

HALL AREA TRANSIT TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

New Services Recommendations
Adopted: May 13, 2008



Prepared for:
Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization

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URS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Hall Area Transit (HAT) has served the City of Gainesville and Hall County since 1983. As the public transit service provider for the County, HAT's mission is to provide efficient, effective, and affordable public transportation allowing riders to access employment, retail shops, recreational facilities, medical offices, social service agencies, government offices, and other key destinations.

HAT provides public transportation to the urban and rural portions of Gainesville and Hall County. Services include scheduled fixed route service and paratransit service within the City of Gainesville and a demand-responsive van service in the outlying areas of the County. The urban fixed route service, known as the Red Rabbit, consists of three (3) fixed routes with coverage of major transportation corridors, such as:

- Browns Bridge Road/Jesse Jewell Parkway
- Limestone Parkway
- John W. Morrow Jr. Parkway
- Athens Street/Athens Highway
- Dawsonville Highway

HAT also provides convenient access to local community service/civic venues and to a number of other key destinations, including but not limited to:

- Downtown Gainesville
- Hall County Library
- Lakeshore Mall
- Georgia Department of Labor
- Hall County Health Department
- The Village Shopping Center
- Georgia Mountains Center
- Gainesville Public Utilities, at Red Rabbit Transfer Station
- U.S. Social Security Administration Field Office
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC)
- NGMC Lanier Park Hospital
- Sherwood Plaza

Access to HAT's demand-responsive van service can be attained by contacting HAT 48 hours in advance to reserve service. Vans are equipped with special lifts and service is provided on a curb-to-curb, shared-ride basis. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, HAT provides complementary paratransit service within a three-fourth mile distance of Red Rabbit fixed routes to persons with disabilities, who by virtue of their disability are unable to access or use the Red Rabbit services.

The Transit System Map (Figure 1-1) illustrates HAT's current coverage area for fixed route service.

Figure 1-1: HAT System Route Alignment



2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

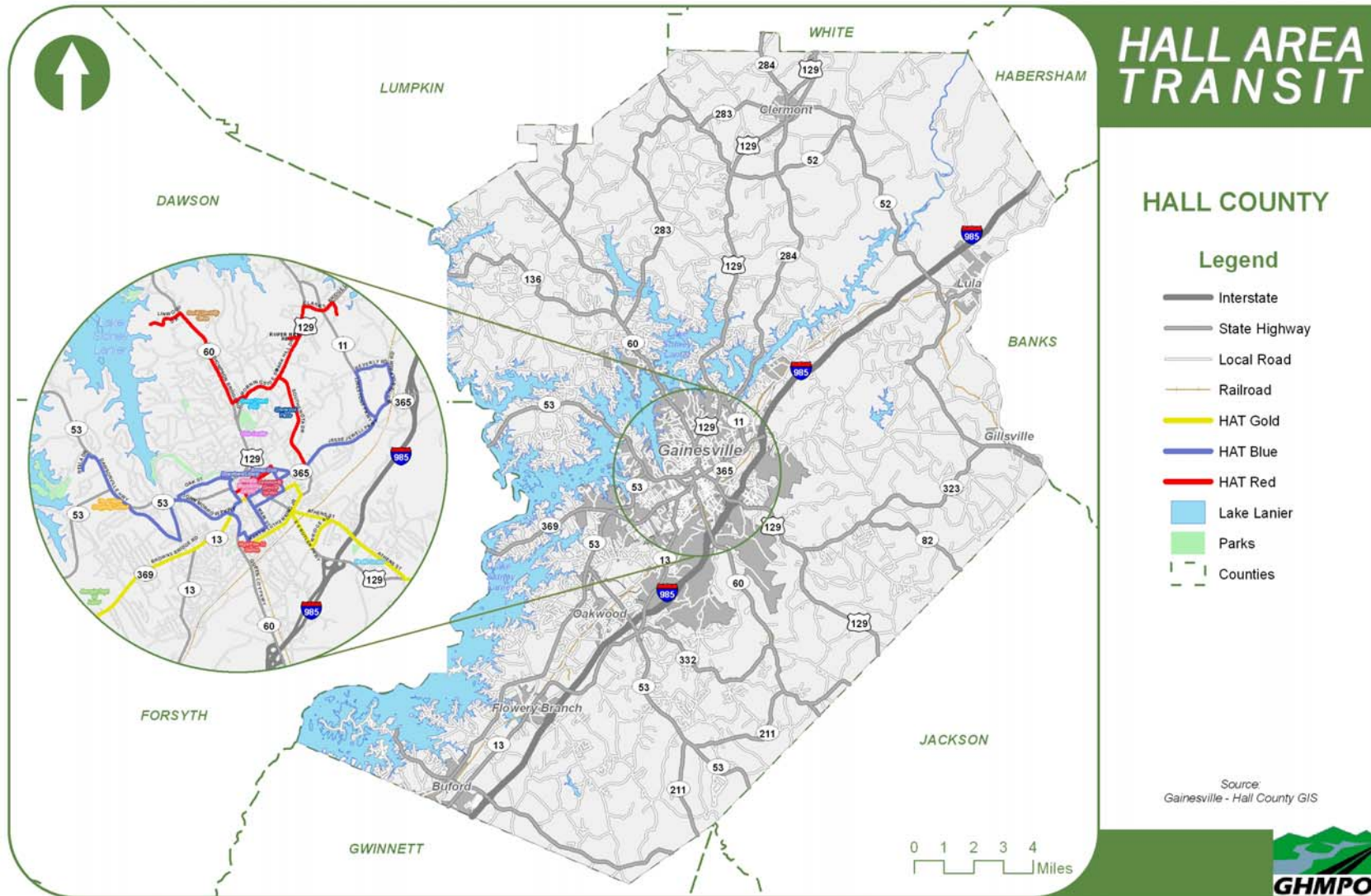
2.1 Study Area Characteristics

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) is the designated planning body for transportation planning within the Gainesville urbanized area and includes all of Hall County as its planning boundary.

Hall County is situated in northeast Georgia at the southern edge of the Chattahoochee Natural Forest and the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Lake Sidney Lanier, a 38,000-acre lake provides 607-miles of shoreline along the western county boundary and serves as a major traffic generator for residential, tourism and recreation trips in the region.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 429 square miles, 394 square miles of which is land, and 36 square miles (8.28%) of which is water. Adjacent counties include White County to the north, Habersham County to the northeast, Banks County to the east, Jackson County to the southeast, Barrow County to the south, Gwinnett County to the southwest, Forsyth County to the west, Dawson County to the northwest, and Lumpkin County to the northwest. Hall County and the adjacent counties are shown in Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1: Hall County and Adjoining Counties



Gainesville, the county seat, is situated 50 miles northeast of Atlanta and 40 miles northwest of Athens. A center for employment and commercial, medical, and educational facilities and services, Gainesville is a regional transportation hub for Hall County as well as neighboring counties. Other municipalities in Hall County include Clermont, Flowery Branch, Gillsville, Lula, and Oakwood.

Key transportation routes in Hall County include Interstate 985 (I-985) and major and minor arterials such as E.E. Butler Parkway, Green Street/Thompson Bridge Road, Browns Bridge Road, and Jesse Jewell Parkway. These routes combine with collectors and local streets to form the County's roadway system. I-985 directly links to Hall County, providing convenient access to Interstate 85 (I-85) and, therefore, to the markets in Metropolitan Atlanta and South Carolina.

2.2 Study Area Description

The following section profiles Hall County. Several variables were examined to evaluate existing conditions, including, but not limited to, population and employment, socioeconomics, demographic composition, income, industry (major employers, industry mix), transit target markets, land uses, and transportation.

2.2.1 Population

Hall County has been characterized by explosive growth over the last decade. The population of Hall County increased from 95,434 to 139,277 between 1990 and 2000, a growth rate of 45.0 percent. U.S. Census Bureau estimates show Hall County gained approximately 7,000 people between 2005 and 2006, increasing to 173,256 residents (growing by 24.4 percent since 2000). The net increase since the Year 2000 Census has been close to 34,000 (see Tables 2-1 and 2-2). As of 2006 the County was ranked 17th among Georgia counties in population percentage gains since 2000.

The Year 2000 population density in Hall County was 354 residents per square mile (see Table 2-3). The density as of 2006 is estimated to be 439.6 residents per square miles. The population is most highly concentrated within the city limits of Gainesville, the county seat. The population density of the City of Gainesville was 944 residents per square mile in 2000 and increased to approximately 1,230 per square miles by 2006. The 2005 and forecasted 2030 population density from the GHMPO Travel Demand Model is illustrated in Figures 2-2 and 2-3.

Table 2-1: Population Totals, Hall and Surrounding Counties, 1960 to 2000 Census

Area Name	2000	1990	1980	1970	1960	1990-2000	1980-1990	1970-1980	1960-1970
Banks	14,422	10,308	8,702	6,833	6,497	39.9%	18.5%	27.4%	5.2%
Barrow	46,144	29,721	21,354	16,859	14,485	55.3%	39.2%	26.7%	16.4%
Dawson	15,999	9,429	4,774	3,639	3,590	69.7%	97.5%	31.2%	1.4%
Forsyth	98,407	44,083	27,958	16,928	12,170	123.2%	57.7%	65.2%	39.1%
Gwinnett	588,448	352,910	166,815	72,349	43,541	66.7%	111.6%	130.6%	66.2%
Habersham	35,902	27,622	25,020	20,691	18,116	30.0%	10.4%	20.9%	14.2%
Hall	139,277	95,434	75,649	59,405	49,739	45.9%	26.2%	27.3%	19.4%
Jackson	41,589	30,005	25,343	21,093	18,499	38.6%	18.4%	20.1%	14.0%
Lumpkin	21,016	14,573	10,762	8,728	7,241	44.2%	35.4%	23.3%	20.5%
White	19,944	13,006	10,120	7,742	6,935	53.3%	28.5%	30.7%	11.6%
Georgia	8,186,453	6,478,149	5,462,989	4,587,930	3,943,116	26.4%	18.6%	19.1%	16.4%

Source: http://www.gadata.org/information_services/Census_Info/2000_county_pop.htm

Table 2-2: Population, Hall County and Gainesville

City/County	Population Totals			
	1990	2000	2005	2006
Gainesville	17,885	25,578	32,444	33,340
Hall County	95,434	139,277	166,302	173,256

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-3: Population Density, Gainesville and Hall County

Population Density ¹				
City/County	1990	2000	2005	2006
Gainesville	660	944	1,197	1,230
Hall County	242	353	422	440

¹Population density computed based on U.S. Census Data based on total land area of Gainesville and Hall County, 27.1 and 394 square miles of Gainesville and Hall County, respectively.

