expect to see reductions for transportation in their monthly budgets. Furthermore, by providing opportunities for higher education, this project would open opportunities for higher wages. In addition, it was noted by at least one county during the site visit that an expanded employer was not able to hire locally because the education level was not what was needed by this employer. Therefore, providing connections to higher education could improve the employment opportunities of the locals.

What population(s) does the project target?

It is expected that older Americans will benefit the most, as expanded and improved service would allow them to get to where they need to go more easily at a more reasonable cost. In addition, older Americans represent the largest percentage of the population in these communities. However, improved transit could also help to retain younger populations or even potentially to support younger populations that had moved away to return to where they grew up. This in turn, would also support the older populations, as there is a potential for increased economic generation within the community.

How will we include the local community in project planning and implementation?

Locating the VISTAs within offices in the rural counties will help integrate them into the local communities. At the onset of each VISTA's time within CSRARC, it is recommended that the VISTA spend a week with each existing transit director in their counties of focus. This will allow the VISTA to better

understand the similarities and differences between the transit systems, as well as identify opportunities for peer exchanges.

With what other community groups or organizations will we collaborate?

In addition to engaging the transit directors in each county, WTI recommends that VISTAs reach out to the United Way of the CSRA, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Transportation Alliance, Georgia Tech, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), state-level health offices, hospitals, major employers, local colleges/community colleges, libraries, and others that are identified through a stakeholder group.

Do we have the resources to support one or more VISTAs?

This will be for the CSRARC to decide.

How will you fill your VISTA positions? What strategies will you use to recruit candidates? How will you make effective use of the AmeriCorps online recruit system?

WTI has developed a draft concept for the position description. This document will serve as a basis of information, providing an understanding of needs, gaps, challenges, and opportunities. The CSRARC can leverage the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech faculty to distribute the information to their students. Information can be shared via LinkedIn.

8.4 Rural Transit Coordination Opportunities Summary

Even though the initial lens of coordination (that proposed transit hubs) may not have been as applicable as envisioned, there are still opportunities for coordination. For example, in order for coordination to be initiated in Washington County, it would be more cost-effective to coordinate with a neighboring county that is already providing service.

Furthermore, there are opportunities where existing intercity public transportation can be leveraged. To do so, bringing awareness to the existence of this service is a good start.

Finally, the researchers identified a potential funding source (AmeriCorps/VISTA) to look at mobility management in the rural CSRARC counties that could further investigate and plan for coordination among counties.

9 Connection to Economic Development

One of the significant benefits of this project has been information sharing among stakeholders. Early on during the site visit meetings, the transit director from Lincoln County learned how the transit director from Hancock County was using submission of ridership numbers via the new Q-Ryde system to justify and ultimately attain additional vans. This spurred the director of the Lincoln County transit system to learn more about how to enter data into the Q-Ryde software system.

If an application to the AmeriCorps VISTA program is moved forward and successful, the results of this project will generate two jobs. Furthermore, these positions are viewed as short-term solutions to a longer-term need for more regionalized mobility manager positions. Therefore, the results of this project have the potential to contribute to one, if not two, long-term positions in the CSRARC.

Through a review of the recently released GDOT Transit Plan, the researchers found several pilot projects and other efforts that GDOT planned to promote over the lifetime of the plan that may fit well within efforts to address rural transit needs in CSRARC rural counties. These projects were identified and shared with the rural CSRARC counties with the hopes that they can leverage some of this support by GDOT.

A review of the *Central Savanna River Area Regional Plan 2040* [2] showed that a substantial portion of monthly income of many residents living in the rural CSRARC counties is being allocated towards housing and transportation (Table 1). Providing transit access could help to reduce the cost of transportation thereby freeing up resources that may then be spent back in the local economies.

Finally, as discussed in the marketing section, if a transit system were to partner with local college students to create marketing materials, there is a possibility for collaboration and employment opportunities.

10 Conclusion

At the onset of this project, the plan was to develop concepts that would facilitate coordination, through a rural transit hub, allowing counties to offer transit service linking their residents to Augusta, Georgia. County feedback during the on-site visit suggested there is not a strong need for this service. Therefore, the researchers developed two surveys and ultimately deployed one. In addition, they reviewed information that was gathered by the GDOT specific to the CSRA. The researchers also reviewed the GDOT Statewide Transit Plan to identify findings and projects that would be relevant to rural CSRA counties. These include an interest to develop and maintain GTFS data for all Georgia transit providers, improve marketing (better websites, using vehicle exteriors as rolling billboards), create a mobility management program, highlight examples of coordination in the rural context, create transit development plans, create a region-wide driver pool, and reduce the required local match to pursue federal funds.

Georgia has more rural transit providers than any other U.S. state. Of a dataset reviewed regarding trips by rural CSRA transit providers, it was found that some counties (Burke, Jefferson) were providing service outside of their identified hours.

One of the most staggering statistics identified in the plans that were reviewed is the percentage of monthly income that residents were allocating towards housing and transportation costs, with Taliaferro (86%), Jefferson (83%), Jenkins (78%), Hancock (76%), Warren (76%), and Wilkes (73%) reporting some of the greatest percentages. These statistics indicate that little monthly income is left for food or other necessities.

As noted in a review of existing rural transit service, more service is needed for all of the rural counties, which may be provided by coordination. In particular, Washington County needs service – this also presents a possibility for coordination, as it may be easier for the County to coordinate with a neighboring county to initiate service rather than setting up its own service. Intercity bus service presently exists in two rural CSRA counties (McDuffie and Wilkes). However, this is not advertised on the websites for these counties, which limits accessibility for anyone who may want to leverage these existing intercity connections.

Much of the existing CSRARC service is centered on providing transportation to senior centers and as a secondary purpose to medical appointments, however the funding source (5311) allows service access to all users regardless of age. Thinking beyond the traditional service specific to older Americans could make the service more cost-effective, provide more opportunities to all residents in CSRARC counties including potentially retaining younger residents, and provide more opportunity for residents to pursue a wider variety of job options and/or higher education.

Information was gathered regarding potential opportunities for better retention of the transportation workforce. In addition, resources that can help support continued service during the COVID-19 pandemic were also included.

As a whole, the survey distribution was limited, both that conducted by GDOT (120 surveys) and that conducted as a part of the study (thirteen surveys). A more concerted, richer source of data is needed, particularly regarding existing origin and destination information, but also for latent demand. However, of the information collected, one notable finding is that there are residents who are unaware that there is existing service available to them in their county. This suggests a need for better marketing, whether by improved websites, posting flyers at locations like libraries, and/or leveraging the public transit vehicles as rolling billboards.

Expansion of service to the levels recommended for rural CSRARC counties that already have service would add less than \$50,000 in costs for each county. For Hancock County, no additional service is needed. Eight additional vehicles would be needed to accommodate this service expansion across all counties.

The National RTAP tools make website improvements much more manageable. In addition, flyers were created, and the editable files were provided to CSRARC in case any counties need to modify them. Hard copies displayed in popular locations (e.g., libraries, favorite restaurant) can help bring awareness to the presence of public transit in a county.

Several limitations and challenges, successes, and opportunities were identified through the outreach to the county public transit providers. However, as it was quickly realized that those in charge of the systems have limited time to consider much beyond just the provision of service, there is a need to provide assistance to facilitate the occurrence of discussions related to coordination opportunities.

At a minimum, looking at coordination opportunities related to the existing intercity bus transportation is an opportunity. In addition, it is clear that coordination of county services, even if it is just between two neighboring counties, may help alleviate some of the issues identified while trying to conduct a peer exchange. A mobility manager(s), possibly through the AmeriCorps VISTA program, could help with opportunities for coordination or identification of how services can reach a broader audience and consequently be more cost effective.

11 References

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12 Appendix A – Demographic Analysis

The primary source of information for the key demographics section was obtained from the US Census Bureau's *2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) Five Year Estimates* [9]. The 2013-2017 ACS data for census tracts was obtained for the 13 member counties of the CSRARC and mapped using ArcMap in order to examine where specific population subgroups reside within the CSRA.

The total population of the CSRARC was 471,434 in 2017. The eleven rural counties within the CSRA had a total population of 126,143. The eleven rural counties within the CSRA have populations ranging from just 1,844 in Taliaferro to 22,645 in Burke (Figure 20). The eleven rural counties with the CSRA make up 26.8 percent of the total population of the CSRA but reside within 87.8 percent of the total land area of the region.

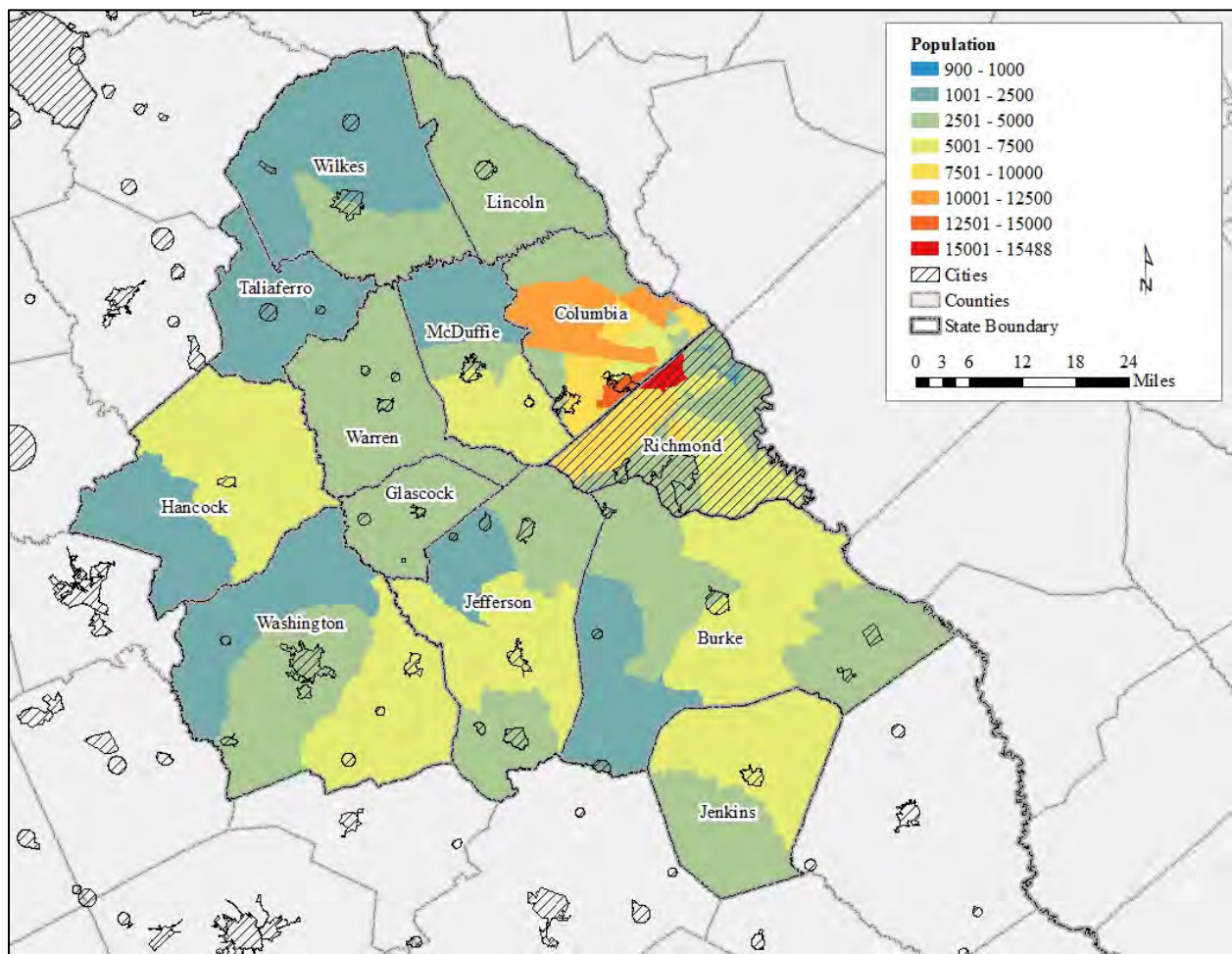


Figure 20. Total Population by Census Tract [9]

Age

The rural portion of the region tends to be older; the median age of the rural counties is 42.07 years old compared to the two urban counties whose median age is 35.05. The Northern portion of the region tends to be older when compared to the Southern portion (Figure 21). This follows the trend of higher proportions of seniors (aged 65+) in these counties, with Hancock, Lincoln, Taliaferro, and Wilkes having higher proportions of their populations aged 65 or older (Table 19).

Table 19Table 18 presents the breakdown of the population by several age ranges, with the two urban counties highlighted in bold.

Table 18. Population Distribution by Age [9]

| County | Total Population | Under 5 | 5 to 9 | 10 to 14 | 15 to 19 | 20 to 24 | 25 to 34 | 35 to 54 | 55 to 74 | 75+ |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Burke | 22,645 | 1,620 | 1,560 | 1,802 | 1,553 | 1,447 | 2,788 | 5,522 | 5,170 | 1,183 |
| Columbia | 143,723 | 9,182 | 10,923 | 10,390 | 10,220 | 8,472 | 19,681 | 39,827 | 28,264 | 6,764 |
| Glascocock | 3,027 | 141 | 180 | 240 | 258 | 141 | 246 | 899 | 698 | 224 |
| Hancock | 8,667 | 262 | 370 | 399 | 296 | 631 | 1,425 | 2,137 | 2,440 | 707 |
| Jefferson | 15,954 | 1,100 | 1,002 | 1,076 | 962 | 1,108 | 1,970 | 3,882 | 3,735 | 1,119 |
| Jenkins | 8,929 | 634 | 707 | 485 | 478 | 787 | 792 | 2,339 | 2,286 | 421 |
| Lincoln | 7,768 | 427 | 407 | 379 | 473 | 395 | 773 | 1,915 | 2,371 | 628 |
| McDuffie | 21,488 | 1,523 | 1,403 | 1,687 | 1,628 | 1,144 | 2,517 | 5,229 | 4,997 | 1,360 |
| Richmond | 201,568 | 13,956 | 13,672 | 12,190 | 13,766 | 17,439 | 32,584 | 47,143 | 40,383 | 10,435 |
| Taliaferro | 1,844 | 73 | 77 | 88 | 108 | 137 | 233 | 475 | 503 | 150 |
| Warren | 5,410 | 275 | 382 | 332 | 213 | 246 | 703 | 1,281 | 1,545 | 433 |
| Washington | 20,506 | 1,181 | 1,323 | 1,265 | 1,320 | 1,348 | 2,569 | 5,390 | 4,732 | 1,378 |
| Wilkes | 9,905 | 525 | 547 | 548 | 787 | 519 | 1,004 | 2,335 | 2,704 | 936 |