Figure 2-2: 2005 Hall County Population Density

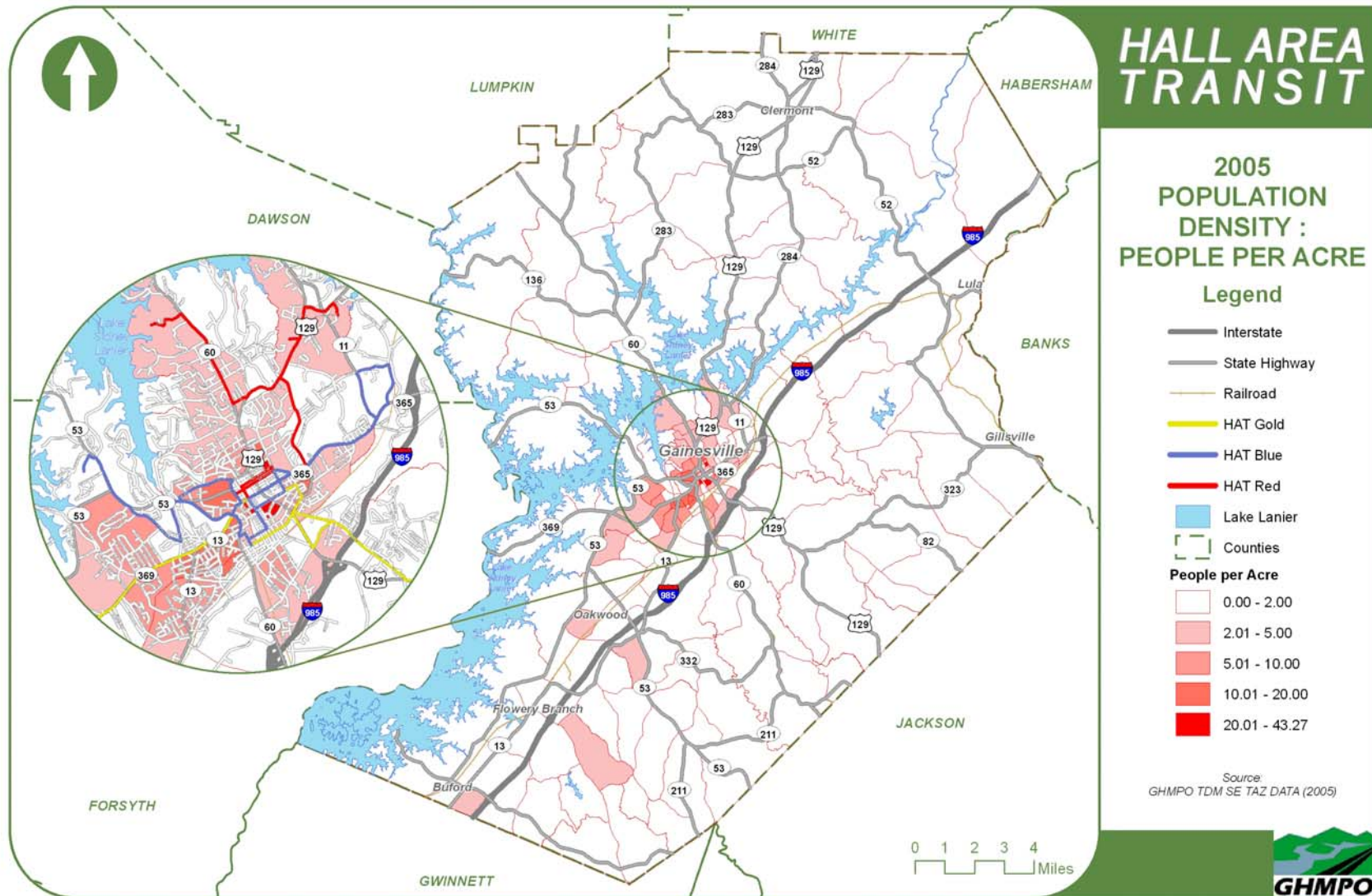
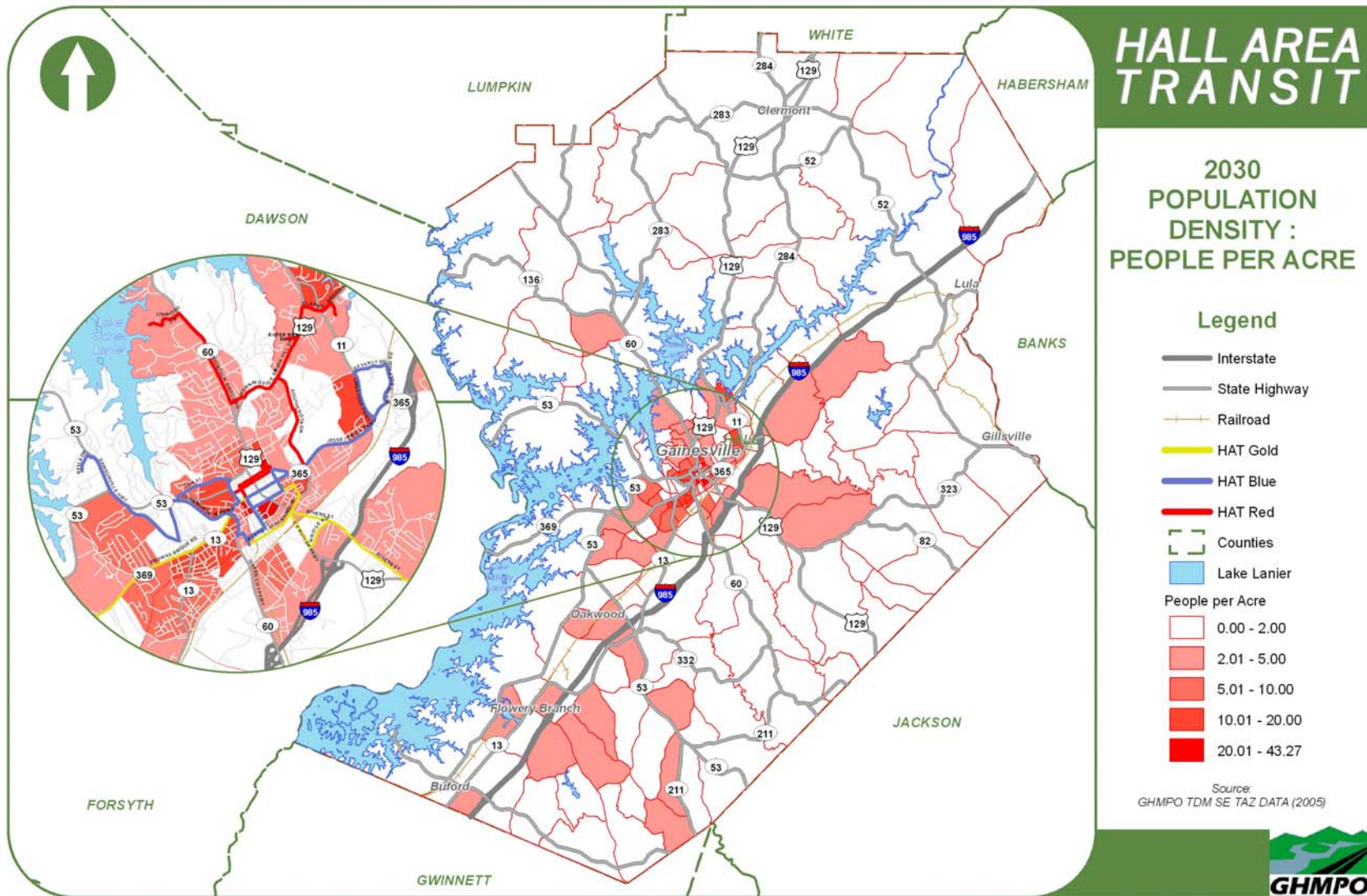


Figure 2-3: 2030 Hall County Population Density



According to the 2025 Hall County Comprehensive Plan, Hall County's growth reflects its status as northeast Georgia's regional center for business, shopping, medical services, and educational opportunities. The historic growth is also due in great part to its proximity to and spread of growth from the metropolitan Atlanta area. According to the 2030 GHMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update, this dramatic growth has created new and more complex challenges to adequately address citizen and business mobility needs.

The LRTP Update projects that by 2030 Hall County's population is anticipated to more than double to 365,241, an approximate 120 percent increase over the most current 2005 population estimate provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. This dramatic growth is anticipated to create new and more complex challenges to adequately address citizen and business mobility needs.

2.2.2 Employment/Socioeconomic Indicators

Employment

Year 2006 labor force data for Hall County and the surrounding labor area, compiled by the Georgia Department of Labor, is presented in Table 2-4.

Table 2-4: Labor Force Activity, 2006 Annual Averages for Hall County and Surrounding Areas

Location	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Banks County	9,730	9,414	316	3.20%
Barrow County	31,655	30,333	1,322	4.20%
Dawson County	10,679	10,281	398	3.70%
Forsyth County	77,892	75,394	2,498	3.20%
Habersham County	19,917	19,109	808	4.10%
Hall County	86,559	83,263	3,296	3.80%
Gwinnett County	412,993	396,127	16,866	4.10%
Jackson County	26,992	25,932	1,060	3.90%
Lumpkin County	12,820	12,299	521	4.10%
White County	12,500	12,033	467	3.70%
Hall Area	701,737	674,185	27,552	3.80%
Georgia	4,741,860	4,522,025	219,835	4.60%
United States	151,428,000	144,427,000	7,001,000	4.60%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

A review of data from the Georgia Department of Labor reveals that the year 2006 employment was most concentrated in service-providing industries, with 38,783 jobs, roughly 55 percent of the total year 2006 workforce of Hall County. Within the service-providing industries, the highest levels fell into the health and social assistance, retail trade, administrative and waste services, accommodation and food services, and wholesale trade categories (see Table 2-5). Goods-producing industries employed approximately 21,899 or 31 percent of the 2006 workforce, with the largest employment numbers in the manufacturing and construction sectors (at 16,938 and 4,439 jobs respectively).

Table 2-5: Industry Mix, Hall County and Hall Area

		Hall County				Hall Area			
		No. of Firms	Employment Number	Employment Percent	Weekly Wage	No. of Firms	Employment Number	Employment Percent	Weekly Wage (\$)
Goods-Producing		917	21,899	31	735	7,021	108,447	21	750
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	24	463	1	690	133	1,922	0	651
	Mining	4	59	0	928	23	410	0.1	1,067
	Construction	613	4,439	6.3	744	5,138	40,661	7.9	711
	Manufacturing	276	16,938	24	733	1,727	65,457	12.6	762
	Food Mfg.	33	8081	11.5	600	111	16,474	3.2	531
	Beverage and Tobacco Product Mfg.	4	169	0.2	772	12	*	*	*
	Textile Mills	8	697	1	697	30	2,167	0.4	616
	Textile Product Mills	6	18	0	441	64	555	0.1	403
	Apparel Mfg.	1	*	*	*	25	524	0.1	503
	Leather and Allied Product Mfg.	1	*	*	*	2	*	*	*
	Wood Product	9	669	0.9	638	93	3,125	0.6	601
	Paper	3	22	0	1,371	24	1,015	0	884
	Printing and Related Support Activities	19	232	0.3	855	217	4,319	0.8	687
	Chemical Mfg.	14	560	0.8	1103	90	3,131	0.6	887
	Plastic and Rubber Products Mfg.	10	374	0.5	625	62	3,078	0.6	681
	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Mfg.	21	334	0.5	772	114	2,949	0.6	825
	Primary Metal Mfg.	4	440	1	922	13	696	0	671
	Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	44	733	1	885	218	4,373	0.8	744
	Machinery Mfg.	22	1,766	3	969	106	4,561	1	1,036
	Computer and Electronic Product Mfg.	5	61	0.1	759	99	5,543	1.1	1255
	Electrical Equipment and Appliances	7	609	1	871	26	2,082	0.4	1,017
	Transportation Equipment Mfg.	8	1,344	1.9	911	50	3,436	1	712
	Furniture and Related Product Mfg.	22	310	0	655	166	1,979	0.4	587
	Miscellaneous Mfg.	35	505	0.7	811	199	5,099	1	809

Table 2-5: Industry Mix, Hall County and Hall Area (continued)

		Hall County				Hall Area*			
		No. of Firms	Employment Number	Employment Percent	Weekly Wage	No. of Firms	Employment Number	Employment Percent	Weekly Wage (\$)
Service-Providing		3,360	38,783	55	635	30,068	347,825	67.2	552
	Utilities	5	158	0.2	1,145	37	1,473	0.3	1,040
	Wholesale Trade	316	3,337	5	884	3,642	41,797	8.1	827
	Retail Trade	552	7,227	10.2	526	4,521	71,901	13.9	479
	Transportation and Warehousing	157	1,827	2.6	797	820	9,572	1.8	654
	Information	41	621	.9	905	571	13,991	2.7	786
	Finance and Insurance	256	2,623	3.7	871	2,234	22,934	4	855
	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	211	587	0.8	645	1,877	7,308	1.4	588
	Professional and Technical Services	406	1,626	2.3	829	4,889	28,457	5.5	758
	Management and Companies and Enterprises	25	321	0.5	1,323	151	7,341	1.4	1,531
	Administrative and Waste Services	274	5,100	7.2	440	2,602	42,617	8.2	505
	Educational Services	32	1,185	1.7	439	393	5,253	1.0	449
	Health and Social Assistance	376	8,044	11.4	811	2,380	35,292	6.8	614
	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	53	450	0.6	423	392	4,795	0.9	450
	Accommodation and Food Services	262	4,071	5.8	242	2,361	42,456	8.2	240
	Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	308	1,514	2.1	475	2,437	11,891	2.3	441
	Unclassified - Industry Not Assigned	86	93	0.1	662	761	752	0.1	656
	Total Private Sector	4,277	60,682	86	685	37,089	456,272	88.1	651
	Total Government	111	9,853	14	765	650	61,647	12	684
	State Government	32	2,620	3.7	577	189	7,319	1.4	572
	Local Government	57	6,731	9.5	652	363	50,002	10	599
	Federal Government	22	502	0.7	1,067	98	4,326	0.8	882
	All Industries	4,388	70,536	100	669	37,739	517,921	100	616
	All Industries – Georgia					266,560	4,023,824		776

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

* This is a comprehensive collection of various data series and includes data for each county's labor draw area. The labor draw area usually consists of the home county and all adjacent counties.

According to the GHMPO 2030 LRTP, total employment is projected to increase from 65,133 in 2005 to 278,978 in 2030. Table 2-6 shows the significant growth in employment projected in the County for the retail, service, manufacturing, and wholesale trade industrial sectors.

The 2005 and forecasted 2030 employment densities from the GHMPO Travel Demand Model are illustrated in Figures 2-4 and 2-5. According to the model, projected areas of highest employment concentration in 2030 are in the City of Gainesville, particularly the town square area, the Northeast Georgia Medical Center area and the predominately industrial Gainesville Mills area. Outside of Gainesville, the area with the highest projected employment density is in Oakwood, in the vicinity of the I-985/State Route 53 (Winder Highway) interchange near Gainesville State College, and Lanier Technical College.

Table 2-6: 2005 and 2030 Employment by Category, Hall County

	Retail	Service	Mfg.	Wholesale	Total Employment
2005	7,000	37,336	16,928	3,869	65,133
2030	29,980	159,305	73,056	16,637	278,978

Figure 2-4: 2005 Hall County Employment Density

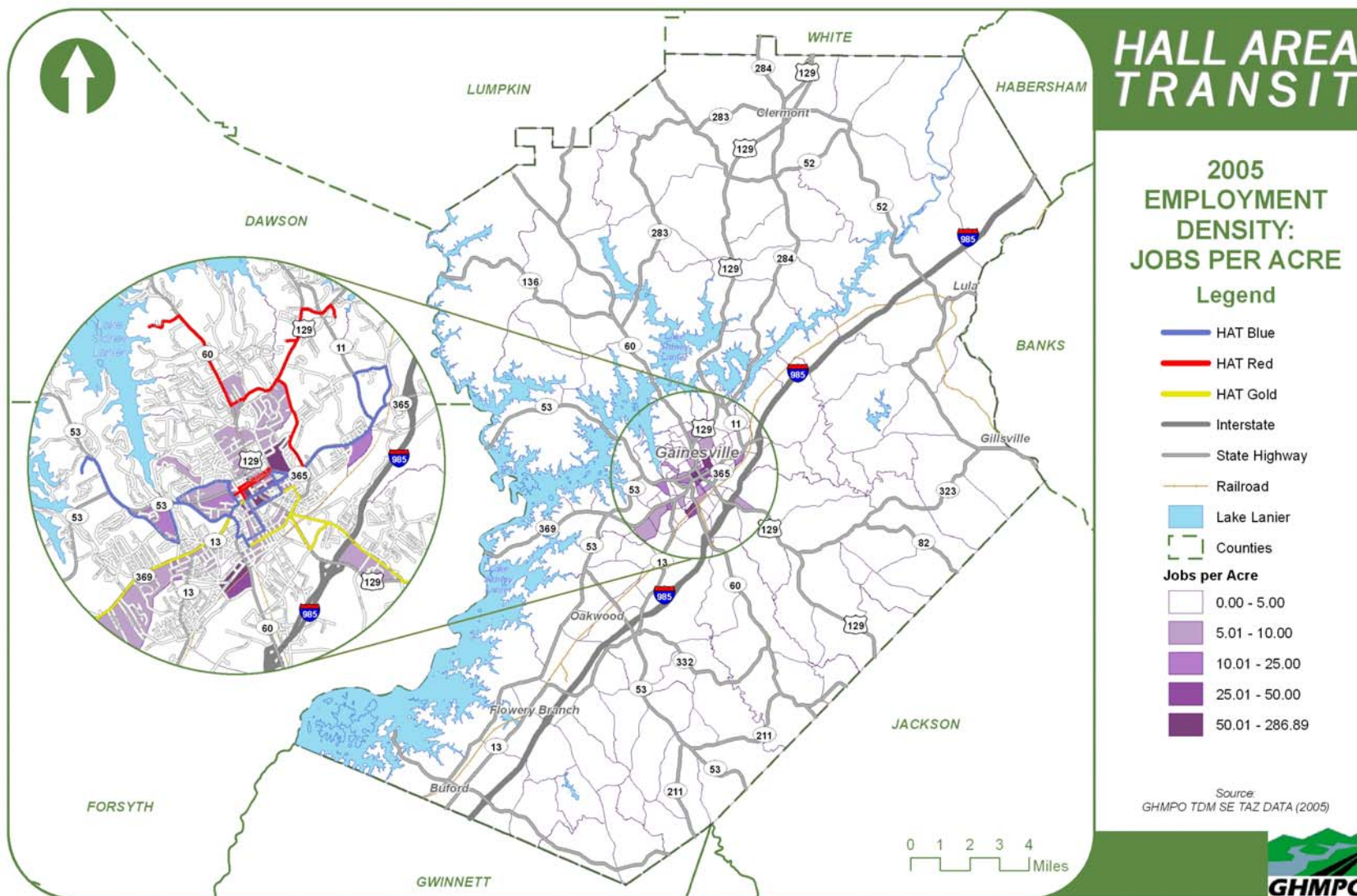
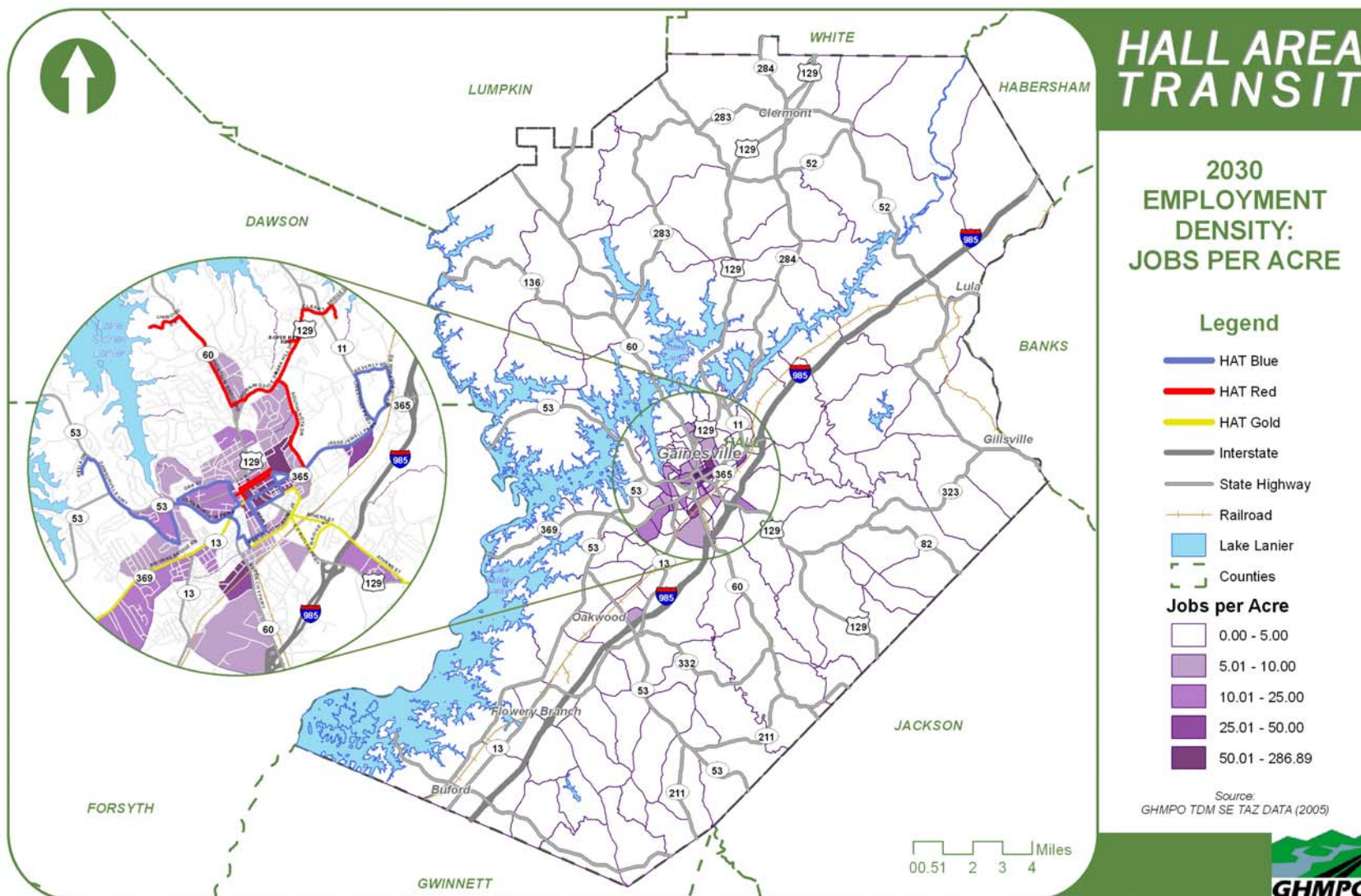


Figure 2-5: 2030 Hall County Employment Density



2.3 Transit Target Market

Populations typically needing transit, or more likely to use transit, are described using a variety of demographic and socioeconomic data; they are often identified by considering where low-income, minority, youth, disabled, and elderly populations, and households without access to a car, truck or van for private use are concentrated. They also consider education, income, and population density.

Target market concentrations were identified by developing a transit market index (transit propensity index). The index included the following variables: households without vehicles, population below poverty, population ages 65 and older, persons with disabilities, persons without a high school diploma, and non-White population. Note that persons of Latino/Hispanic ethnicity are included in both White and non-White populations. Each census block group was assigned a numerical ranking from one through five for each variable, based on its percentile, as compared to the study area as a whole: 20th percentile, 40th percentile, 60th percentile, 80th percentile or 100th percentile. An aggregate score for each block group was computed. The resulting transit target market scores were mapped and are illustrated in Figure 2-6 to aid in identifying transit needs and potential transit markets.

The geographic distributions of households without vehicles, population below poverty, population ages 65 and older, persons with disabilities, persons without a high school diploma, and non-White population are mapped separately and are illustrated in Figures 2-6 through 2-12, respectively.

The transit market index values are observed to be highest within limits of the City of the Gainesville, to the east of the city (bordering US 129 (Athens Highway) and SR 323 (Gillsville Highway), and to the southwest (between SR 13 (Atlanta Highway) and SR 369 (Browns Bridge Road)). The highest potential (the area with a transit target market index equal to 5, as shown in Figure 3-6) is observed in a zone generally bounded by US 129 (E.E. Butler Parkway) to the west, I-985 to the south and SR 365 (Jesse Jewell Parkway) to the north and east.