Table 19. Population Distribution by Selected Age Groups [9]

| County | Total Population | Under 18 | Percent Under 18 | 19-64 | Percent 19-64 | 65 and Older | Percent 65 and Older |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Burke | 22,645 | 5,948 | 26.3 | 13,504 | 59.6 | 3,193 | 14.1 |
| Columbia | 143,723 | 37,216 | 25.9 | 88,880 | 61.8 | 17,627 | 12.3 |
| Glascok | 3,027 | 698 | 23.1 | 1,815 | 60.0 | 514 | 17 |
| Hancock | 8,667 | 1,245 | 14.4 | 5,640 | 65.1 | 1,782 | 20.6 |
| Jefferson | 15,954 | 3,815 | 23.9 | 9,444 | 59.2 | 2,695 | 16.9 |
| Jenkins | 8,929 | 2,162 | 24.2 | 5,370 | 60.1 | 1,397 | 15.6 |
| Lincoln | 7,768 | 1,506 | 19.4 | 4,574 | 58.9 | 1,688 | 21.7 |
| McDuffie | 21,488 | 5,676 | 26.4 | 12,312 | 57.3 | 3,500 | 16.3 |
| Richmond | 201,568 | 47,236 | 23.4 | 128,502 | 63.8 | 25,830 | 12.8 |
| Taliaferro | 1,844 | 296 | 16.1 | 1,156 | 62.7 | 392 | 21.3 |
| Warren | 5,410 | 1,148 | 21.2 | 3,155 | 58.3 | 1,107 | 20.5 |
| Washington | 20,506 | 4,623 | 22.5 | 12,566 | 61.3 | 3,317 | 16.2 |
| Wilkes | 9,905 | 2,039 | 20.6 | 5,673 | 57.3 | 2,193 | 22.1 |
| Total CSRA | 471,434 | 113,608 | 24.1 | 292,591 | 62.1 | 65,235 | 13.8 |
| Total Urban | 166,368 | 43,164 | 26 | 102,384 | 62 | 20,820 | 13 |
| Total Rural | 295,161 | 68,405 | 23 | 184,534 | 63 | 42,222 | 14 |

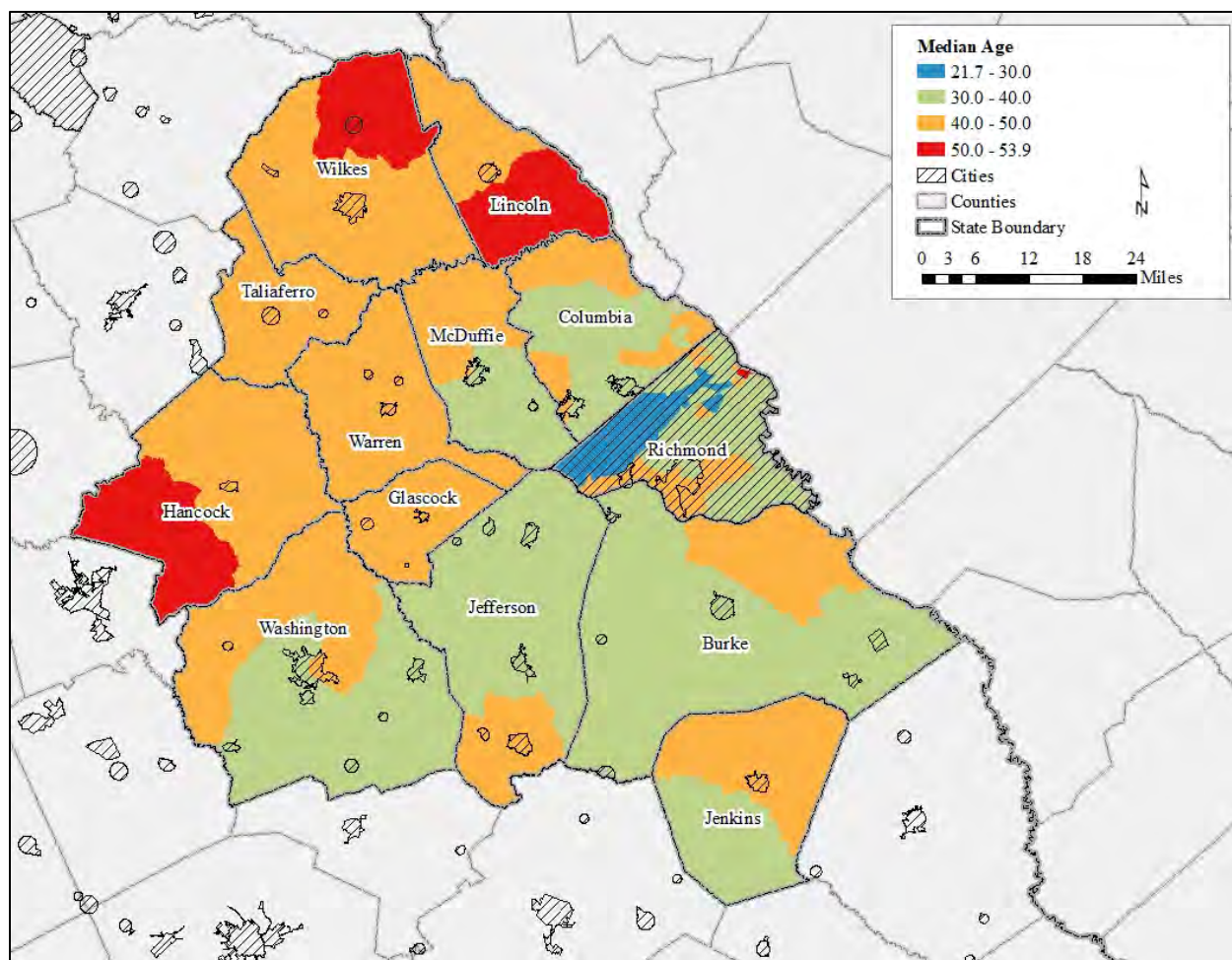


Figure 21. Median Age by Census Tract [9]

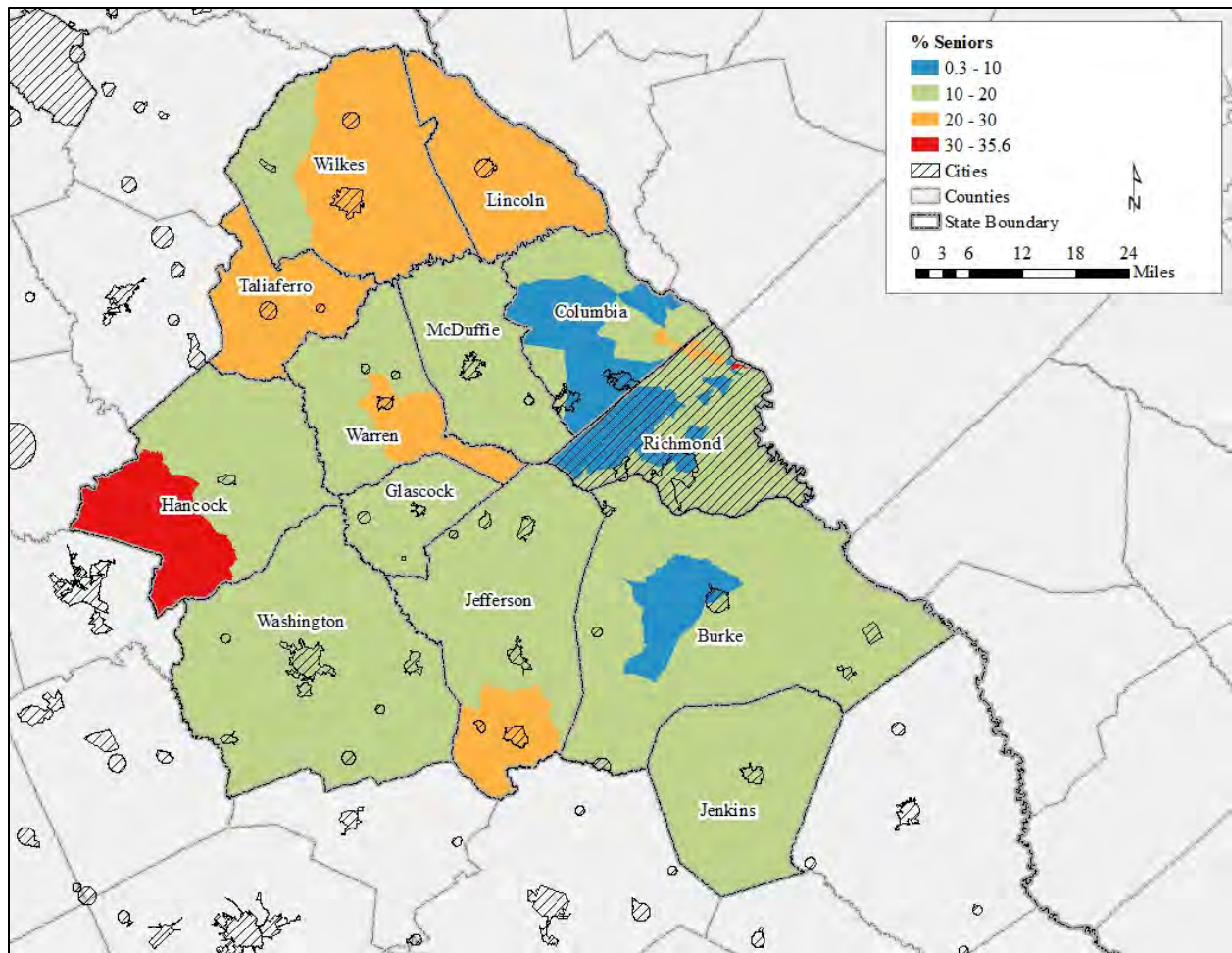


Figure 22. Percent of Population Aged 65+ by Census Tract [9]

People with a Disability

Of the total population of the CSRA, 66,376 are people with a disability (14.7 percent) (Table 20). Most of the rural counties have a population of people with a disability that ranges from 10 to 20 percent. Taliaferro County has the highest proportion of people with a disability at 22.5 percent followed by Lincoln County. In particular there are higher proportions of people with a disability within the entire County of Taliaferro and within Southeast Washington County (Figure 23).

Table 20. Distribution of People with a Disability by County [9]

| County | Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population | With a Disability | Percent with a Disability |
|--------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Burke | 22,413 | 3,422 | 15.3 |
| Columbia | 139,660 | 15,693 | 11.2 |
| Glascok | 2,939 | 421 | 14.3 |
| Hancock | 6,021 | 1,066 | 17.7 |
| Jefferson | 15,477 | 2,421 | 15.6 |
| Jenkins | 8,852 | 1,257 | 14.2 |
| Lincoln | 7,689 | 1,397 | 18.2 |
| McDuffie | 21,098 | 2,750 | 13 |
| Richmond | 191,995 | 31,996 | 16.7 |
| Taliaferro | 1,844 | 414 | 22.5 |
| Warren | 5,336 | 660 | 12.4 |
| Washington | 18,795 | 3,176 | 16.9 |
| Wilkes | 9,809 | 1,703 | 17.4 |
| Total CSRA | 451,928 | 66,376 | 14.7 |
| Total Urban | 331,655 | 47,689 | 14.4 |
| Total Rural | 120,273 | 18,687 | 15.5 |

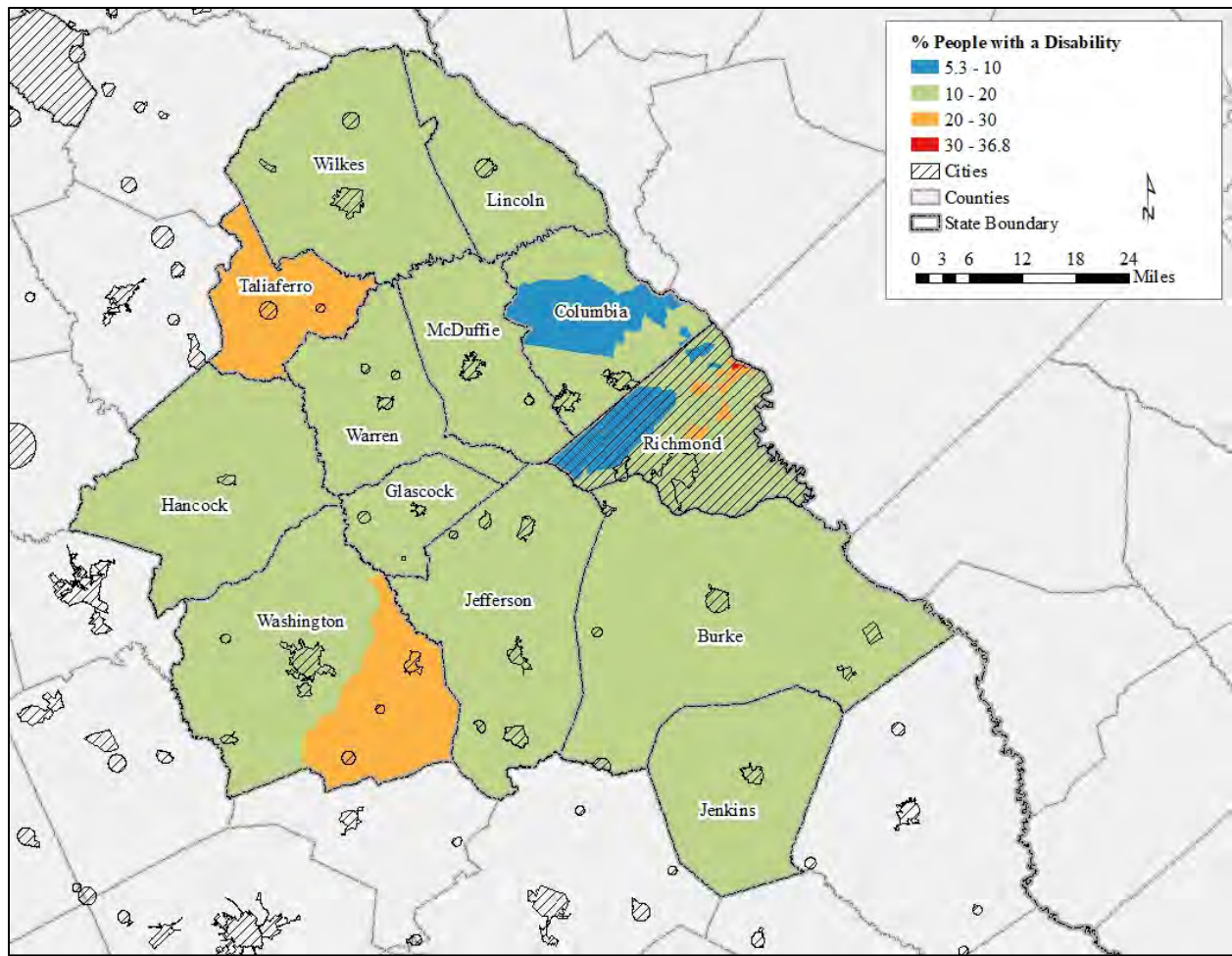


Figure 23. Percent of Population with a Disability by Census Tract [9]

Low Income Individuals

The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status for 455,730 people within the CSRA. Of this population, 20.1 percent were below the poverty level in 2017. In 2017, the Federal Poverty Guidelines stated that the poverty level was \$12,060 for an individual [16]. The proportion of people below the poverty level is higher in the rural counties than the urban counties (Table 21. Taliaferro has the highest proportion of people below the poverty level at 31 percent, followed by Jenkins (30.7 percent), and Hancock (30 percent) (Table 21).