Figure 2-6: Transit Target Market

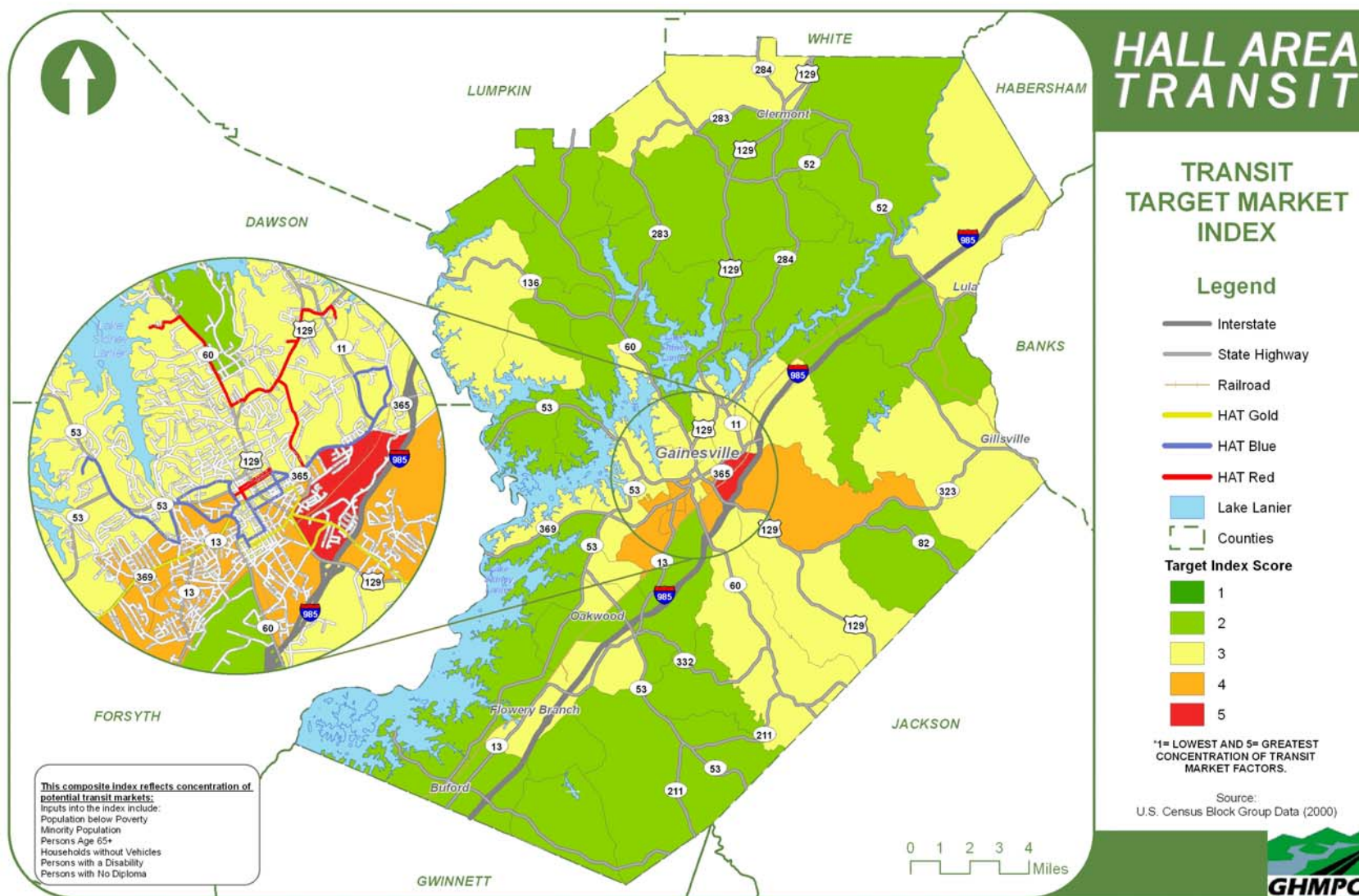


Figure 2-7: Percent of Households without Vehicles

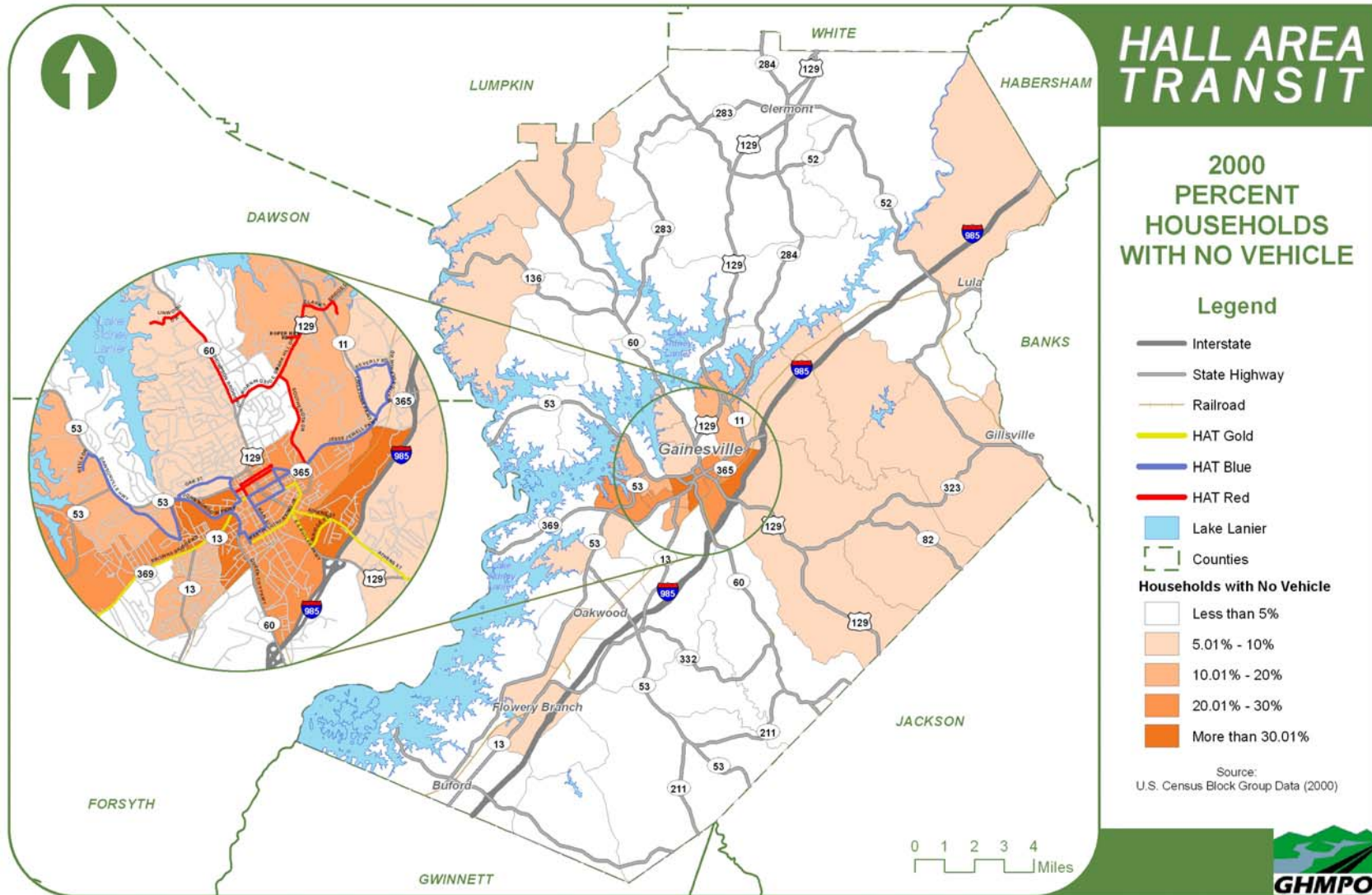


Figure 2-8: Persons Living Below the Poverty Level

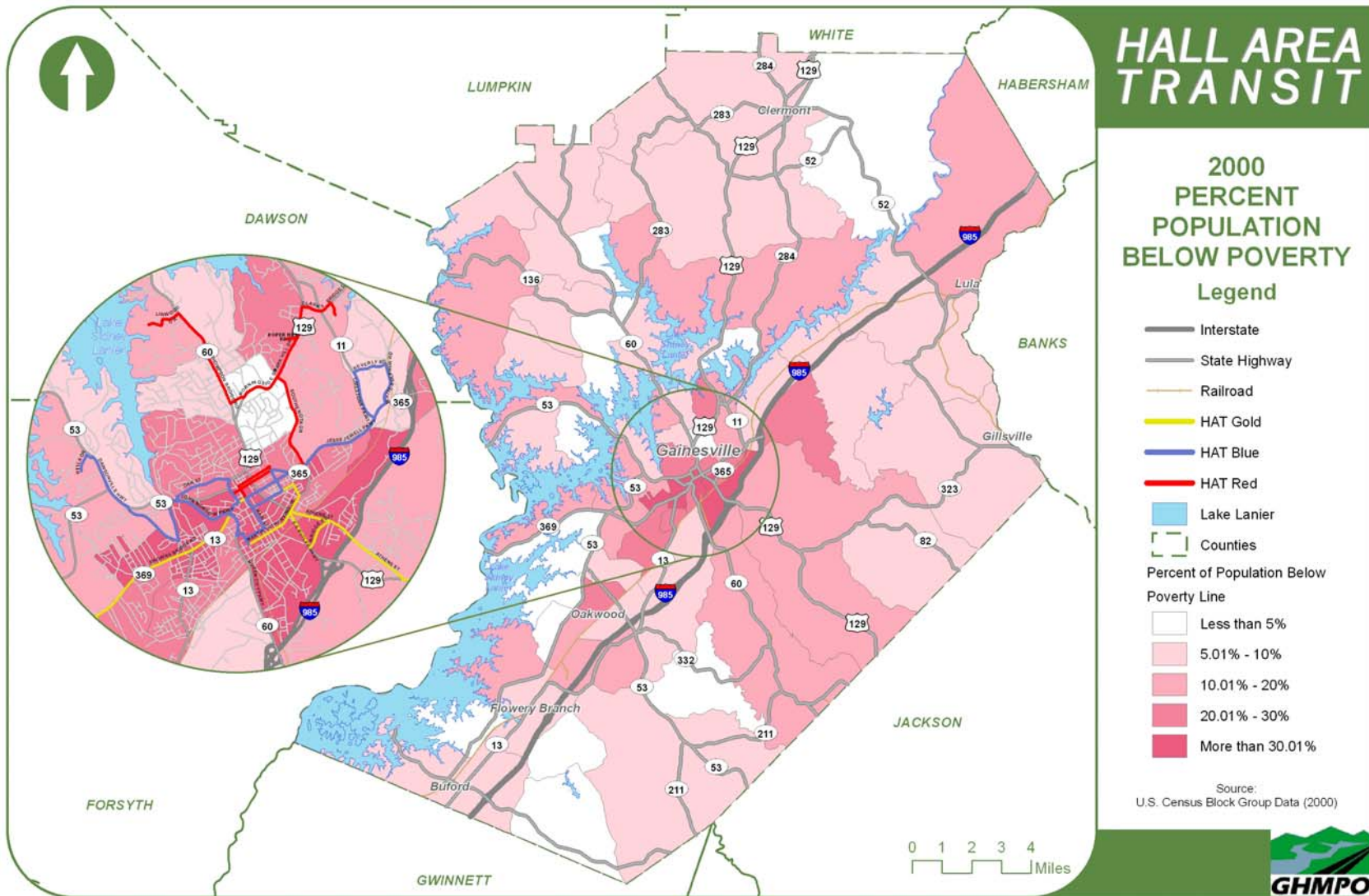


Figure 2-9: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older

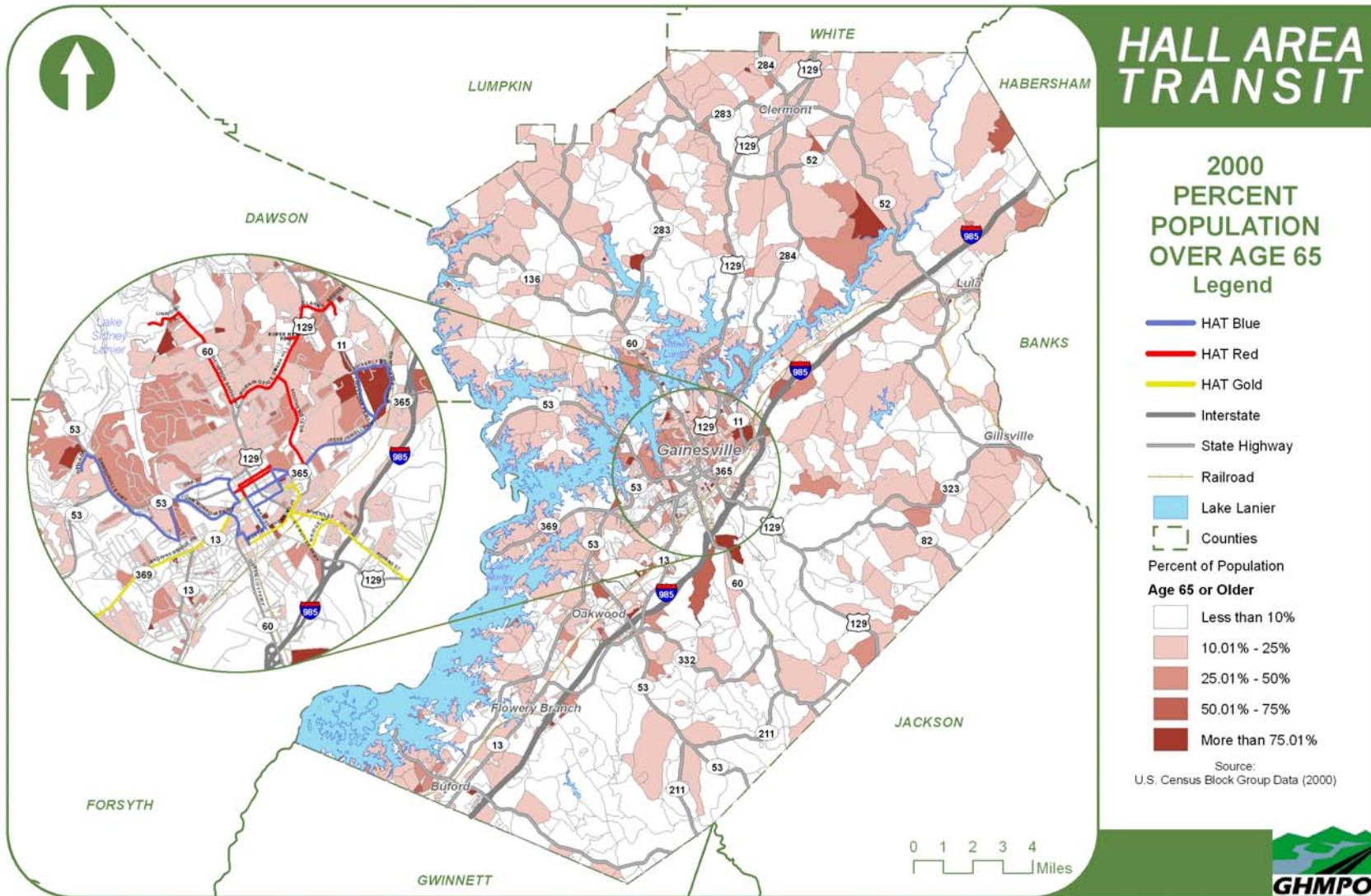


Figure 2-10: Persons with Disabilities

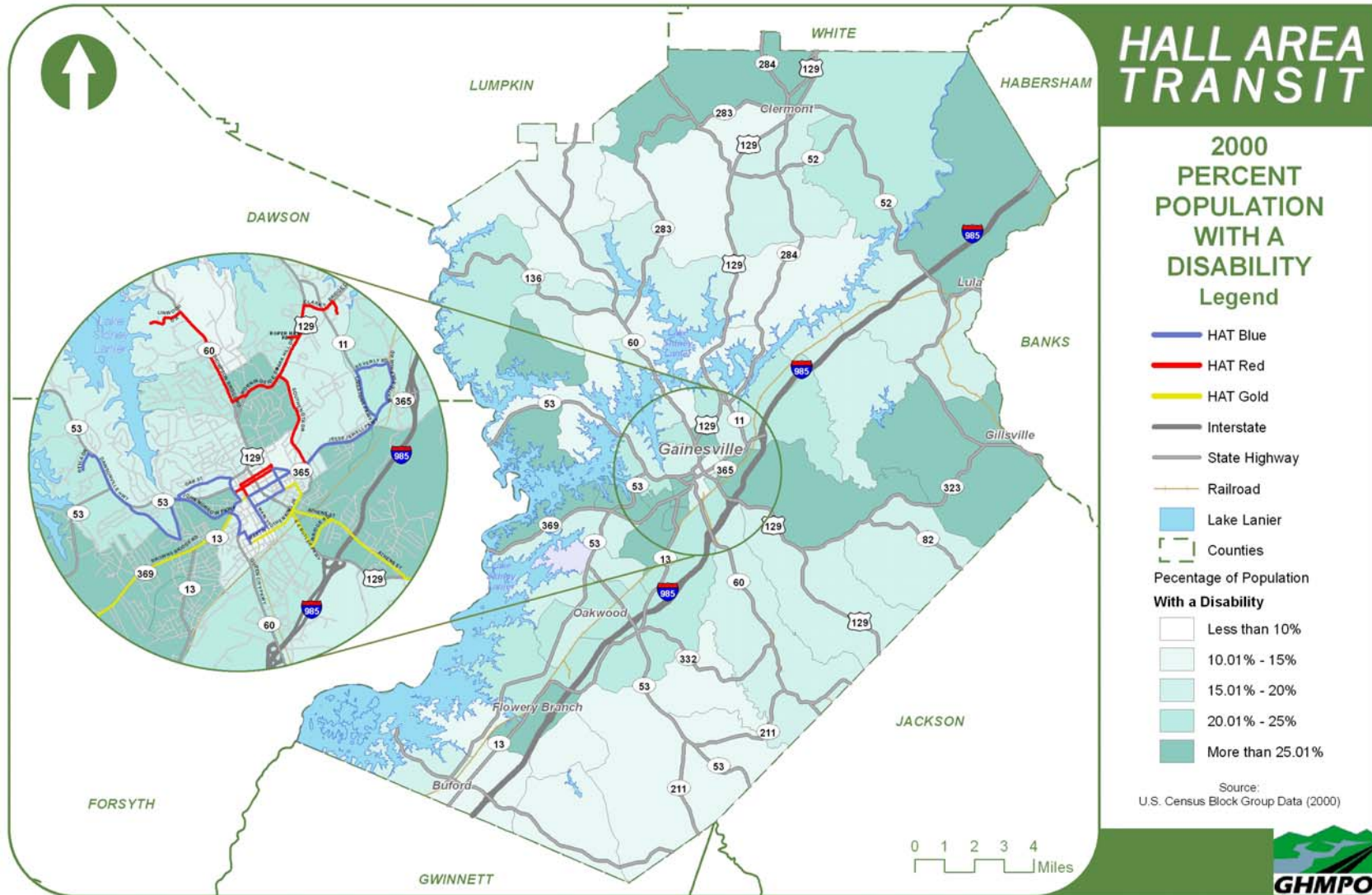


Figure 2-11: Persons without a High School Diploma

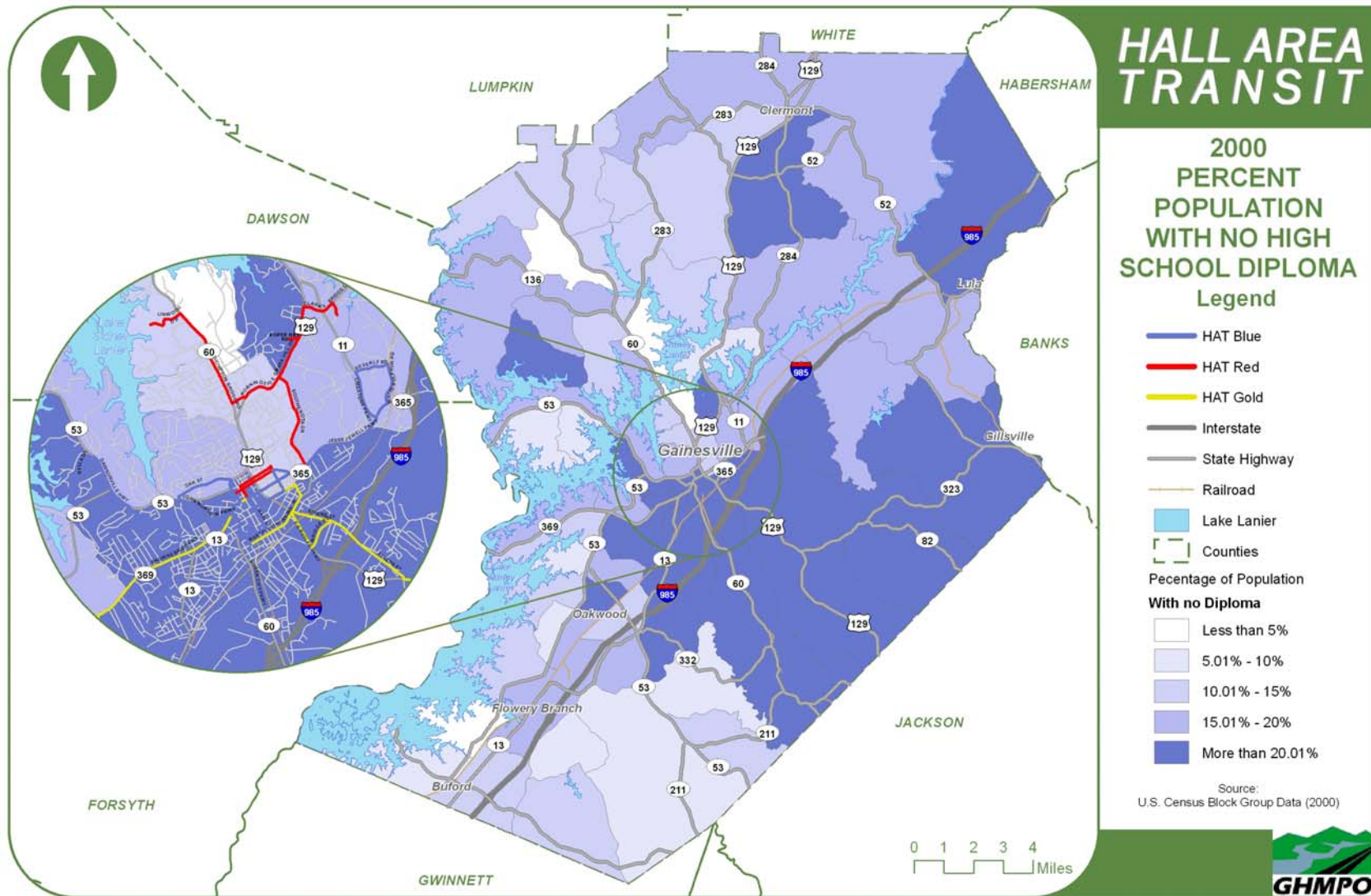


Figure 2-12: Percentage of Minority (Non-White) Populations

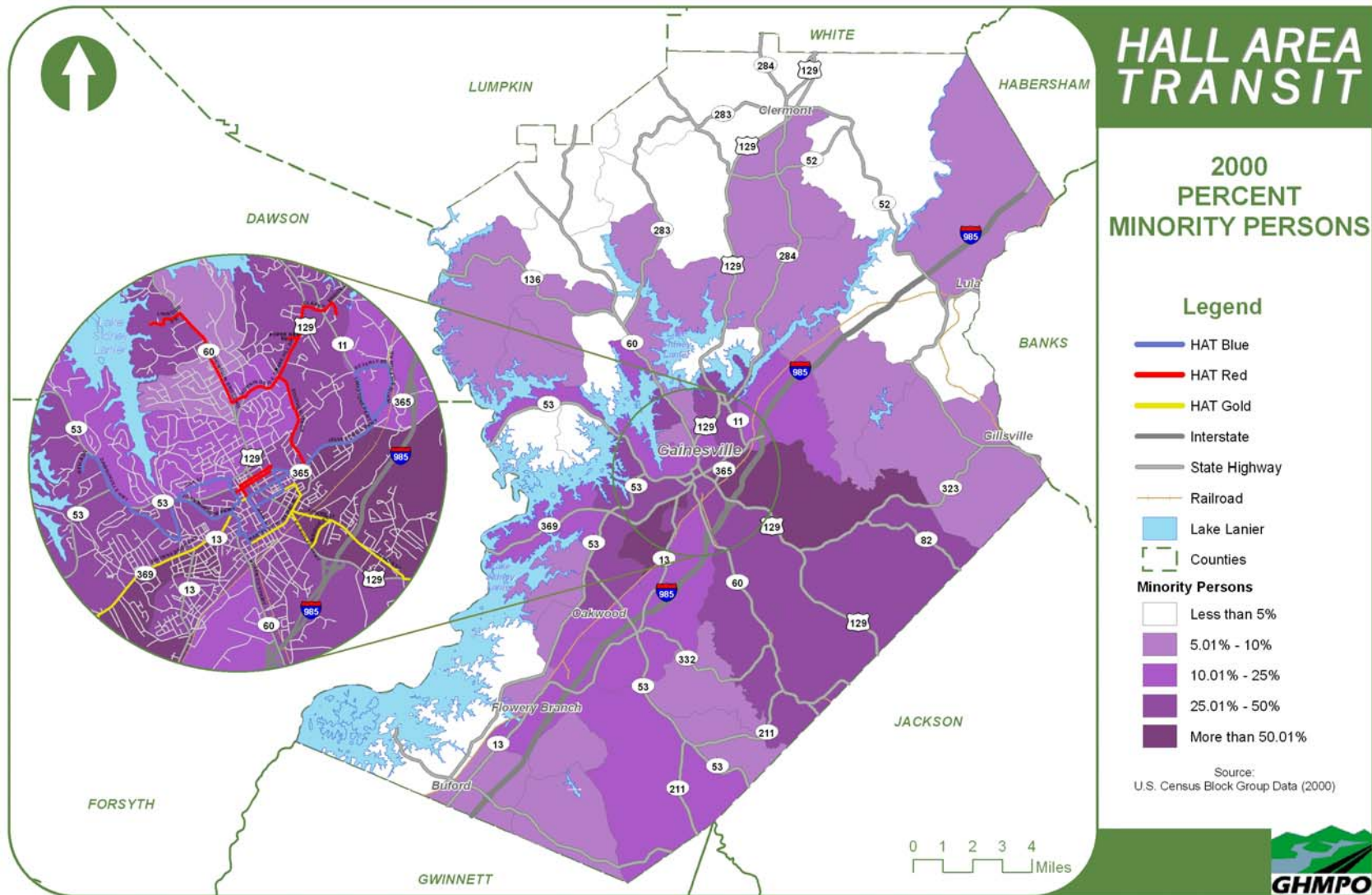


Figure 2-6 reveals that at the countywide scale, areas served by HAT's Red Rabbit fixed routes effectively correspond with the areas with the highest transit target market indices, specifically central Gainesville as demonstrated in the inset for the figure. This suggests that the majority of residential areas with the highest propensities for transit use in Hall County are served by HAT.