Table 21. Distribution of People Below the Poverty Level by County [9]

| County | Total Population | Below Poverty level | Percent Below Poverty Level |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Burke | 22,289 | 6,504 | 29.2 |
| Columbia | 142,975 | 12,269 | 8.6 |
| Glascok | 2,939 | 339 | 11.5 |
| Hancock | 6,021 | 1,804 | 30 |
| Jefferson | 15,464 | 4,162 | 26.9 |
| Jenkins | 8,852 | 2,720 | 30.7 |
| Lincoln | 7,701 | 1,773 | 23 |
| McDuffie | 21,177 | 5,503 | 26 |
| Richmond | 192,621 | 46,692 | 24.2 |
| Taliaferro | 1,839 | 571 | 31 |
| Warren | 5,333 | 1,427 | 26.8 |
| Washington | 18,740 | 5,074 | 27.1 |
| Wilkes | 9,779 | 2,595 | 26.5 |
| Total | 455,730 | 91,433 | 20.1 |
| Total Urban | 335,596 | 58,961 | 17.6 |
| Total Rural | 120,134 | 32,472 | 27.0 |

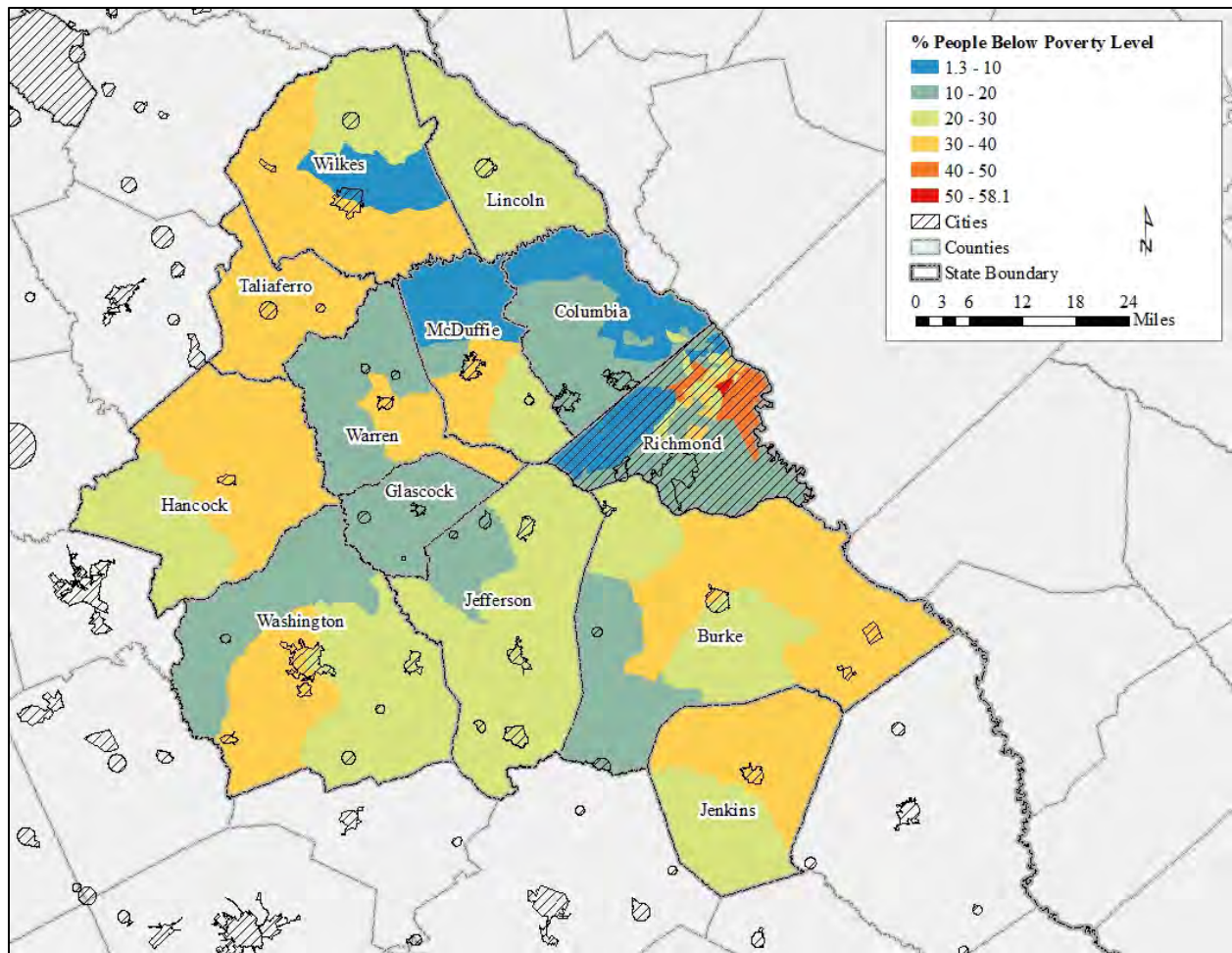


Figure 24. Percent of Population Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract [9]

Employment

In 2016, the CSRA region had an unemployment rate of 6.4 percent, which is slightly higher than the unemployment rate for the State of Georgia (5.1 percent) [2]. Taliaferro and Washington Counties have the highest unemployment rates of the rural counties with 9.5 and 9.3 percent respectively (Table 22). Higher rates of unemployment seem to be concentrated to Southeast Washington County, Northern Washington County, Northern Warren County, and West of Thomson in McDuffie County (Figure 25). Glascock and Hancock counties have the lowest unemployment rates (even lower than the State) at 3.3 and 4 percent respectively.

Table 22. Employment Characteristics by County [9] [2]

| County | Population 16+ | In Labor Force | Percent In Labor Force | Not in Labor Force | Percent Not in Labor Force | Unemployment Rate |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Burke | 17,353 | 9,233 | 53.2 | 8,120 | 46.8 | 5.8 |
| Columbia | 111,009 | 70,697 | 63.7 | 40,312 | 36.3 | 5.8 |
| Glascok | 2,411 | 1,352 | 56.1 | 1,059 | 43.9 | 3.3 |
| Hancock | 7,485 | 2,215 | 29.6 | 5,270 | 70.4 | 4 |
| Jefferson | 12,549 | 6,323 | 50.4 | 6,226 | 49.6 | 8.5 |
| Jenkins | 7,024 | 3,517 | 50.1 | 3,507 | 49.9 | 6.3 |
| Lincoln | 6,469 | 3,434 | 53.1 | 3,035 | 46.9 | 6 |
| McDuffie | 16,473 | 9,042 | 54.9 | 7,431 | 45.1 | 8.1 |
| Richmond | 159,145 | 94,479 | 59.4 | 64,666 | 40.6 | 11.6 |
| Taliaferro | 1,590 | 693 | 43.6 | 897 | 56.4 | 9.5 |
| Warren | 4,397 | 2,293 | 52.1 | 2,104 | 47.9 | 8.2 |
| Washington | 16,394 | 8,432 | 51.4 | 7,962 | 48.6 | 9.3 |
| Wilkes | 8,141 | 4,194 | 51.5 | 3,947 | 48.5 | 7.5 |
| Total CSRA | 370,440 | 215,904 | 58.3 | 154,536 | 41.7 | 6.4* |

*Data from the CSRA Regional Plan 2040 [2]

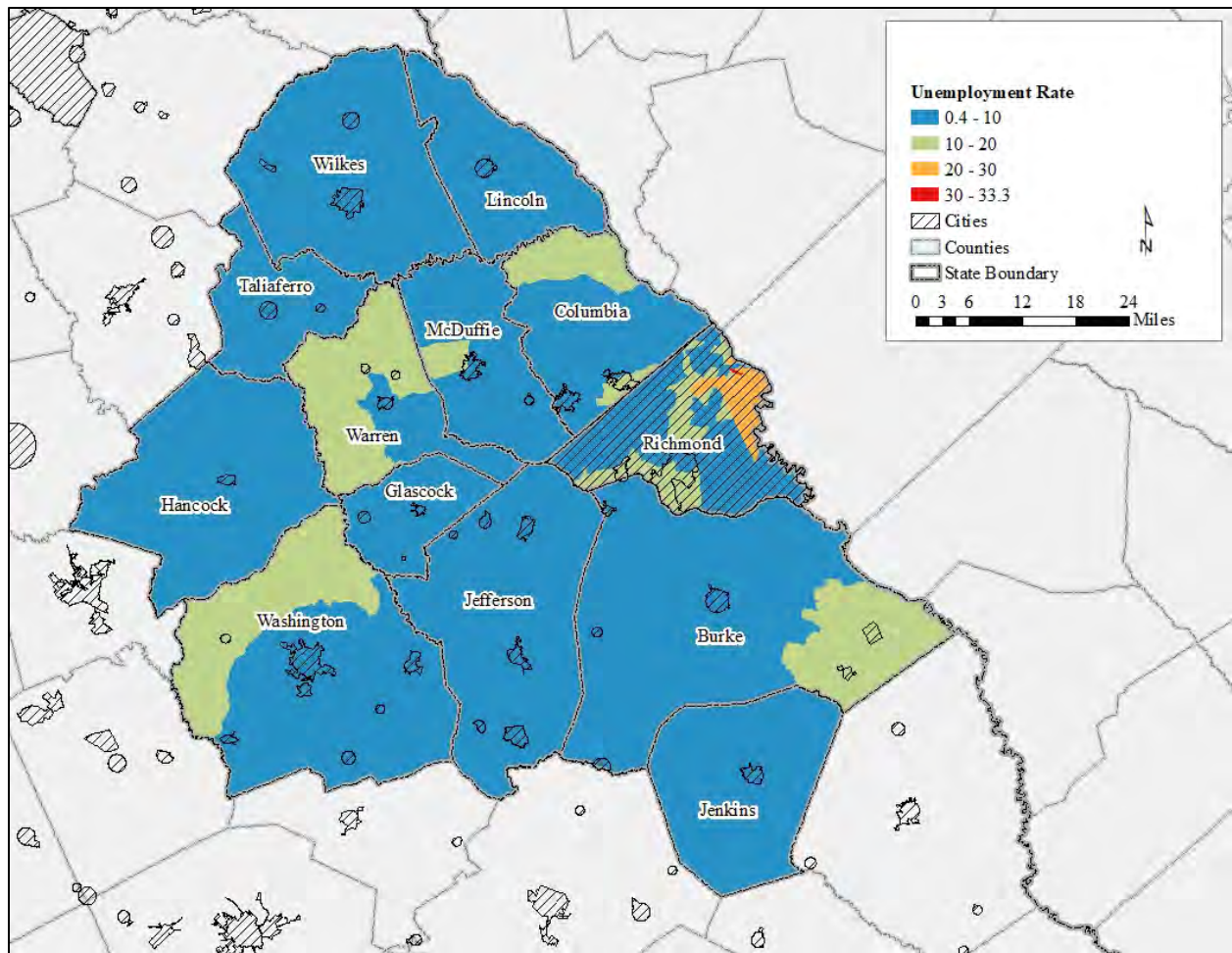


Figure 25. Unemployment Rate by Census Tract [9]

Employment within the rural CSRA is primarily in the educational services, and health care and social assistance industry (21.0 percent), followed by manufacturing (15.9 percent) and retail trade (10.3 percent) (Figure 26). The information industry employs the fewest rural CSRA residents (0.9%). Compared to the two urban counties, the rural CSRA has more workers within the agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, and mining industry, construction, manufacturing, and transportation and warehousing, and utilities (Table 23).

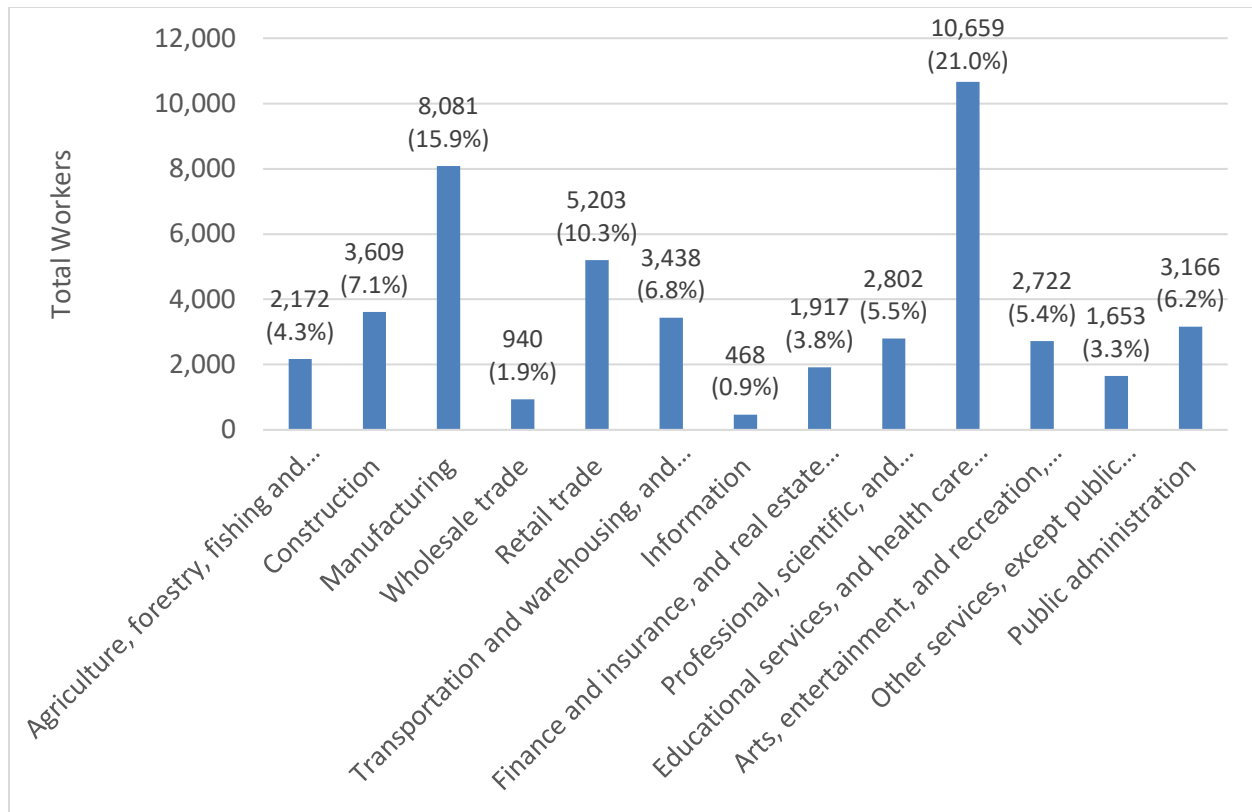


Figure 26. Type of Employment Industry

Table 23. Rural vs. Urban Workers by Industry

| Geography | Rural CSRA | | Urban CSRA | |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| | Total Workers | Percent of Rural Workers | Total Workers | Percent of Urban Workers |
| Population 16 years and over - In labor force | 50,728 | 100% | 165,176 | 100% |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining | 2,172 | 4.3% | 759 | 0.5% |
| Construction | 3,609 | 7.1% | 8,810 | 5.3% |
| Manufacturing | 8,081 | 15.9% | 12,537 | 7.6% |
| Wholesale trade | 940 | 1.9% | 2,624 | 1.6% |
| Retail trade | 5,203 | 10.3% | 18,293 | 11.1% |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities | 3,438 | 6.8% | 7,342 | 4.4% |
| Information | 468 | 0.9% | 2,714 | 1.6% |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing | 1,917 | 3.8% | 5,961 | 3.6% |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services | 2,802 | 5.5% | 15,339 | 9.3% |
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance | 10,659 | 21.0% | 37,351 | 22.6% |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services | 2,722 | 5.4% | 14,441 | 8.7% |
| Other services, except public administration | 1,653 | 3.3% | 6,090 | 3.7% |
| Public administration | 3,166 | 6.2% | 9,582 | 5.8% |

Zero Vehicle Households

The proportion of zero-vehicle households is also larger in the rural portion of the region compared to the urban proportion. Nearly 10 percent of households in the eleven rural counties do not have a vehicle available, compared to 7.1 percent in the urban counties. Access to a vehicle can be particularly important in rural areas where there is less access to alternative modes and travel distances to employment, education, and other necessary facilities are typically longer. Warren County has the largest proportion of zero-vehicle households at 16.8 percent, followed by Jefferson (15.8 percent), and Wilkes (13.1 percent), see Figure 27. Percent of Zero Vehicle Households by Census Tract [9]. In particular, the Southeast portion of Warren County and the Southern portion of Jefferson County have higher proportions of households without access to a vehicle. In Washington County where there is no public transportation system in operation, 8 percent of households do not have access to a vehicle.