Land use type and distribution/densities were considered in evaluating HAT service areas relative to target markets. Although some service routes travel along the periphery of the market areas, in most cases the buses run adjacent to portions of the areas where residential and commercial/office development densities are highest.

Within Gainesville, the vast majority of census block groups with medium-high or high market index scores are served by one or more HAT routes, and each of these areas appear to be at least partially within a three-quarter-mile distance from HAT stops, representative of the HAT demand-responsive service area.

Considering that the target market indices are based primarily on residential data, HAT services which extend beyond these target market areas typically reach major activity centers for employment and non-residential trip purposes. The arterial orientation of much of the HAT route alignments provides the simplest means of connecting these target markets with one another and with key activity centers.

Table 2-7 provides a summary of demographic characteristics for the county and state, for persons age 10 to 19, persons age 65 and older, persons living below poverty, and households without access to car, truck, or van. Overall, the percentage of persons 65 years of age and greater and of persons under 18, are somewhat equivalent to the statewide percentages. The percentages of persons living below the poverty line and zero-vehicle households are lower than statewide percentages.

Table 2-7: Population and Household Characteristics - 2005

Geography	Total		Percent of Population or Households			
	Population	Households	Persons Under 18	Persons Age 65+	Individuals Living Below Poverty	Households w/No Access to Vehicles
Hall County	166,302	53,036	27.5%	9.3%	8.5%	5.7%
Georgia	8,821,142	3,771,466	26.0%	9.6%	14.4%	7.0%

Source: State data from the 2005 American Community Survey and <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/13139.html>
And http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census/2005tp/tab3totab8/percents/hall_county_georgia.xls and
<http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/stories/20060903/localnews/121826.shtml>

Data on race and ethnicity from the 2000 Census are presented in Table 2-8. Overall, the County and its principal city, Gainesville, are characterized by a larger proportion of persons identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino than is found statewide. The percentage of Asian residents is also slightly higher in Gainesville than the percentage residing within in the County and the State.

Table 2-8: Year 2000 Data on Race and Ethnicity

Geography	Total Year 2000 Population	White	African American	Asian	American Indian and Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic/Latino
Gainesville	25,578	65.2%	15.7%	2.7%	0.3%	0.1%	14.3%	1.7%	33.2%
Hall County	139,277	80.8%	7.3%	1.3%	0.3%	0.2%	8.8%	1.4%	19.6%
Georgia	8,186,453	65.1%	28.7%	2.1%	0.3%	0.1%	2.4%	1.4%	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 U.S. Census

According to the 2030 LRTP Update, Hall County is dominated by undeveloped, agriculture/forestry, and residential land uses. Of the County's total acreage, 86 percent (234,795 acres) currently falls into one of these three categories. Residential land use accounts for 62,811 acres or 23 percent of the total acreage, while agriculture/forestry land use accounts for 70,420 acres or 26 percent of the total acreage. Over 37 percent of land in Hall County is currently undeveloped or unused.

The existing land use pattern of the County is characterized by an urban core (Gainesville), with a pattern of scattered subdivision and rural residential development throughout much of the rest of the County, except in areas furthest to the north and east. Development is most pronounced in the southern portion of the County, but there are also significant numbers of developments north and northwest of Gainesville, particularly along Lake Lanier. Most commercial and industrial development is currently concentrated in Gainesville and along the I-985 corridor to the southwest.

Projected future land use shows 188,080 acres (71 percent of Hall's total acreage) projected for residential uses in the future, about three times the existing amount of residential land. The majority of residential land uses under the future scenario fall into the low and medium density category. Industrial land uses are expected to more than double from 5,508 acres in 2000 to a projected 11,338 acres by 2030. The conservation/parks/recreation category is expected to comprise 15 percent of the total acreage and mixed uses are projected to account for 4 percent of total future land use. Hall County is currently implementing a plan to construct sewer service along SR 365 (Gainesville Connector), north of Gainesville, to serve development along this corridor.

Existing and Future Land Use data are presented in Tables 2-9 and 2-10, and are illustrated in Figures 2-13 and 2-14. Lake Lanier is included in the Future Land Use classification of Parks/Recreation/Conservation. The existing land use includes the entirety of Hall County. The total future land use is not inclusive of land use assumptions for the municipalities of Clermont, Flowery Branch, Gillsville, Lula, and Oakwood.

Table 2-9: Existing Land Use, Hall County

Land Use Category	Area (Acreage)	Area (Percent)
Agriculture, Forestry	70,420	25.65%
Commercial	5,003	1.82%
Industrial	5,503	2.00%
Lakes	22,627	8.24%
Public Institutional	2,649	0.97%
Residential	62,811	22.88%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	2,999	1.09%
Undeveloped/Unused	102,475	37.33%
Total	274,487	100.00%

Source: GHMPO, 2030 LRTP Update

Table 2-10: Future Land Use (2030), Hall County

Land Use Category	Area (Acreage)	Area (Percent)
Retail Commercial	6,024	2.28%
Industrial	11,156	4.23%
Institutional/Public	4,126	1.56%
Transportation/Utilities/Communication	2,979	1.13%
Mixed-Use Downtown	72	0.03%
Mixed-Use Midtown	315	0.12%
Mixed-Use Transitional	11,479	4.35%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	39,764	15.08%
Agricultural/Rural	0	0.00%
Residential		
Rural Low Density	58,165	22.05%
Rural Medium Density	41,533	15.75%
Suburban Low Density	50,090	18.99%
Suburban Medium Density	34,115	12.94%
Suburban High Density	3,258	1.24%
Urban Residential Low Density	169	0.06%
Urban Residential Medium Density	35	0.01%
Urban Residential High Density	456	0.17%
Total Residential	187,821	71.21%
Total	263,737	100.00%

Source: GHMPO, 2030 LRTP Update

Figure 2-13: Existing Land Use

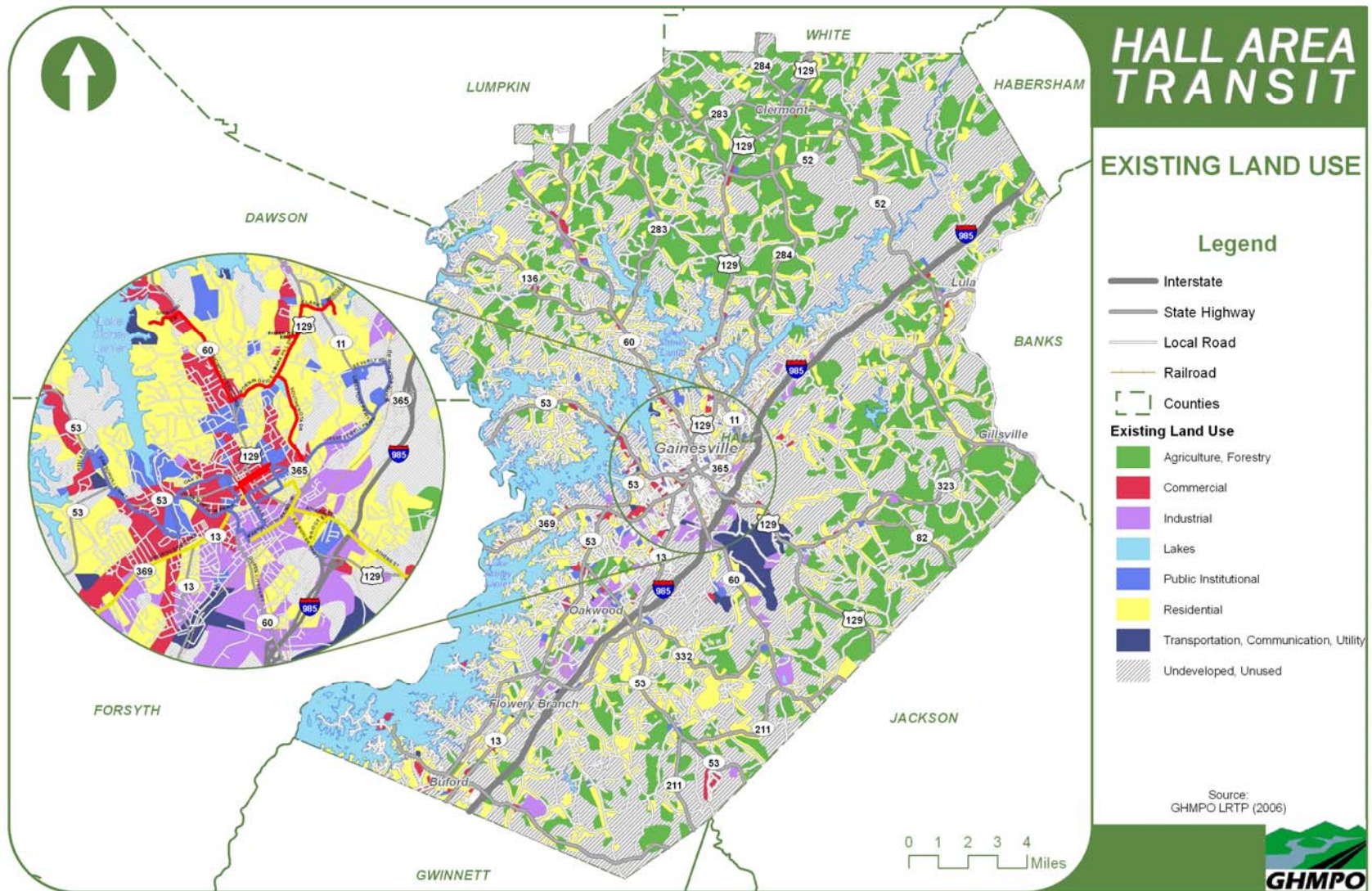
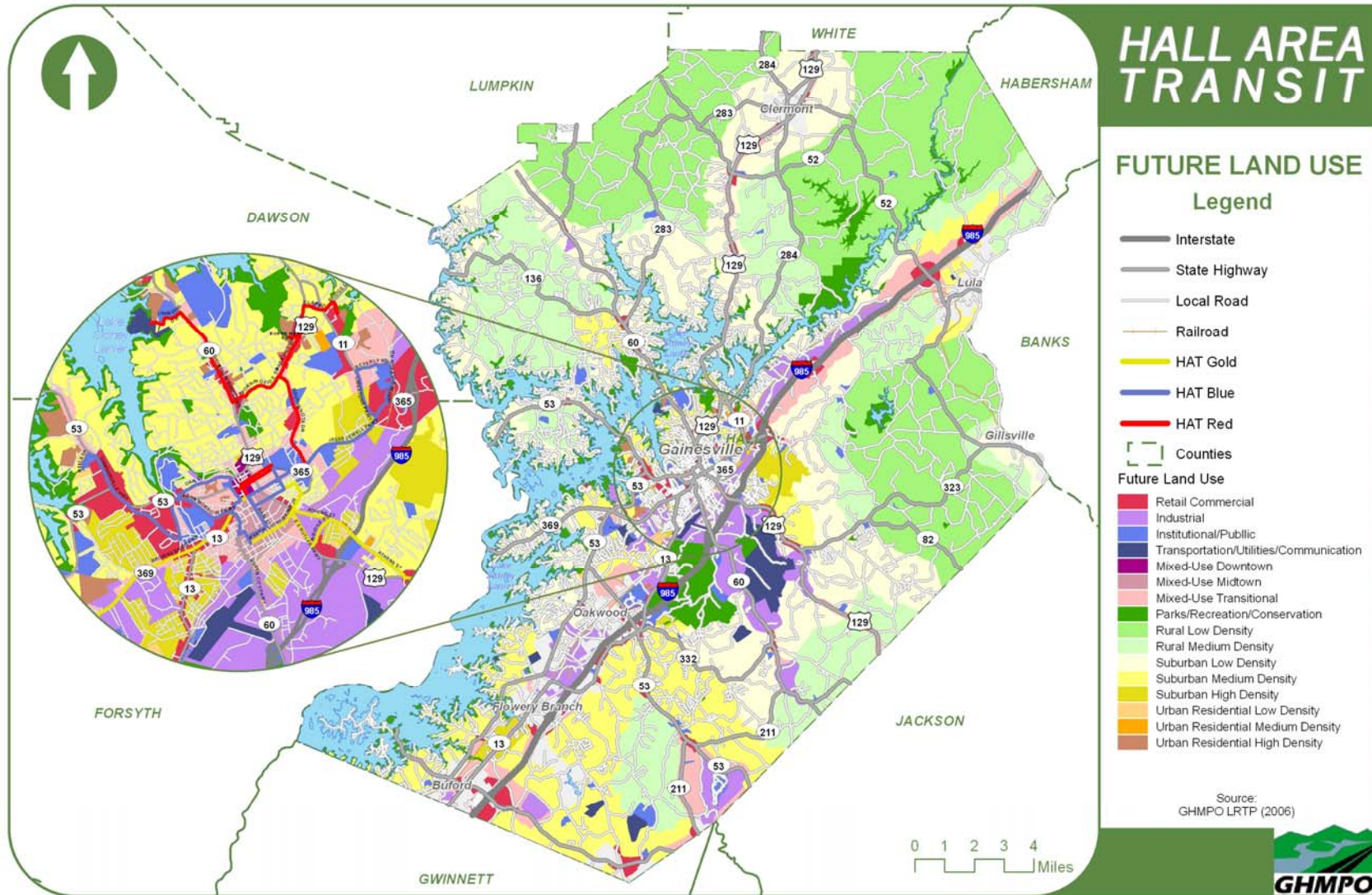


Figure 2-14: Future Land Use



The 2030 LRTP Update describes a future land use plan with approximately 71 percent of Hall's total acreage dedicated to residential uses in the future. The majority of future residential areas are identified as low- and medium-density residential uses. Industrial land uses are shown to more than double by 2030. Conservation/parks/recreation areas and mixed uses are projected to account for approximately 15 and 4 percent of total future land use, respectively.