Looking at zero vehicle households by age group, Burke, Hancock, Jefferson, McDuffie, and Warren counties have census tracts with upwards of 30 percent of working age households (aged 15-64) without a vehicle, see Figure 28. Jefferson, Warren, and Wilkes counties have higher proportions of senior households without access to a vehicle.

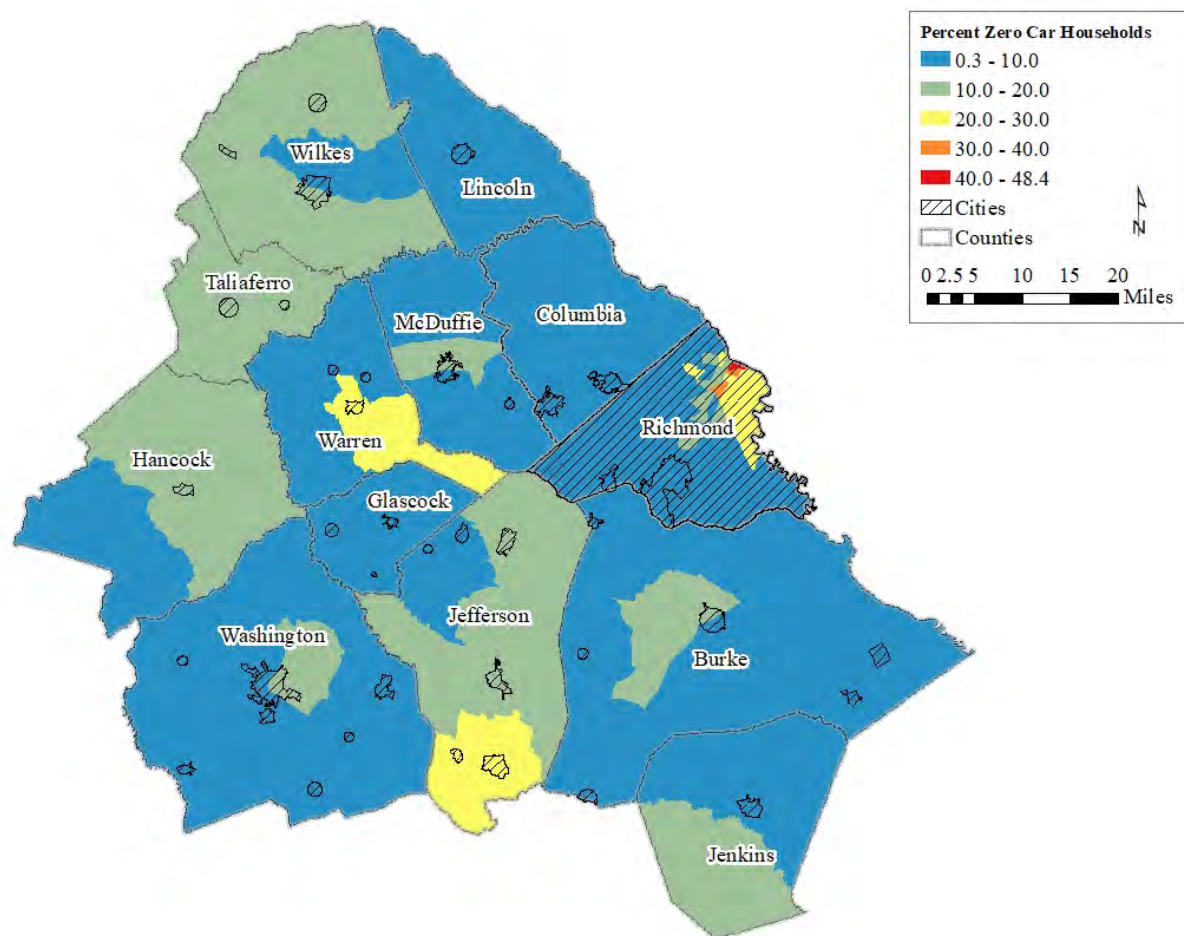


Figure 27. Percent of Zero Vehicle Households by Census Tract [9]

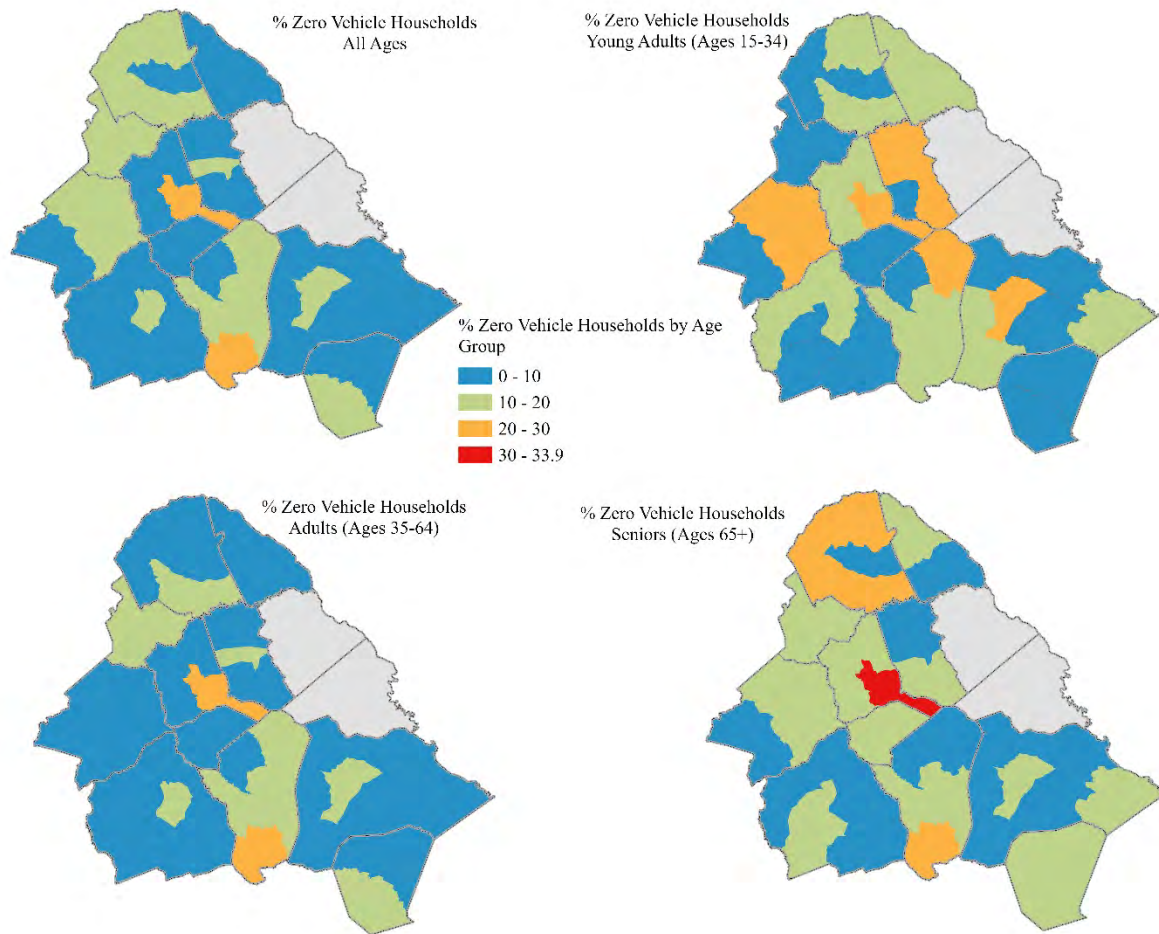


Figure 28. Percent Zero Vehicle Households by Census Tract for Each Age Group [9]

13 Appendix B – CSRARC Rural Transit Data

The following data was obtained from GDOT summaries (which correspond with NTD data).

Burke County

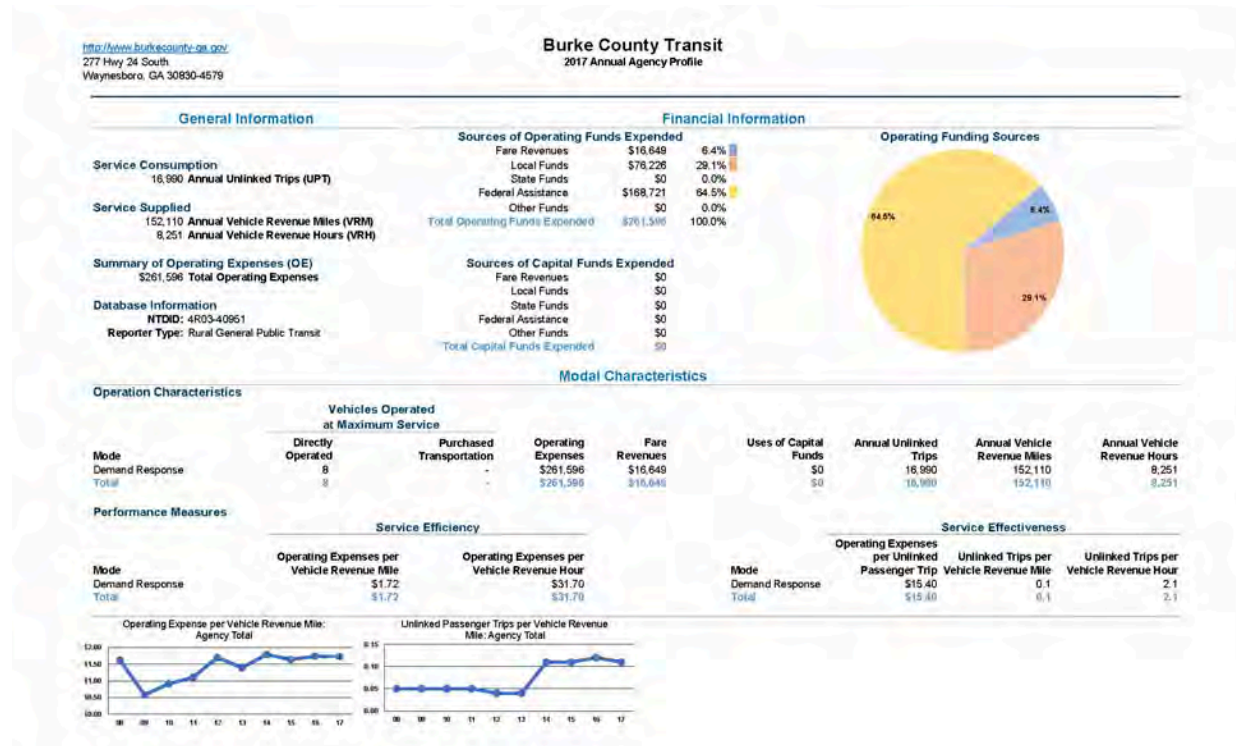


Figure 29. Burke County Summary Characteristics – National Transit Database (NTD)

BURKE COUNTY TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Service Area: **Burke County**

Service Area Size (sqmi): **835**

Service Type: **Demand Response**

Advance Notice Needed: **36 hours**



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | |

Service Hours



** All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted*



For More Information:



(706) 554-1660



www.burkecounty-ga.gov/departments/burke-transit

Figure 30. Burke County Summary Characteristics – Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Page 1

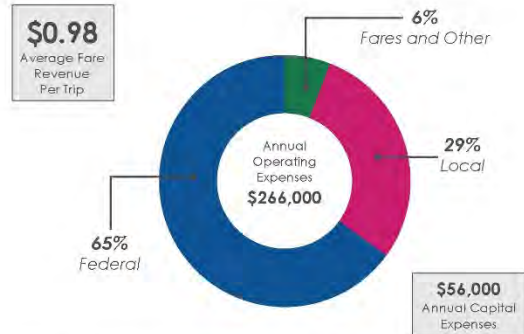


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 22,645 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 27.12 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$38,707 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 37.4 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 51.6% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 29.2% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 7.3% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 63.3% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **16,990**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 152,110 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 8 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 0.75 |
| Revenue Hours: | 8,251 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.36 |
| Standard Fare: | \$3.00 |
| Fare Type: | Stop Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 31. Burke County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Glascok County