The future land use plan shows urban development along the I-985/SR 365 (Gainesville Connector/Cornelia Highway) corridor through and including Gainesville, Lula, Buford, Flowery Branch, and Oakwood. Lower-density suburban development is anticipated in the vicinity of Lake Lanier and Gainesville, along the major transportation corridors to the north, east and west, and within the majority of the southern portion of the County. A "semi-rural residential" pattern is illustrated in the northern and eastern portions of the County. Agricultural land use is expected to decline in the future, as is indicated by the future land use plan.

3.0 FUTURE HAT SERVICE OPTIONS

3.1 New Service Evaluation Methodology

The new services proposed in this document were developed based on input from a variety of sources. The initial sources were prior studies including the GHMPO 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Plan, 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan, 2004 Hall Area Transit Strategic Plan, and the 2004 Hall Area Transit Comprehensive Operations Analysis. Data collected to analyze the existing system and to propose potential service modifications was also used for the purpose of identifying those areas most likely to support some form of transit. The data includes population and employment densities; socioeconomic and land use data; and a transit target market analysis. A series of public awareness forums and stakeholder interviews was also conducted during this time period to solicit passenger input and public opinion on all aspects of HAT service, but particularly on desired changes and new service requests. The summaries of these efforts are presented in Appendix C. Additionally, GHMPO and HAT staffs were closely involved in the TDP process and contributed their service recommendations.

The current HAT system is depicted in Figure 3-1 and the proposed HAT system modification map is presented in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-1: Current HAT System



Figure 3-2: Proposed HAT Service Options

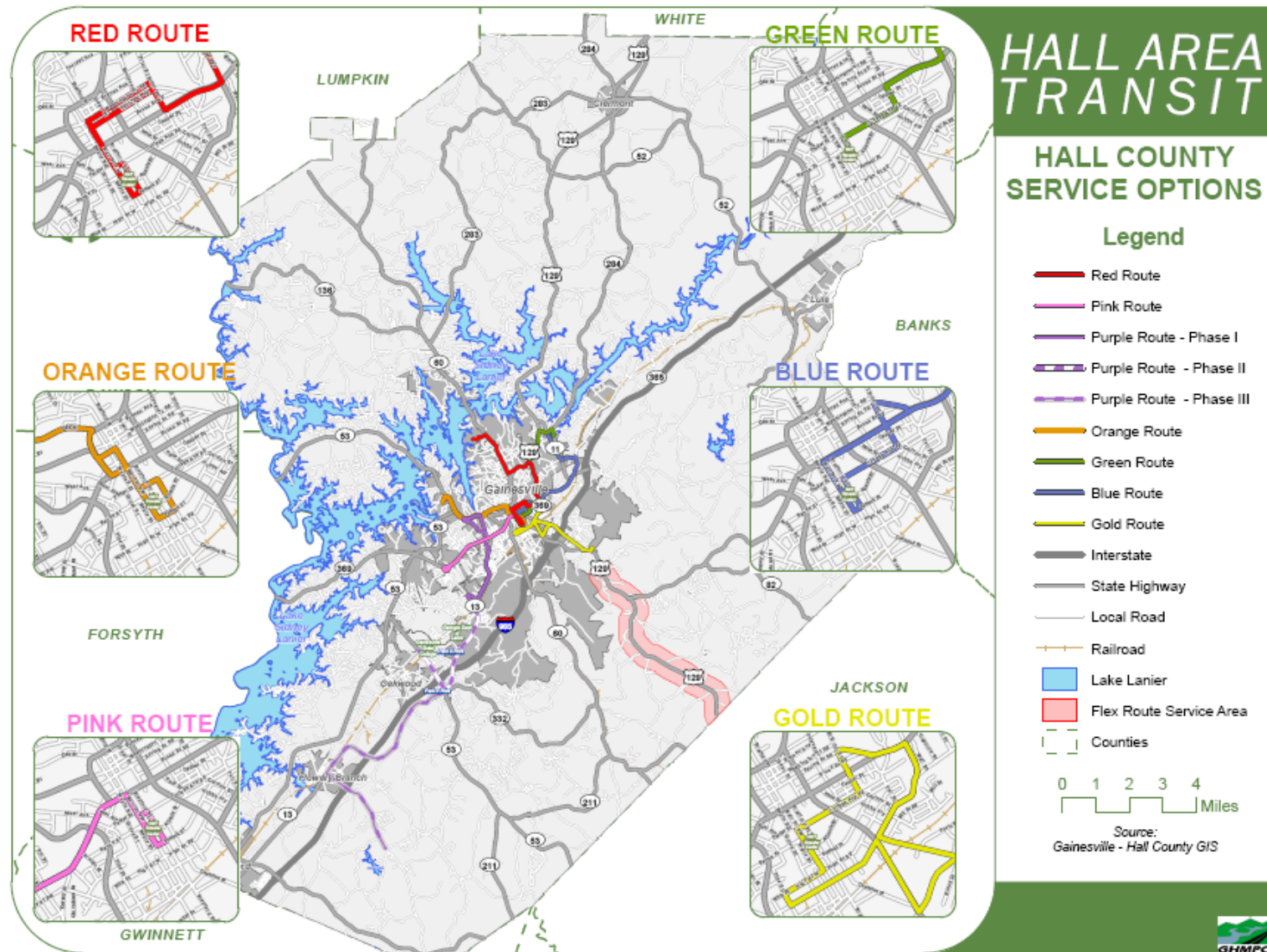


Table 3-1 was presented at a public meeting conducted during January 2008 at the Georgia Mountains Center.

Table 3-1: Description of Proposed HAT Service Enhancements and Modifications

Potential Service Modifications	
Facility/Route	Proposed Modification Description
Transfer Center	Relocate the HAT system transfer center from High Street/Pine Street to the new HAT Headquarters building at 687 Main Street
Blue	Extend north on Limestone Parkway to Ridgecrest Apartments and connect with Green Route. Eliminate service on Limestone Parkway between Beverly Road and Jesse Jewell Parkway. Terminate at new HAT Transfer Center. Operate on 30 minute frequency.
Orange	Originate at Lake Forest Apartments and terminates at new HAT Transfer Center via Dawsonville Highway and Rainey Street. Service on Shallowford Road and Pearl Nix Parkway transferred to Purple Route. Service on John Morrow Boulevard eliminated. Operate on 30 minute frequency.
Gold	Originate at Lenox Park and terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center. Operates on same routing as the eastern half of the current Gold Route. Operate on 60 minute frequency.
Pink	Originate at Memorial Park Drive and terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center. Operate on 60 minute frequency.
Red	Originate at Linwood Apartments and terminate at new HAT Transfer Center. Service on Queen City Parkway eliminated. Operate on 60 minute frequency.
Green	Originate at Ridgecrest Apartments and connect with Blue Route. Terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center. Operate on 60 minute frequency.
Potential New Services	
Route	Proposed New Service Description
Purple	New Red Rabbit service on Atlanta Highway from Lakeshore Mall to Flowery Branch area (implementation recommended in three phases) Operate on 30 minute frequency.
Flexible Route Service	New weekday demand response zone service for US 129 corridor area. Operate on 60 minute frequency.
Commuter Service	-Commuter bus service to Gwinnett County -Commuter bus service from Park and Ride lot to downtown Atlanta

The potential new facilities, services and alignment modifications are described as follow:

3.2 Relocate Transfer Center

Relocate the HAT system transfer center from High Street/Pine Street to the new HAT Headquarters building on 687 Main Street.

3.3 Modify Current Routes

Following are the proposed operating patterns for the modified Red Rabbit routes:

Blue Route (Modification of current Blue Route)

Operate on Old Clarks Bridge Rd., Limestone Pkwy., Beverly Rd., Pine Valley Rd., J. Jewell Pkwy., Fair St., Prior St., College Ave., Bradford St. to Transfer Center.

Orange Route (Modification of current Blue Route)

Operate on Otila Dr., Dawsonville Hwy., Rainey St., Limestone Pkwy., W. Academy St., Spring St., Main St., College Ave., Bradford St. to Transfer Center.

Gold Route (Modification of current Gold Route)

Operate on Lenox Dr., Athens Hwy., Athens St., Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Fair St., J. Jewell Pkwy., Prior St. College Ave., Main St., Transfer Center, High St. Pine St., Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., E.E. Butler Pkwy., Ridge Rd., Athens St., Athens St., to Lenox Dr.

Pink Route (Modification of current Gold Route)

Operate on Memorial Park Dr., Browns Bridge Rd., J. Jewell Pkwy., Main St. to Transfer Center

Red Route (Modification of current Red Route)

Operate on Linwood Dr., Thompson Bridge Rd., Morningside Dr., S. Enota Dr., J. Jewell Pkwy., Washington St./Spring St., Main St. to Transfer Center.

Green Route (Modification of current Red Route)

Operate on Old Clarks Bridge Rd., Clarks Bridge Rd., Park Hill Dr., S. Enota Dr., J. Jewell Pkwy., Prior St., College Ave., Bradford St. to Transfer Center

3.4 New Fixed Route - Purple

During the stakeholder interview, public involvement, and staff input processes, a travel corridor with a high potential for transit ridership was identified. This corridor is Atlanta Highway extending from the Lakeshore Mall to the north to Flowery Branch in the south. Key attractions/characteristics along this corridor include:

- Lakeshore Mall and other large retail stores
- Significant Hispanic community
- Park and Ride
- Gainesville State College
- Department of Labor
- Significant retail, commercial, and residential development in Flowery Branch

The Purple Route is recommended to be implemented in three phases:

Phase I – Lakeshore Mall to Memorial Park Drive

Phase II - Memorial Park Drive to Gainesville State College

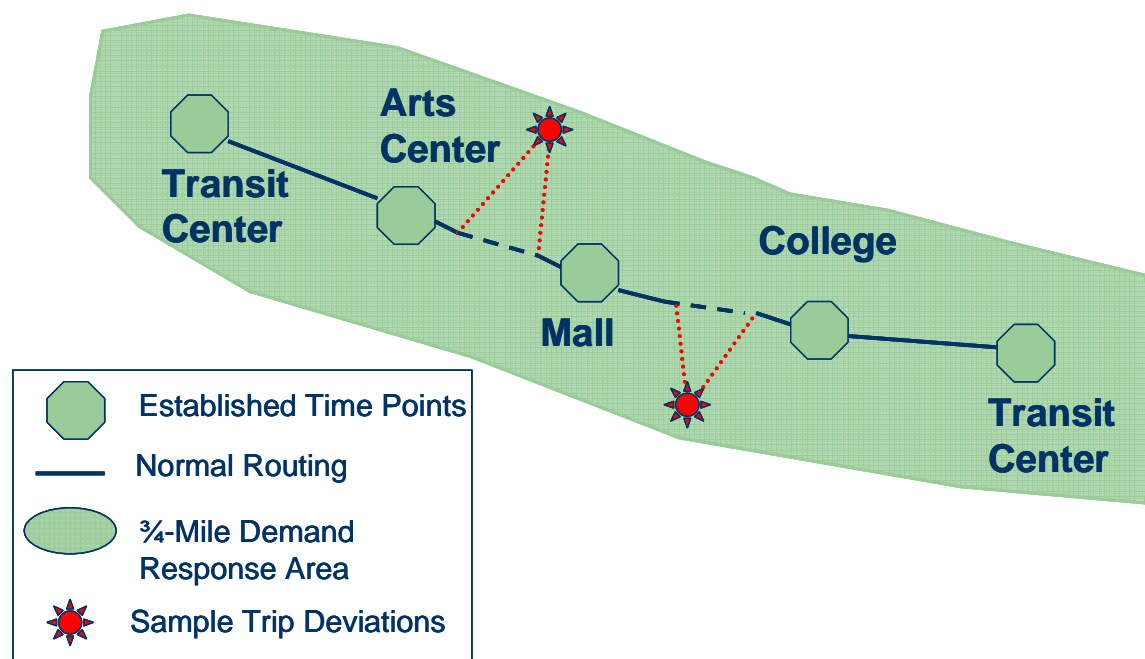
Phase III – Gainesville State College to Flowery Branch

3.5 New Flexible / Demand Response Services

HAT currently operates a Dial-A-Ride service in the rural areas of Hall County. As the area southeast of the current terminal point of the Gold Route on Highway 129 is emerging as potential implementation sector for HAT services, a step approach to deploying service is proposed through a pilot program of combining fixed route and demand response service into a flexible route concept. The service as envisioned would operate only within the defined sectors as shown in Figure 3-3. The specific routing(s) would be determined within the sectors to connect various key locations and activity areas. The service would be provided on weekdays

between approximately 9:00AM and 4:00PM with connection to the HAT Gold Route. Scheduled service would connect identified time points and also provided requested passenger pick-ups and drop-offs within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the normal routing. Depending on the success of the pilot program, service could eventually be expanded or considered for implementation of regular local service. Figure 3-3 is an example of this type of service.