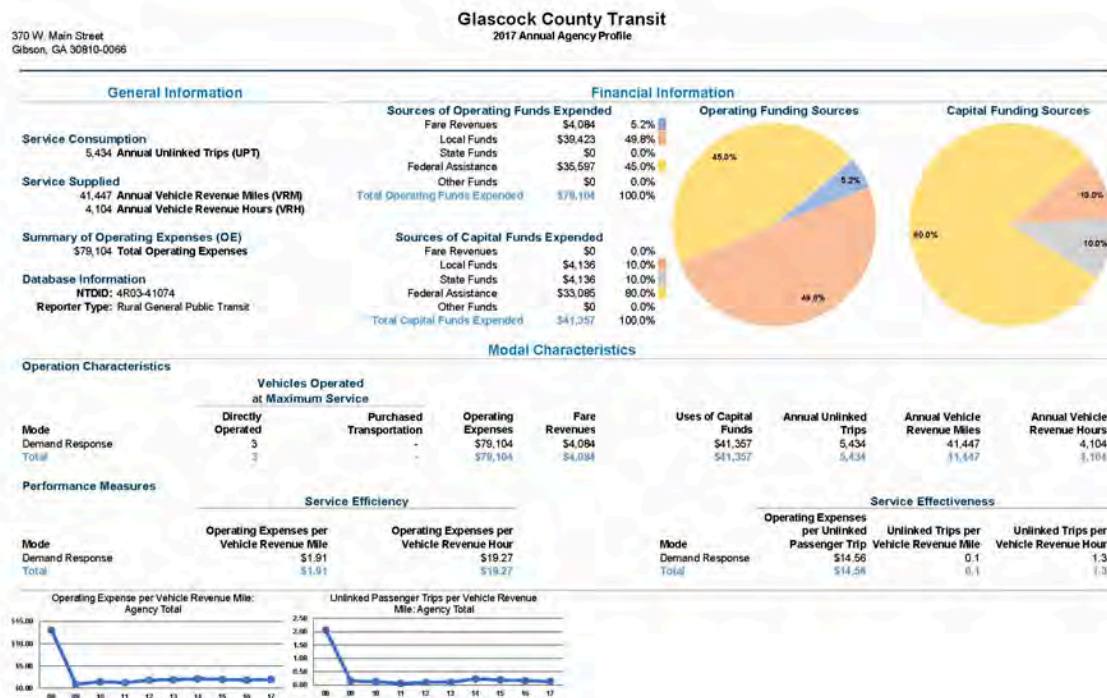


Figure 32. Glascok County Summary Characteristics – NTD

GLASCOCK COUNTY TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | Glascok County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 144 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |

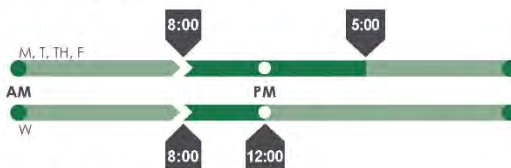


OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(706) 598-3313



www.glascocountyga.com/commissioners/countyoffices/transit/

Figure 33. Glascock County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

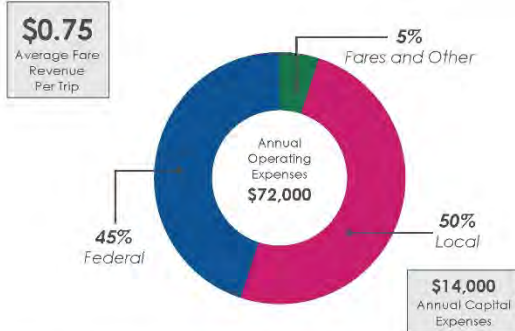


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 3,027 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 21.02 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$45,273 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 42.9 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 11.8% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 11.5% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 6.3% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 54.9% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **5,434**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 41,447 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 3 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.80 |
| Revenue Hours: | 4,104 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 1.36 |
| Standard Fare: | \$2.00 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 34. Glascock County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Hancock County

http://hancockcountyga.gov/?page_id=3972
12630 Broad Street
Sparta, GA 31087-1748

Hancock County Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

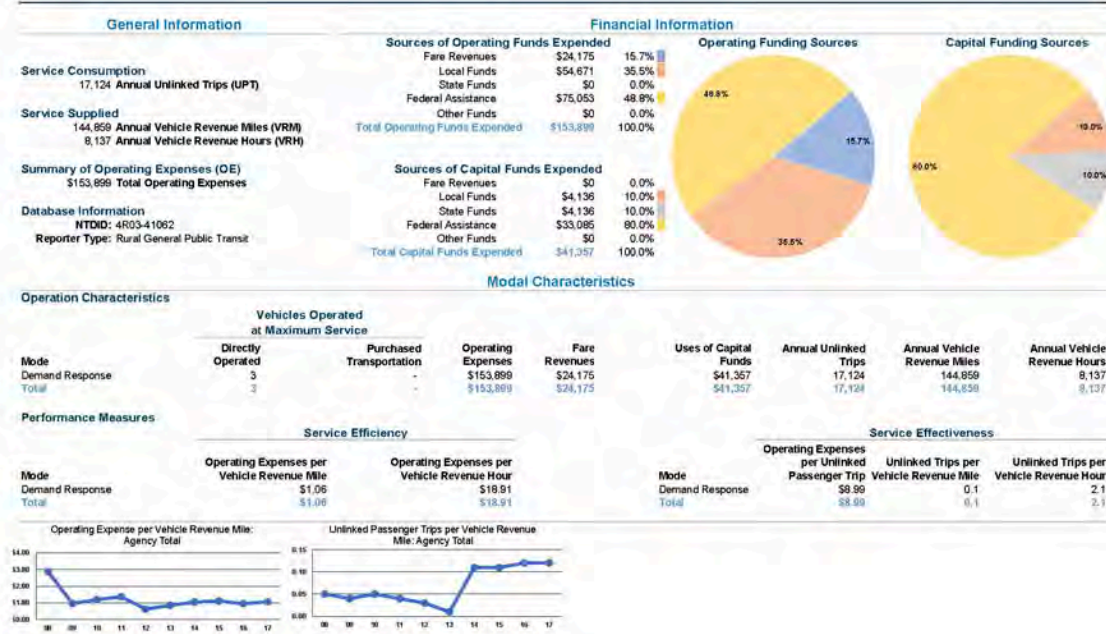


Figure 35. Hancock County Summary Characteristics – NTD

HANCOCK COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | Hancock County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 479 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(706) 444-7767



www.hancockcountyga.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hancock-Flyer_transit.pdf

Figure 36. Hancock County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

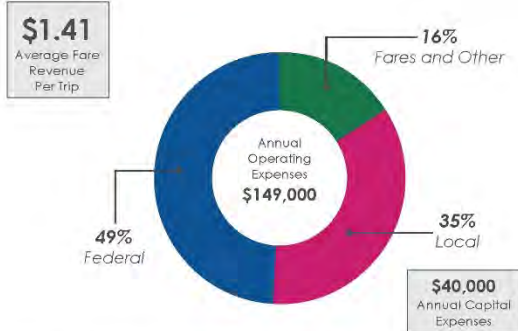


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 8,667 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 18.09 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$29,268 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 44.3 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 75.5% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 30.0% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 10.8% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 44.1% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **17,124**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 144,859 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 3 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.98 |
| Revenue Hours: | 8,137 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.94 |
| Standard Fare: | \$5.00 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



Figure 37. Hancock County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Jefferson County

<http://www.jeffersoncountypa.gov>
217 E. Broad Street
Louisville, GA 30434-4002

Jefferson County Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

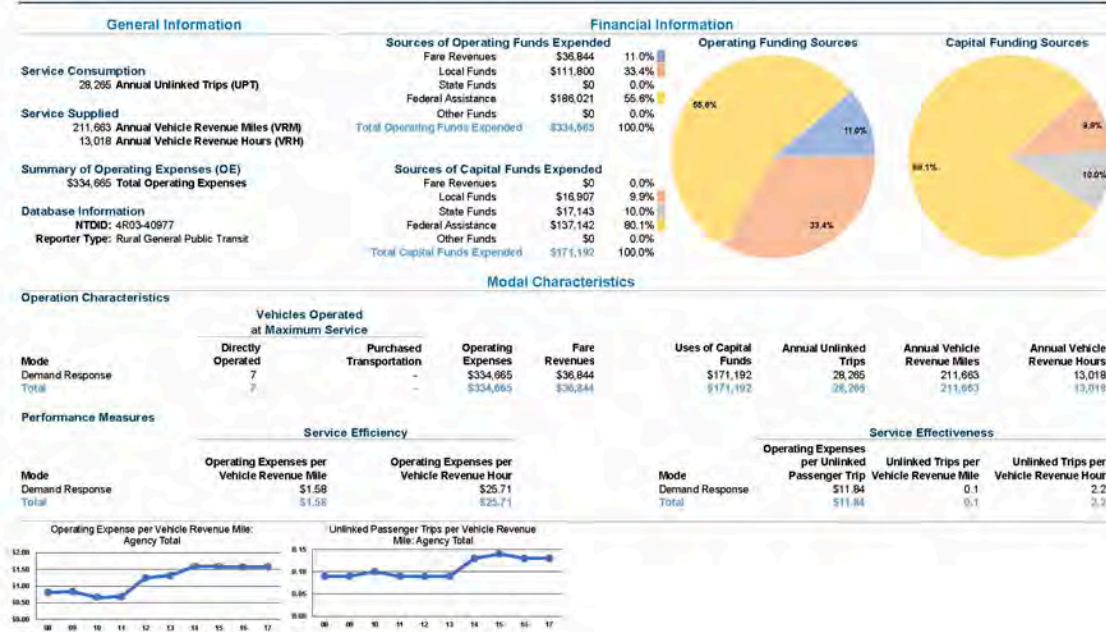


Figure 38. Jefferson County Summary Characteristics – NTD

JEFFERSON TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Service Area: **Jefferson County**

Service Area Size (sqmi): **530**

Service Type: **Demand Response**

Advance Notice Needed: **18 hours**



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | |

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(478) 625-8518



<http://www.jeffersoncountygga.gov/218/Transit>

Figure 39. Jefferson County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

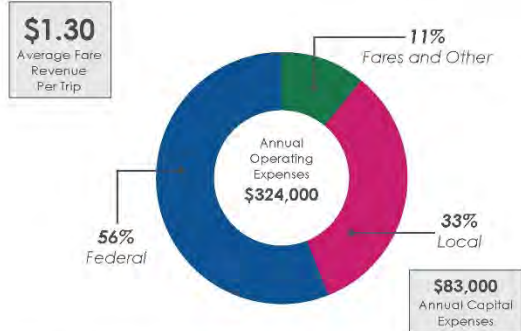


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 15,954 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 30.10 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$29,640 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 38.6 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 56.7% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 26.9% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 15.8% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 54.1% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **28,265**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 211,663 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 7 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.77 |
| Revenue Hours: | 13,018 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.82 |
| Standard Fare: | \$3.00 |
| Fare Type: | Distance Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 40. Jefferson County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Jenkins County

<http://www.jenkinscountyga.com/>
833 E. Winthrop Street
Milledgeville, GA 30442-0797

Jenkins County Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

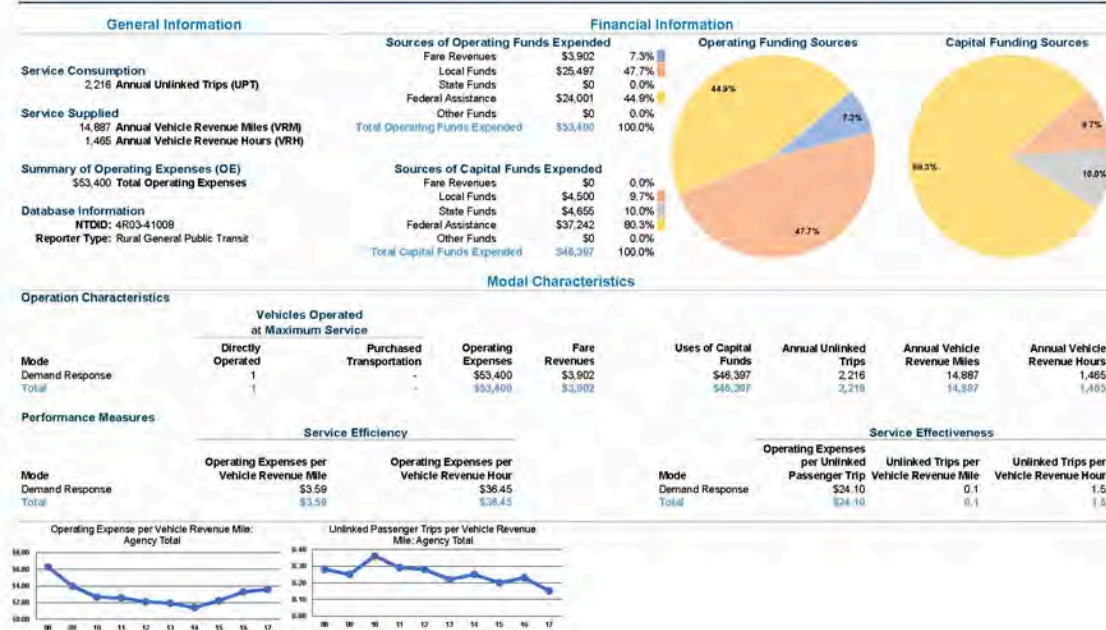


Figure 41. Jenkins County Summary Characteristics – NTD

JENKINS COUNTY TRANSIT (JCT)



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | Jenkins County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 352 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:

(478) 299-9983

N/A

Figure 42. Jenkins County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

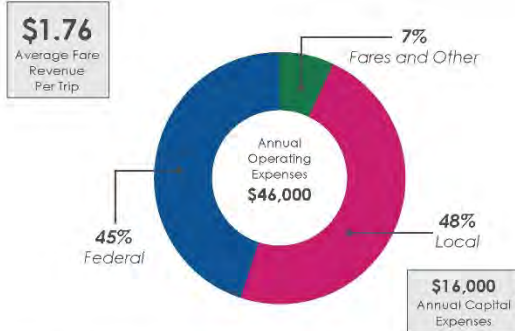


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 8,929 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 25.37 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$27,197 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 40.6 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 38.8% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 30.7% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 9.6% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 49.9% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **2,216**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 14,887 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 1 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 0.25 |
| Revenue Hours: | 1,465 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.16 |
| Standard Fare: | \$1.50 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 43. Jenkins County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Lincoln County

<http://www.lcga.gov.org/transit.html>
210 Humphrey St
Lincolnton, GA 30817-5847

Lincoln County Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

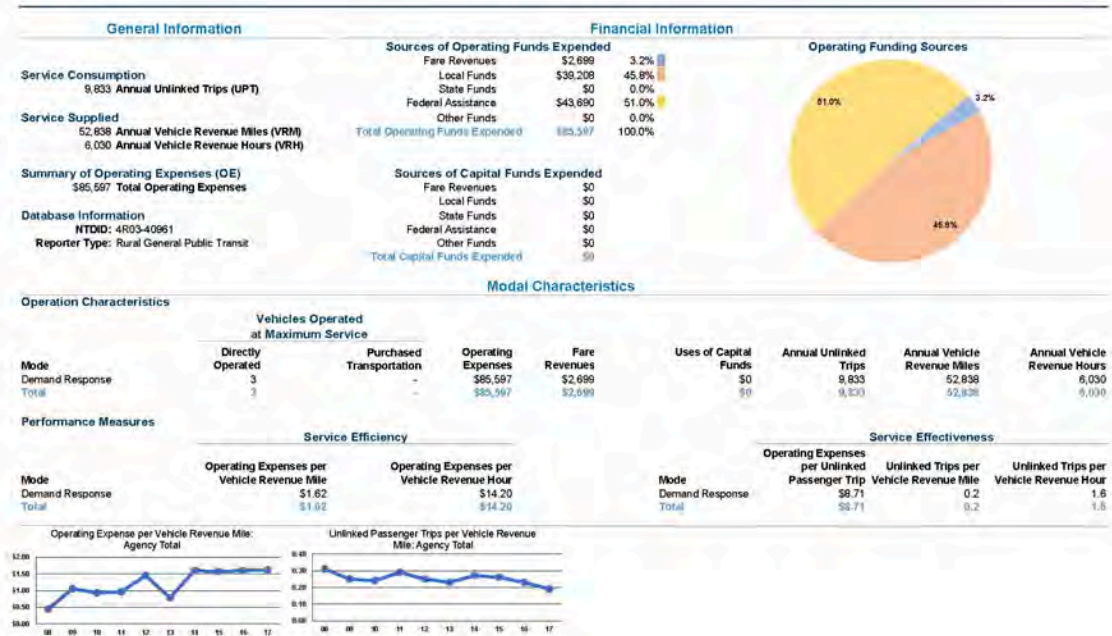


Figure 44. Lincoln County Summary Characteristics – NTD

LINCOLN COUNTY TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Service Area: **Lincoln County**

Service Area Size (sqmi): **257**

Service Type: **Demand Response**

Advance Notice Needed: **1 business day**



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | |

Service Hours



** All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted*



For More Information:



(706) 359-3116



www.lincolncountyga.com/senior-and-transit-center

Figure 45. Lincoln County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

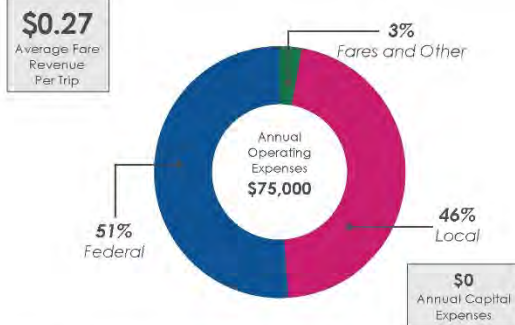


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 7,768 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 30.23 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$37,711 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 47.9 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 33.6% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 23.0% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 6.0% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 42.9% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **9,833**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 52,838 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 3 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.27 |
| Revenue Hours: | 6,030 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.78 |
| Standard Fare: | \$5.00 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 46. Lincoln County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

McDuffie County

<http://www.thomson-mcduffie.com>
180 Sweetwater Road
Thomson, GA 30824-8712

McDuffie County Commission Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

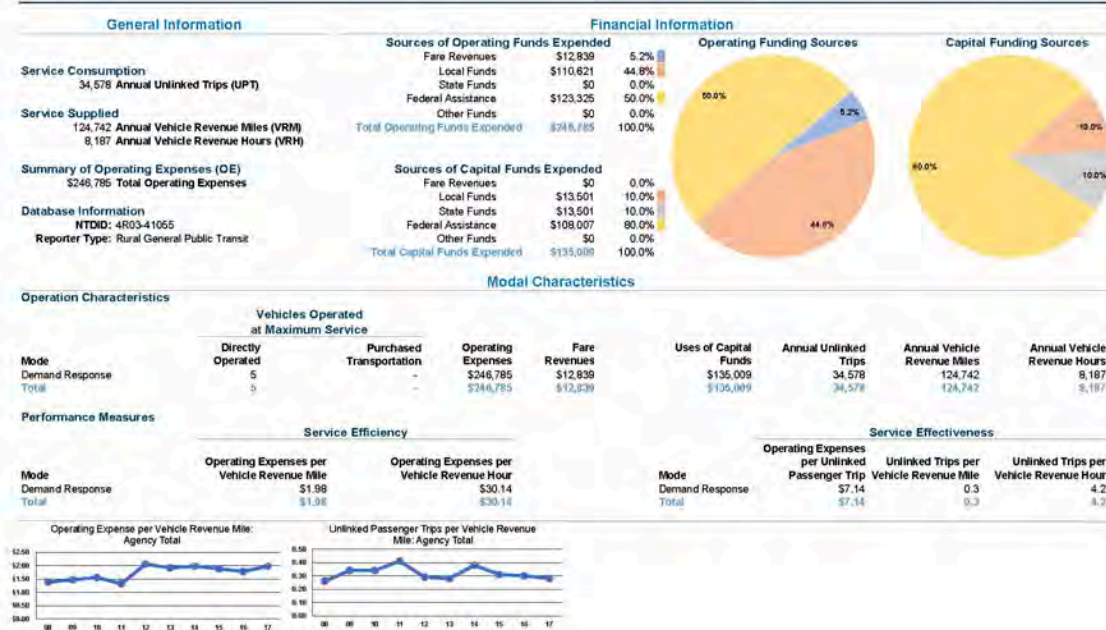


Figure 47. McDuffie County Summary Characteristics – NTD

THE MCDUFFIE COUNTY RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | McDuffie County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 266 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(706) 595-6683



www.thomson-mcduffie.com/citycounty/departments/mcduffie-county-departments/recreation-leisure-services/rural-transportation

Figure 48. McDuffie County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

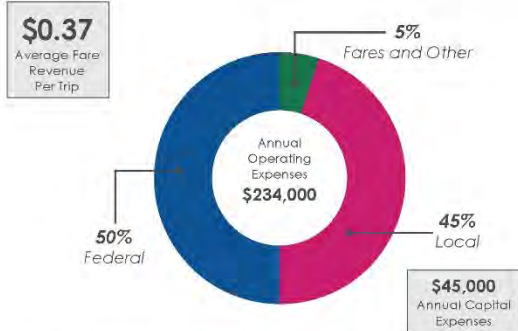


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 21,488 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 80.78 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$40,469 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 37.8 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 45.2% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 26.0% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 8.4% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 57.4% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **34,578**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 124,742 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 5 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.61 |
| Revenue Hours: | 8,187 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.38 |
| Standard Fare: | \$5.75 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 49. McDuffie County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Taliaferro County

<http://www.taliaferrocountyga.org>
113 Monument Street
Crawfordville, GA 30531-0114

Taliaferro County Board of Commissioners 2017 Annual Agency Profile

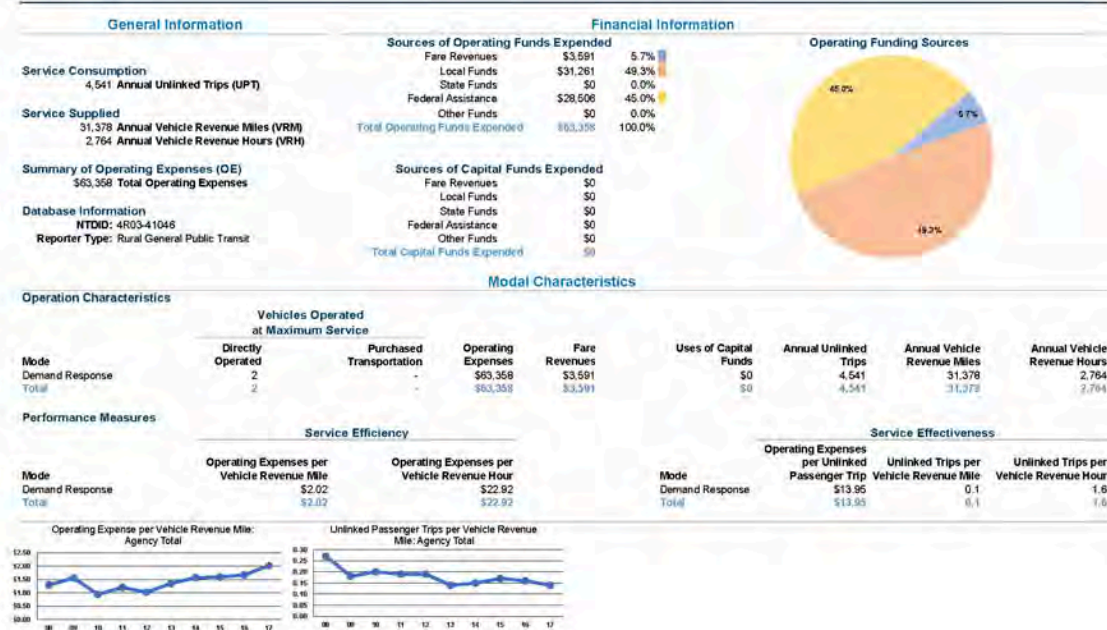


Figure 50. Taliaferro County Summary Characteristics – NTD

TALIAFERRO COUNTY TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Service Area: | Taliaferro County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 195 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(706) 456-2962



www.taliaferrocountyga.org/index.php?page=government

Figure 51. Taliaferro County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

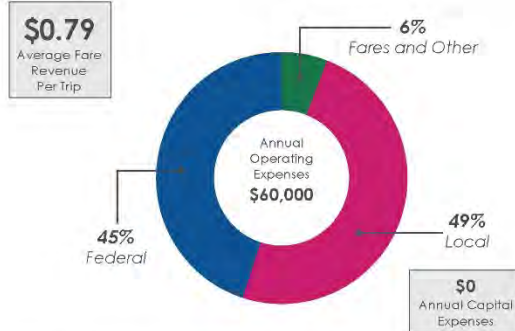


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 1,844 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 9.46 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$30,500 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 43.3 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 63.0% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 31.0% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 13.0% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 39.7% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **4,541**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 31,378 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 2 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 2.46 |
| Revenue Hours: | 2,764 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 1.50 |
| Standard Fare: | \$3.00 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 52. Taliaferro County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Warren County

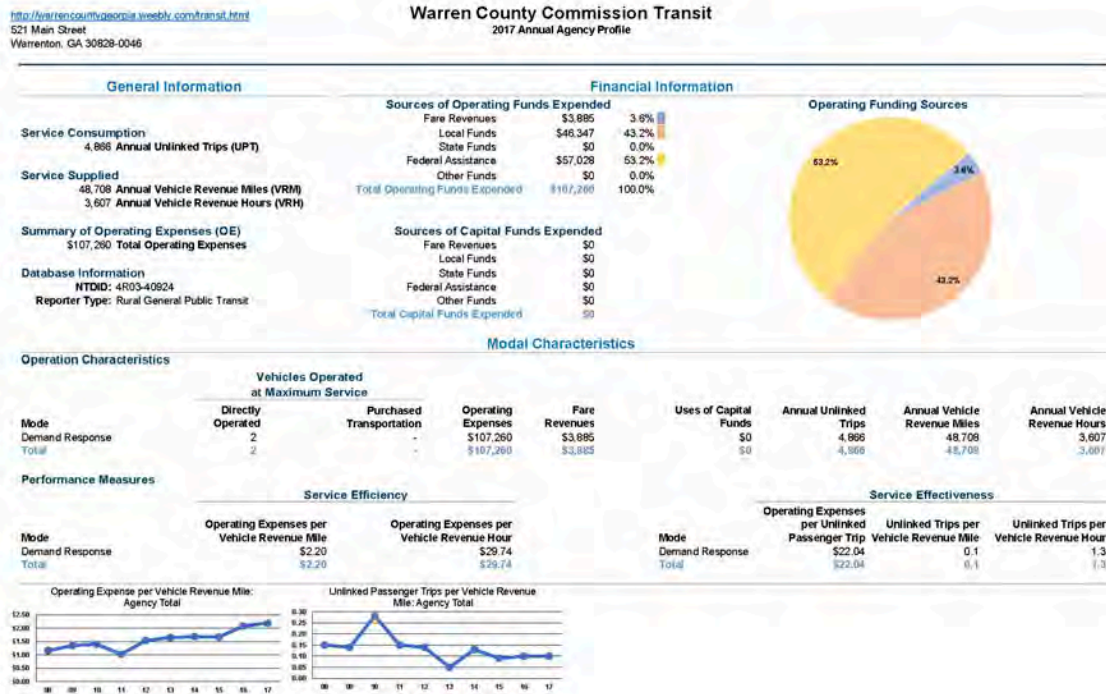


Figure 53. Warren County Summary Characteristics – NTD

WARREN COUNTY TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | Warren County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 287 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 1 business day |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



For More Information:



(706) 465-3222



www.warrencountygeorgia.weebly.com/transit.html

** All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted*

Figure 54. Warren County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

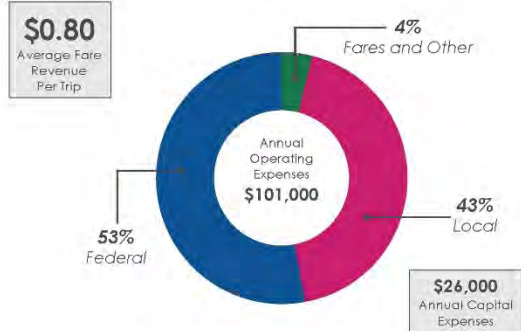


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 5,410 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 18.85 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$32,860 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 44.2 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 62.8% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 26.8% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 16.8% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 50.3% | 72.6% |



Funding



* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **4,866**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 48,708 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 2 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 0.90 |
| Revenue Hours: | 3,607 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.67 |
| Standard Fare: | \$1.50 |
| Fare Type: | Destination Based |

* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted

Figure 55. Warren County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2

Wilkes County

<http://www.wifa1.org>
23 East Court Street, Rm 222
Washington, GA 30673-1570

Wilkes County Commission Transit 2017 Annual Agency Profile

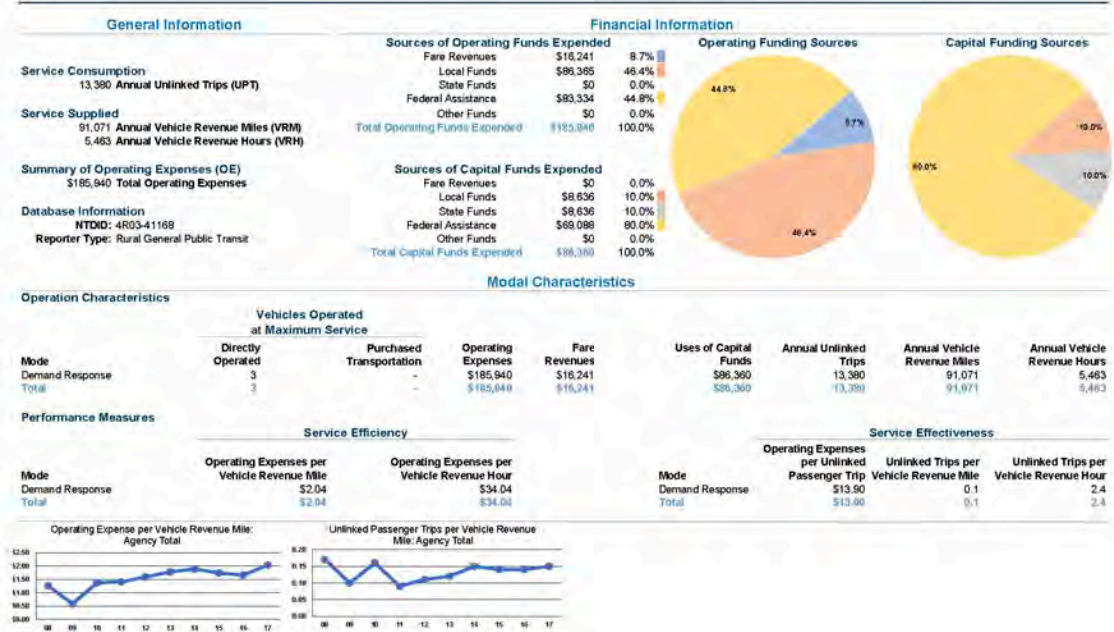


Figure 56. Wilkes County Summary Characteristics – NTD

WILKES COUNTY COMMISSION TRANSIT



SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Area: | Wilkes County |
| Service Area Size (sqmi): | 474 |
| Service Type: | Demand Response |
| Advance Notice Needed: | 24 Hour Advance |



OPERATING TIME

Days Per Week

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Service Hours



* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted



For More Information:



(706) 678-4459



www.wilkescountyga.org/wilkes-county-transit-system/

Figure 57. Wilkes County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 1

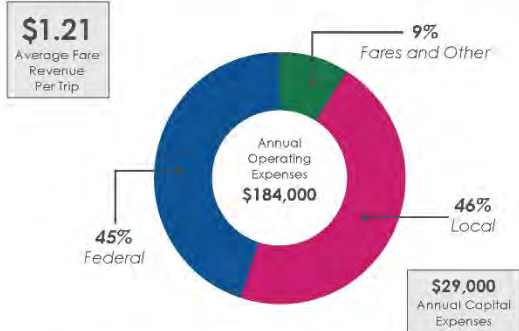


Service Area Population

| | Service Area | Statewide |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Population: | 9,905 | 10,201,653 |
| Population Density (per sqmi): | 20.90 | 171.7 |
| Median Household Income: | \$34,234 | \$52,977 |
| Median Age: | 45.5 | 36.4 |
| Minority: | 47.2% | 40.6% |
| Low Income: | 26.5% | 16.9% |
| Zero Car Households: | 13.1% | 6.7% |
| Household Smartphone Access: | 37.8% | 72.6% |



Funding

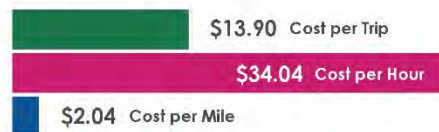


* Operating and capital expense totals reflect a three-year average from NTD data (2015-2017) and may include funding from FTA, USDOT, and other federal sources.



OPERATIONS / RIDERSHIP

Annual Trips: **13,380**



Annual Figures:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Revenue Vehicle Miles: | 91,071 |
| Peak Vehicle Count: | 3 |
| Trips Per Capita: | 1.35 |
| Revenue Hours: | 5,463 |
| Hours Per Capita: | 0.55 |
| Standard Fare: | \$3.00 |
| Fare Type: | Flat Fare |


* All data is from 2017 unless otherwise noted




Figure 58. Wilkes County Summary Characteristics – GDOT, Page 2



14 Appendix C – Transit System Website Screenshots

Burke County (<https://burkecounty-ga.gov/departments/burke-transit/>)

**BURKE** COUNTY
COUNTY GOVERNMENT

[Spanish](#)


Search this site 

In This Section

- ▶ Administration
- ▶ Airport
- ▶ Animal Services
- ▶ Board of Commissioners
- ▶ Burke Transit
- ▶ Census - Complete Count Committee
- ▶ Clerk of Superior, State, and Juvenile Court
- ▶ Coroner's Office
- ▶ Development Authority of Burke County
- ▶ E911
- ▶ Elections and Registration
- ▶ EMA
- ▶ Facility Maintenance
- ▶ Juvenile Court
- ▶ Library
- ▶ Magistrate Court
- ▶ Museum
- ▶ Planning Commission
- ▶ Probate Court
- ▶ Recreation
- ▶ Roads and Bridges
- ▶ Sheriff's Office
- ▶ Solicitor General's Office
- ▶ Solid Waste
- ▶ State Court
- ▶ Tax Assessor

BURKE TRANSIT



Burke Transit provides rural transportation on a per call basis. Office hours are Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed weekends & holidays.

Phone # 706-554-1660. Call to request service. At least 36 hours advanced request usually required.

No charter service available. No van rentals available.

BURKE TRANSIT FARE INFORMATION:

Burke Transit provides transportation within Burke County and to Richmond County. Transportation is provided for medical appointments, pharmacy visits, school, work, & shopping. Wheelchair access is available, call 706-554-1660 to specify and to receive information on available services.

For riders ages 60+: roundtrip within Burke County is \$6 and \$18 for a roundtrip to Richmond County.

For riders under age 60: \$8 roundtrip within Burke County for medical appointments and pharmacy visits, \$10 roundtrip for school and work. And, \$22 roundtrip to Richmond County.

References and Resources concerning Burke Transit & transportation information

[Burke Transit Title VI Plan](#)

[Notice of Rights Title VI](#)

[Title VI Complaint Form](#)

Follow this link for the ADA Discrimination Complaint form. After completing & submitting the form, the complaint will be reviewed by Transit Administrative Staff:

<https://www.ada.gov/t2cmpfrm.htm>

Burke Transit ADA Reasonable Accommodations document


[Burke_Transit_ADA_Reasonable_Accommodation_policies_and_practices.docx](#)

Follow this link for the Civil Rights Complaint Form


[Civil_Rights_Complaint_Form_for_Transit.pdf](#)

To contact LogistiCare (Medicaid recipients only), call 888-224-7988

Seniors seeking information on various transportation options in our region, may contact the Area Agency on Aging at 706-210-2018 or 866-552-4464



GLASCOCK COUNTY *Georgia*



- HOME
- COUNTY
- CITIES
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- RECREATION
- HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Transit

Home / COUNTY / Transit

Director/Driver: Robin Usry
Driver: Kim Martin

Glascok County Transit services Glascok County residents. Riders with disabilities must be accompanied by an attendant. Attendants may ride free of charge, unless they shop for personal use. Additional companions will be charged the regular fare.

[GDOT Title VI Plan](#)
[GDOT Title VI Plan – Complaint Procedures](#)
[GDOT Title VI Plan – Complaint Form](#)
[GDOT Title VI Plan – Complaint Form \(Spanish\)](#)
[Title II – ADA Complaint Form](#)

Fares for a round trip are:
\$2.00 – in the county
\$5.00 – Glascok to Louisville, Sandersville, Thomson, Warrenton and Wrens
\$10.00 – to Augusta

Offices located in the Glascok County Senior Center:
568 Brassell Park Lane
Gibson, GA 30810
Phone: 706-598-3313
Email: transit@glascokcountyga.com

Hours:
Monday – Friday: 8 am – 4 pm
Wednesday: 8 am – 12 pm

Hancock County (<https://hancockcountyga.gov/senior-center-transit-department/>)



[Departments](#) ▾

[Courts](#) ▾

[Judges Orders](#)

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Senior Center & Transit Department

Hancock County Senior Center & Transit Department

Malina Griffin

Director

330 Waterworks Road

Sparta, GA 31087

(706) 444-7532

- Increase your productivity, customize your experience, and engage in information you care about.

Rules, Regulations & Complaints

Transit Title VI Plan (PDF)

Americans With Disabilities

County Holidays

PUBLIC NOTICES

[Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Departments](#) > [Transit](#)

Transit

Jefferson Transit is a public transportation system, owned and operated by the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners and has served Jefferson County since 1987. Transit's mission is to provide efficient, effective, safe and affordable transportation that will allow riders to access jobs, medical/dental offices, education, social service agencies, government offices, and for shopping/personal purposes.

Public transportation supports our Communities by helping people that cannot drive, seniors and persons with disabilities to fully participate in and contribute to our Communities. Whether you are a first time passenger or a seasonal traveler, this information is provided to answer your questions and make your riding experience with Jefferson Transit positive.

To schedule transportation or for more information on available services, Call 478-625-8518 prior to 12:00PM the day before transportation is needed. Office hours are 8:00AM to 5:00PM Monday through Friday.

Bus Services

Jefferson Transit provides scheduled bus services throughout Jefferson County. Buses operate Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. through 5 p.m. except on County Holidays (see link).

| Distance | Admission |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Local and Within 5 Miles | \$3 |
| 5 - 7 Miles | \$3.25 |
| 7 - 9 Miles | \$3.50 |
| 9 - 11 Miles | \$3.75 |
| 11 - 13 Miles | \$4 |
| 13 - 15 Miles | \$4.50 |
| 15 - 17 Miles | \$5 |
| 17 - 20 Miles | \$5.25 |
| Extra Stops | \$1 |

Augusta One-Way or Round Trip - \$20 with a \$2 cost for each additional stop. Escorts for adults are \$10. Escorts for children ride for free. Children under 18 must have an escort.

Note: It is necessary for riders to have the correct amount of money. Jefferson Transit does not make change on the bus. Cancellations are necessary for whatever reason rider does not need the ride scheduled. Transit has an answering machine with the telephone number 478-625-8518 and the drivers check the messages before they leave the office.

Funding

Jefferson Transit receives funding from the Federal Transit Administrator, the Georgia Department of Transportation, the Department of Human Services, Jefferson County and fares from riders.

Jenkins County Transportation



Transportation options may be Jenkins County's major advantage. The community lies strategically between Augusta, GA and Savannah, GA and expects to benefit from the growth of both regional centers.

Jenkins County has access to three federal

both divided 4-lane limited access corridors of which parts are designated the Savannah River Parkway, allowing efficient transport of goods by motor carrier. The Fall-Line Freeway, like the Savannah River Parkway, will provide four-lane divided highway access from Augusta to Macon to Columbus upon its

Operating Hours

8:30 to 4:30

Monday—Friday

Call to schedule an
appointment the Day before
your trip

To Schedule a trip we need
the following:

Name

Pickup Address with
instructions if needed

Destination

Time

Thank you for your patronage!
Jenkins County Commissioners
Jenkins County Transit
Georgia Department of
Transportation
Federal Transportation
Administration
Georgia Department of Human
Resources

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please give us a call
478-982-2563
Office hours
8:00 AM to 5:00PM

COMPLIMENTS / COMPLAINTS

Have a compliment,
complaint, or suggestion?
Please give us a call
478-982-2563

Complaints can be submitted
in writing on Jenkins County
Transit Complaint Form
Available with the Transit
Driver or at the Jenkins
County Commissioners
Office 833 Winthrop Ave.
of Jenkins County Annex

JENKINS COUNTY
TRANSIT

JENKINS COUNTY TRANSIT
JENKINS COUNTY ANNEX
833 WINTHROPE AVE.
MILLEN, GEORGIA 30442
PHONE 478-982-2563



THE JENKINS COUNTY TRANSIT
SERVICE OFFERS JENKINS COUNTY
RESIDENTS TRANSPORTATION WITH
JENKINS COUNTY. CONTACT THE
JENKINS COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S
OFFICE THE DAY BEFORE TRANSPORT.

Welcome to **Lincoln County, Georgia**

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Officials](#)

[Departments](#)

[History](#)



Department of Leisure Services Senior / Tranist Center

Director
Nancy Blount

Transportation is provided for the Seniors to the Center and the return home.

Hot nutritious lunches are served daily for Lincoln County Senior Citizens. Great care is taken to see that all meals are nutritionally well-balanced to further contribute to the wellness of the seniors.

Activities in the daily program for the Seniors include line dancing, bingo, etc.



Lincoln County Transit has one 15 passenger van, one 12 passenger van and one wheelchair accessible van that seats 8. This system provides rural public transportation services designed to allow convenient, dependable, accessible transportation for Lincoln County residents who, due to financial and/or physical burdens, do not have access to other means of transportation.

This is a Shared-Ride service which means that several individuals may be on board the vehicle and in route to their appointments.

The Lincoln County Transit requires at least a 24 hour notice for services needed.

[ADA Complaint form](#)

Transportation Fares:

Thomson - \$10.00

Washington - \$10.00

Lincolnton: \$5.00

Thomson (Dialysis) Tuesday/Thursday - \$20.00 per month

Washington (Dialysis) Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday - \$20.00 per month

Transportation
Hours of Operation:
9am - 3pm

Title VI Notice to Public

Title VI Complaint
Procedure

Title VI Complaint Form



Lincoln County Government
PO Box 340
182 Humphrey Street
Lincolnton, Georgia 30817
Phone: 706-359-5502
Fax: 706-359-5503

Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm

Leisure Services

Recreational Facilities & Rental

Leisure Services

Senior Center

Rural Transportation

Big Hart Campground

Rayville Campground

CONTACT INFORMATION

304 Greenway Street
Thomson, GA 30824

[View Full Contact Details](#)

Rural Transportation

The McDuffie County Rural Transportation System operates five vehicles from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Rural Transportation provides transportation services to all McDuffie County residents for local appointments Monday through Friday. Appointments need to be between the hours of 8:30 am and 2:00 pm. Three vans are equipped with a wheelchair lift. Weekly trips are made on Thursdays to Augusta for appointments between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:00 pm. To arrange for transportation contact the office at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment so we can get you to your destination on time.

Program Director: Linda Lynch

Dates:

| Senior Citizens: | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| McDuffie County | \$2.00 (Round Trip)/\$1.00 (one way) |
| Augusta | \$5.00 (round trip)/\$2.50 (one way) |
| Under 60: | |
| McDuffie County | \$6.00 (Round Trip)/\$3.00 (one way) |
| Augusta | \$12.00 (round trip)/\$6.00 (one way) |

**If you are riding as a chaperone to help assist the person that is riding the van, there will be a half price cost according to your age. The person you are assisting must be disabled (wheelchair, blind, etc.) for you to qualify as a chaperone.

Supporting Documents

- [Public Transit Rules and Regulations \(65 KB\)](#)
- [ADA Compliance for Rural Transit \(311 KB\)](#)
- [Title VI Public Notice \(155 KB\)](#)
- [Transit Complaint Form \(470 KB\)](#)
- [Title VI nondiscrimination policy \(530 KB\)](#)

Taliaferro County (<http://taliaferrocountyga.org/index.php?page=government>)

[City of Crawfordville](#)[Chamber of Commerce](#)[Taliaferro County](#)[Development Authority](#)[Gallery](#)[Contact Us](#)[Home](#)

Taliaferro County | Crawfordville

G E O R G I A

Government

Taliaferro County Courthouse
113 Monument Street
Crawfordville, Georgia 30631

Taliaferro County Board of Commissioners

Willie Blockum, Jr, Chairman
P.O. Box 114
Crawfordville, GA 30631
(706) 456-2229
(706) 456-2904 (fax)
Email: Taliaferro@nu-z.net

Crawfordville, GA
79° F
2:57pm ET
[Full Day Forecast](#)



TOURISM INFORMATION:

- [Driving Directions](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Alexander H. Stephens Park](#)
- [Geocaching](#)
- [Camera Ready](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS


Taliaferro County Transit

The Taliaferro transit runs Tuesday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (706) 456-2962


[Click here to download the Taliaferro County Transit Complaint Procedures and Compliance.](#)

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Warren County (<https://www.warrencountyga.com/transit.html>)



[Home](#) [Chamber](#) [Downtown](#) [Explore](#) [Development](#) [Government](#) [Volunteer](#) [Connect](#)




Welcome to the place for information on Warren County Georgia transit activities. Here you will find information on services available to Warren County residents to assist them with their transportation needs. Use the menu above or links below to access more information.

Sincerely,

Patricia Allen, Director

Monday: Thomson, Georgia - Multiple Trips
Tuesday: Augusta, Georgia - Morning Pickup
Wednesday: Thomson, Georgia - Multiple Trips
Thursday: Augusta, Georgia - Morning Pickup
Friday: Thomson, Georgia - Multiple Trips



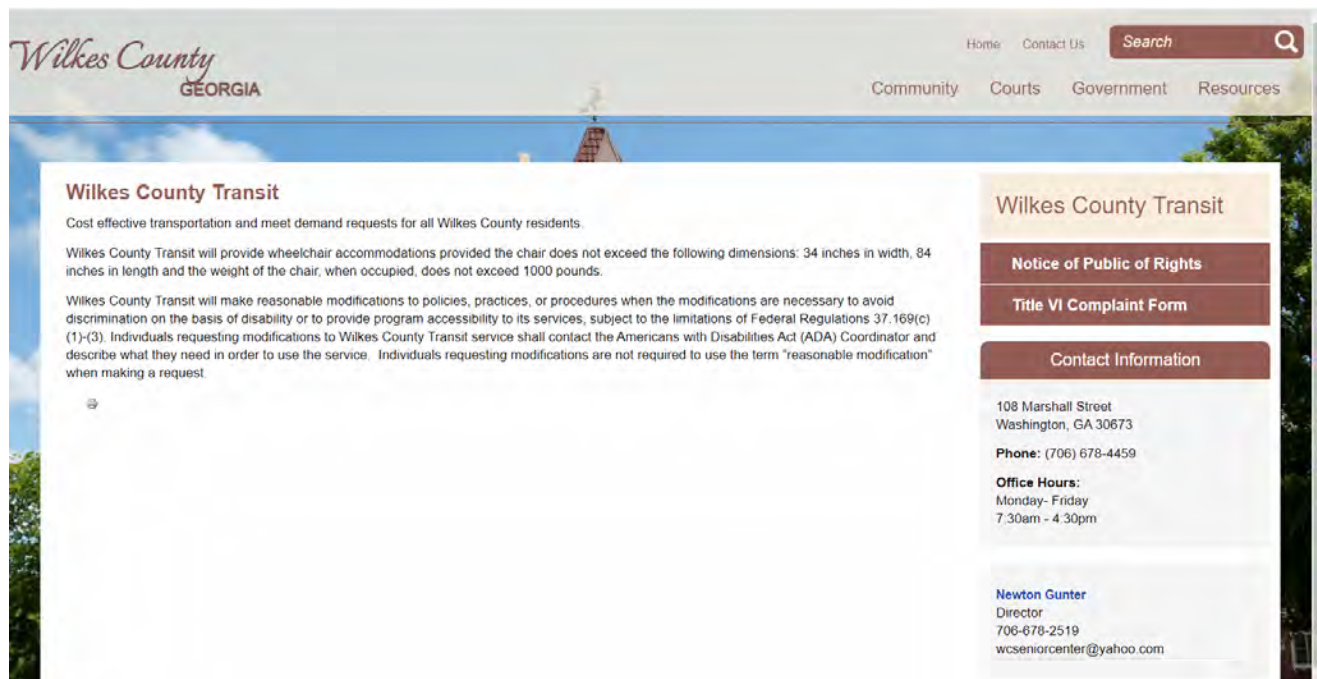
Patricia Allen
DIRECTOR
706-465-3539

EMAIL

TITLE VI PLAN

COMPLAINT FORM

Wilkes County (<https://www.wilkescountyga.org/transit>)



Wilkes County
GEORGIA

Home Contact Us Search

Community Courts Government Resources

Wilkes County Transit

Cost effective transportation and meet demand requests for all Wilkes County residents.

Wilkes County Transit will provide wheelchair accommodations provided the chair does not exceed the following dimensions: 34 inches in width, 84 inches in length and the weight of the chair, when occupied, does not exceed 1000 pounds.

Wilkes County Transit will make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability or to provide program accessibility to its services, subject to the limitations of Federal Regulations 37.169(c) (1)-(3). Individuals requesting modifications to Wilkes County Transit service shall contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and describe what they need in order to use the service. Individuals requesting modifications are not required to use the term "reasonable modification" when making a request.

📍

Wilkes County Transit

Notice of Public of Rights

Title VI Complaint Form

Contact Information

108 Marshall Street
Washington, GA 30673

Phone: (706) 678-4459

Office Hours:
Monday- Friday
7:30am - 4:30pm

Newton Gunter
Director
706-678-2519
wcseniorcenter@yahoo.com

15 Appendix D – Survey Instruments

First, the survey that was shared with residents within CSRA is presented. Then after, the survey that was developed for riders (March of 2020) is presented. Finally, postcards, which were to be used to share information about the survey are also included for the readers' reference.

Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission 2021

PLEASE READ FIRST:

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission is working with the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University to identify options for coordinating public transportation in its rural member counties. Participation is voluntary. You can skip any question you want, and you can stop at any time.

The information you provide by taking the survey will be used solely for research purposes and to understand public transportation needs. Personal information about respondents will remain strictly confidential and will not be sold or shared. Survey results will be summarized to exclude any personally identifiable information. Your participation is important for planning for the future of public transportation in the region.

We anticipate that it will take no more than 8 minutes to complete the survey. **Thank you!**

If you would prefer to take this survey online, please use the following link or QR code to access.

<https://bit.ly/CSRA-RC>



If you have any questions about the survey or study, please contact Natalie Villwock-Witte, PhD, PE at (505)-414-8935 or by email at n.villwockwitte@montana.edu

Section I. Date & County

1. Please enter today's date: _____
2. In which Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRA-RC) county do you live?

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burke | <input type="checkbox"/> McDuffie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glascock | <input type="checkbox"/> Taliaferro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hancock | <input type="checkbox"/> Warren |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jenkins | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilkes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln | |

Section II. Transportation, Employment, Healthcare

3. Which of the following best describes your use of the bus/van within your county (please check all that apply)?
 - ☐ I own or have access to a vehicle that takes me to where I need to go.
 - ☐ There is **not** a bus/van in my county.
 - ☐ The bus/van does not meet my **schedule**.
 - ☐ The **destinations** of the bus/van do not meet my needs.
 - ☐ I do not believe that I'm **eligible** to use the bus/van.
 - ☐ Other _____
4. Do you have a friend/family member who relies on you for transportation to their place of employment/medical appointments, etc.?
 - ☐ Yes → If yes, go to question 4a.
 - ☐ No → If no, go to question 5.
- 4a. How often have you provided a ride to a family/friend member or co-worker?
 - ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Periodically
5. Do you have a driver's license?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
6. Have you ever had to limit a job search due to transportation concerns?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
7. Have you ever missed or arrived late to a medical appointment because of transportation issues (e.g., could not find transportation)?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

8. Which of the following category/categories applies to you? (Please check ALL that apply.)

- ☐ Employed, full-time
- ☐ Employed, part-time
- ☐ Unable to work due to a disability
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Homemaker
- ☐ Stay-at-home parent
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Section III. Demographics

9. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

10. Which of the following age categories do you fall within?

- ☐ 17 and younger
- ☐ 18 to 35
- ☐ 36 to 53
- ☐ 54 to 72
- ☐ 73 to 86
- ☐ 87 and older
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

11. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have completed.

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school graduate/GED
- ☐ Vocational or technical school certificate
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate degree or professional degree (MA, MS, PhD, JD, MBA, etc.)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

12. What was your household income before taxes in 2019?

- ☐ Less than \$12,500
- ☐ \$12,500 to less than \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000 to less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000 to less than \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,000 to less than \$100,000
- ☐ \$100,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

13. With which racial group(s) do you most closely identify? (Please check ALL that apply.)

- ☐ American Indian/or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or/African American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

14. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

- ☐ Yes, Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ No, not Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

15. Please share with us any additional comments about public transportation in your county or the CSRA-RC region.

Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission 2020

PLEASE READ FIRST:

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission is working with the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University to identify options for coordinating public transportation in its rural member counties. Participation is voluntary. You can skip any question you want, and you can stop at any time.

The information you provide by taking the survey will be used solely for research purposes and to understand public transportation needs. Personal information about respondents will remain strictly confidential and will not be sold or shared. Survey results will be summarized to exclude any personally identifiable information. Your participation is important for planning for the future of public transportation in the region.

We anticipate that it will take no more than 8 minutes to complete the survey. **Thank you!**

If you have any questions about the survey or study, please contact Natalie Villwock-Witte, PhD, PE at (505)-340-3570 or by email at n.villwockwitte@montana.edu

Section I. Date & County

1. Please enter today's date: _____
2. In which Central Savannah River Area Regional Council (CSRA-RC) county do you live?

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burke | <input type="checkbox"/> McDuffie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glascock | <input type="checkbox"/> Taliaferro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hancock | <input type="checkbox"/> Warren |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jenkins | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilkes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln | |

Section II. Public Transportation

3. How did you learn about the bus?

4. For what purpose(s) do you currently use the bus? (*please check ALL that apply*)

| |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical appointments (doctor appointment, dialysis, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping (grocery store, pharmacy, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essential needs (bank, post office, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social trips (visiting family/friends, trips to the senior center, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
5. Do you use the bus to travel to travel to other communities?

| |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes → If yes, go to question 5a. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No → If no, go to question 6. |

 - 5a. Which communities do you travel to (mark all that apply)?

| |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Augusta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Macon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milledgeville |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Millen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thomson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waynesboro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
6. If you could suggest additional destinations for the bus service, where would you like to travel?

7. If the bus could extend service hours,

- What day(s) (e.g. Saturday, Sunday) would you like to use the bus?
 - During what times (e.g starting at 7am, ending at 9pm) would you like service to be available?
-

Section III. Transportation, Employment, Healthcare

8. Do you have a driver's license?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

9. Which of the following category/categories applies to you? (Please check ALL that apply.)

- ☐ Employed, full-time
☐ Employed, part-time
☐ Unable to work due to a disability
☐ Retired
☐ Homemaker
☐ Stay-at-home parent
☐ Unemployed
☐ Self-employed
☐ Student
☐ Other (please specify) _____

10. Have you ever had to limit a job search due to transportation concerns?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

11. Have you ever missed or arrived late to a medical appointment because of transportation issues (e.g., could not find transportation)?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Section IV. Demographics

12. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to answer

13. Which of the following age categories do you fall within?

- ☐ 17 and younger
- ☐ 18 to 35
- ☐ 36 to 53
- ☐ 54 to 72
- ☐ 73 to 86
- ☐ 87 and older
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

14. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have completed.

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school graduate/GED
- ☐ Vocational or technical school certificate
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate degree or professional degree (MA, MS, PhD, JD, MBA, etc.)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

15. What was your household income before taxes in 2019?

- ☐ Less than \$12,500
- ☐ \$12,500 to less than \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000 to less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000 to less than \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,000 to less than \$100,000
- ☐ \$100,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

16. With which racial group(s) do you most closely identify? (Please check ALL that apply.)

- ☐ American Indian/or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or/African American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

17. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

- ☐ Yes, Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ No, not Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

18. Please share with us any additional comments about public transportation in your county or the CSRA-RC region.

Resident Survey

The **Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission** is working with the **Western Transportation Institute** at **Montana State University** to identify options for coordinating public transportation in its rural member counties. Participation is voluntary. You can skip any question you want, and you can stop at any time.

The information you provide by taking the survey will be used solely for research purposes and to understand public transportation needs. Personal information about respondents will remain strictly confidential and will not be sold or shared. Survey results will be summarized to exclude any personally identifiable information. **Your participation is important for planning for the future of public transportation in the region.**

We anticipate that it will take **no more than 8 minutes** to complete the survey. Thank you!

Survey Link: http://bit.ly/CSRA_Residents

If you have any questions about the survey or study, please contact Natalie Villwock-Witte, PhD, PE at (505)-340-3570 or by email at: n.villwockwitte@montana.edu



Public Transportation Users Survey

The **Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission** is working with the **Western Transportation Institute** at **Montana State University** to identify options for coordinating public transportation in its rural member counties. Participation is voluntary. You can skip any question you want, and you can stop at any time.

The information you provide by taking the survey will be used solely for research purposes and to understand public transportation needs. Personal information about respondents will remain strictly confidential and will not be sold or shared. Survey results will be summarized to exclude any personally identifiable information. **Your participation is important for planning for the future of public transportation in the region.**

We anticipate that it will take **no more than 8 minutes** to complete the survey. Thank you!

Survey Link: http://bit.ly/CSRA_TransitUsers

If you have any questions about the survey or study, please contact Natalie Villwock-Witte, PhD, PE at (505)-340-3570 or by email at: n.villwockwitte@montana.edu



16 Appendix E – Potential COVID-19 Outreach Discussion Questions

How has COVID-19 affected your operations?

Providing same service as before or modified?

Local and state restrictions affecting your operations? (e.g., masks, closing of senior centers, social distancing on buses, etc.)

Are you/have you had staff concerns and if so, what are they?

Are you changing your operations to assist with vaccine rollout?

What have been your biggest challenges during COVID-19?

What have been your lessons learned due to COVID-19 that you think your peers could learn from?

Looking at the silver lining, are there any opportunities COVID-19 has provided that you wouldn't have had otherwise?

Are there changes that you made that you would try to keep after COVID-19?

What resources would be most helpful to you as you continue to navigate the COVID-19 obstacles?

Using funding from CARES Act - has that changed?

Have there been impacts to the county budget that are being impacted now by COVID-19 or may potentially be in the future?

Looking forward

What do you see as challenges and opportunities as you begin to resume "normal" operations?

What resources would be most helpful to you in planning to return to "normal" operations?

Marketing - how are you getting the information out about your COVID-19 changes?

17 Appendix F – Potential Outreach Discussion Questions

Existing conditions, marketing, mobility manager

Are you aware of other services (e.g., cities/towns/otherwise) operating in your county or is your service the only one of that type?

Does your county pick up or drop people off to intercity facilities?

Do you have MOUs with any other partners/organizations?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of your transit system?

Would you be interested in expanding your service to the other groups that are eligible via funding, but not currently using your service (e.g., non-elderly)

Do you have a transit development plan or has GDOT asked you to create one?

Have you had any issues/challenges with moving to GDOT's new data system?

Do you have a history of working with neighboring counties?

Have you ever considered doing pooled dispatching or drivers with a neighboring county?

Are you experiencing a driver shortage? How are you advertising job opportunities?

Have you ever used an AmeriCorps Vista? If so, for what and how was your experience with the program?

Are you aware that GDOT identified in their recently released (December 2020) Statewide Transit Plan the potential for driver pools? Would they be interested in such a concept for rural CSRARC counties?