Figure 3-3: Example of Flexible Route Concept



3.6 New Service – Commuter Bus

Initial considerations, based on prior studies, for commuter bus service from Hall County included:

- Adjoining counties
- Downtown Atlanta
- Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport

In a separate report prepared for the TDP (Data Collection, Review and Analysis), an analysis of journey to work data from the 2000 Census for county to county work flows was conducted. The results of the analysis indicate that commuter trips primarily occur within Hall County. Of the commuter trips with a Hall County workplace, the next largest percentage of commuters emanate from Gwinnett County. For commuters with a Hall County residence (other than internal Hall County flows) most are associated with Gwinnett and Fulton Counties. Additionally, public outreach activities and stakeholder surveys produced very little demand for commuter service to adjoining counties (except Gwinnett).

Park-and-ride lots provide a potential future location for commuter bus services. There are two park-and-ride lots in Hall County:

- GDOT operates one park-and-ride lot in Oakwood, at the intersection of SR 53 (Winder Highway) and Wallis Road, just south of the I-985 northbound off-ramp at Exit 16. The lot has 600 parking spaces.
- Another additional park-and-ride lot accommodating 300-400 vehicles is under construction at SR 13 (Atlanta Highway) and I-985, as part of the I-985 Split Diamond Interchange/Collector-Distributor Project.

Many Atlanta-bound Hall County commuters use the park-and-ride facility in Gwinnett County, at SR 20 (Buford Drive) just west of the I-985 southbound on-ramp. Served by Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) Route 50 and GRTA Xpress Route 101, the Buford park-and-ride has 335 spaces and is located approximately three miles south of Hall County. Future studies should be considered to determine how many Hall County commuters are utilizing these sites.

A commuter bus service could operate to several important destinations, including:

- I-985 Exit 4 Park and Ride (Gwinnett County)
- MARTA Doraville Station (DeKalb County)
- Midtown/Downtown Atlanta (Fulton County)
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (Clayton County)

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the further review of the future potential services and input received from the public meeting process, the following recommendations have been prepared. The recommendations regarding the proposed service options are grouped in two categories: recommended service options and service options not recommended for implementation. The recommended service options are divided into categories depending on which year of the Five Year Action Plan they are recommended for implementation. Additionally, paratransit recommendations are presented in this section.

4.1 Recommended Service Options and Cost Estimates

The routes recommended for implementation in the Five Year Plan and the estimated annual operating cost of implementing the recommendations are presented in Table 4-1. The operating statistics and ridership estimates for the services in Table 4-1 are presented in Appendix A.

Table 4-1: Estimated Annual Operating Cost of Five Year Plan Implementation

Year 1				
Facility / Route	Recommended Service Options	Estimated Additional Annual Cost	Estimated Additional Annual Revenue¹	Total Estimated Additional Annual Operating Cost²
Transfer Facility	Relocate the HAT system transfer center from High Street/Pine Street to the new HAT Headquarters building on Main Street	N/A	N/A	N/A
Blue	Extend north on Limestone Parkway to Ridgecrest Apartments and connect with Green Route. Eliminate service on Limestone Parkway between Beverly Road and Jesse Jewell Parkway. Terminate at new HAT Transfer Center.	\$69,280	\$4,761	\$64,519
Orange	Originate at Lake Forest Apartments and terminate at new HAT Transfer Center via Dawsonville Highway and Rainey Street. Service on Shallowford Road and Pearl Nix Parkway transferred to Purple Route. Service on John Morrow Boulevard eliminated.	\$69,280	\$4,761	\$64,519
Gold	Originate at Lenox Park and terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center. Operate on same routing as the eastern half of the current Gold Route.	\$69,280	\$4,761	\$64,519
Pink	Originate at Memorial Park Drive and terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center.	\$69,280	\$4,761	\$64,519
Red	Originate at Linwood Apartments and terminate at new HAT Transfer Center. Service on Queen City Parkway eliminated.	\$0	\$0	\$0
Green	Originate at Ridgecrest Apartments and connect with Blue Route. Terminate at the new HAT Transfer Center.	\$0	\$0	\$0
Purple	New Red Rabbit service on Atlanta Highway from Lakeshore Mall to Memorial Park Drive	\$277,592	\$30,600	\$246,992
Year 1 Sub-Total:		\$554,712	\$49,645	\$505,067

Year 2				
Route	Recommended Service Options	Estimated Annual Cost	Estimated Annual Revenue	Total Estimated Annual Operating Cost
Flex	Establish Flex Route Service on 60 minute frequency on Hwy 129 from termination point on Gold Route to Jackson County boundary	\$138,560	\$9,600	\$128,960
Year 2 Estimated Additional Cost:		\$138,560	\$9,600	\$128,960
Year 3				
Route	Recommended Service Options	Estimated Annual Cost	Estimated Annual Revenue	Total Estimated Annual Operating Cost
Purple	Extend to Gainesville State College	\$138,560	\$9,600	\$128,960
Year 3 Estimated Additional Cost:		\$138,560	\$9,600	\$128,960
Year 4				
Route	Recommended Service Options	Estimated Annual Cost	Estimated Annual Revenue	Total Estimated Annual Operating Cost
Purple	Extend to Flowery Branch	\$277,592	\$19,100	\$258,492
Year 4 Estimated Additional Cost:		\$277,592	\$19,100	\$258,492
Year 5				
Route	Recommended Service Options	Estimated Annual Cost	Estimated Annual Revenue	Total Estimated Annual Operating Cost ³
Commuter Service	Commuter service from Exit 16 to downtown Atlanta	\$166,547	\$30,085	\$136,462
Year 5 Estimated Additional Cost:		\$166,547	\$30,085	\$136,462
Grand Total Service Modifications:		\$1,275,970	\$118,030	\$1,157,940

1. Estimated annual ridership multiplied by average fare (\$0.65)

2. Represents total cost less estimated farebox revenue

3. Estimated costs based on GRTA Xpress and Gwinnett County Transit figures

4.2 Paratransit Recommendations

The following route recommendations were examined to determine if they would require an expansion of paratransit service into areas where currently no HAT service is currently provided:

Service Area Expansion

- Purple Route – This new route will expand the paratransit service area into the Atlanta Highway corridor. The initial phase of the route will be from the Lakeshore Mall area to Memorial Park Road.
- Flex Route – The Americans with Disabilities Act requires transit agencies that provide fixed-route bus service to also provide paratransit service for people who are unable to use the fixed-route service due to a disability. Because the Flex Route does not operate as a fixed route, ADA complementary paratransit service is not required.

It is anticipated that due to the low number of subscription riders currently utilizing paratransit service, no additional paratransit vehicles will be required by the creation of the Purple Route.

4.3 Potential Funding Sources

Table 4-2 identifies potential sources for transit program funding. Sources could include funding from various federal transit related categories as well as from system revenue, local agencies, the state, and private interest organizations. Transit funding is available from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through Section 5303 funds which are designated for planning related activities, Section 5307 which are formula funds for urban transit programs, Section 5309 which are capital funds, and Section 5311 funds which are for rural transit programs. Funding is also available through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for capital related categories.

Table 4-2: Potential Funding Sources

CATEGORY	Federal				State	Local		
	5303 / 5304	5307	5309	5311		System Revenue	Local	Private
Vehicles		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotion		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Planning Support	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Equipment		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facilities		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rideshare Program	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Rural Program	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Federal Funding

Section 5303 – Metropolitan Planning and Section 5304 Statewide Planning

Program Description

These programs provide funding to support cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas.

Eligible Recipients

Metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) and State Departments of Transportation.

Eligible Purposes

For planning activities that:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;

- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Funding Allocation

Funds are apportioned by a complex formula to states that includes consideration of each state's urbanized area population in proportion to the urbanized area population for the entire nation, as well as other factors. States can receive no less than 0.5 percent of the amount apportioned. These funds, in turn, are sub-allocated by states to MPOs by a formula that considers each MPO's urbanized area population, their individual planning needs, and a minimum distribution.

Federal/Local Share

The federal share is 80 percent and the local share is 20 percent.

Section 5307 – Urbanized Area Formula Program

Program Description

This program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Eligible purposes include planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as bus replacement, overhaul and rebuilding, crime prevention and security equipment; construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance and some Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service costs are considered capital costs. For urbanized areas with a 200,000 population and over, funds are apportioned and flow directly to a designated recipient selected locally to apply for and receive Federal funds. For urbanized areas under 200,000 in population, the funds are apportioned to the Governor of each state for distribution. A few areas under 200,000 in population have been designated as transportation management areas and receive apportionments directly.

For urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or more, operating assistance is not an eligible expense. In these areas, at least one percent of the funding apportioned to each area must be used for transit enhancement activities such as historic preservation, landscaping, public art, pedestrian access, bicycle access, and enhanced access for persons with disabilities.

Program Summary Fact Sheet

Appropriation: Funded under Formula Grants

Description: Grants to urbanized areas and states for transit-related purposes

Eligible Recipients: Funding is made available to designated recipients that must be public bodies with the legal authority to receive and dispense Federal funds. Governors, responsible local officials and publicly owned operators of transit services are to designate a recipient to

apply for, receive, and dispense funds for transportation management areas pursuant to 49USCA5307(a)(2). Generally, a transportation management area is an urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or over. The Governor or Governor's designee is the designated recipient for urbanized areas between 50,000 and 200,000.

Eligible Purposes: Planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as bus replacement, overhaul, and rebuilding, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance and some ADA complementary paratransit services are considered capital costs.

Allocation of Funding: Funding is apportioned on the basis of legislative formulas. For areas of 50,000 to 199,999 in population, the formula is based on population and population density. For areas with populations of 200,000 and more, the formula is based on a combination of bus revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles, fixed guideway revenue vehicle miles, and fixed guideway route miles as well as population and population density.

Match: The Federal share is not to exceed 80 percent of the net project cost. The Federal share may be 90 percent for the cost of vehicle-related equipment attributable to compliance with the ADA and the Clean Air Act. The Federal share may also be 90 percent for projects or portions of projects related to bicycles. The Federal share may not exceed 50 percent of the net project cost of operating assistance.

Funding Availability: Year appropriated plus three years (total of four years)

Section 5309 – Bus and Bus Related Facilities Program

Program Description

The transit capital investment program (49 U.S.C. 5309) provides capital assistance for three primary activities:

- New and replacement buses and facilities;
- Modernization of existing rail systems; and
- New fixed guideway systems.

Eligible recipients for capital investment funds are public bodies and agencies (transit authorities and other state and local public bodies and agencies thereof) including states, municipalities, other political subdivisions of states; public agencies and instrumentalities of one or more states; and certain public corporations, boards, and commissions established under state law. Funds are allocated on a discretionary basis.

Bus and Bus-Related Projects

Eligible purposes are acquisition of buses for fleet and service expansion, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, acquisition of replacement vehicles, bus rebuilds, bus preventive maintenance, passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs, accessory and miscellaneous equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fareboxes, computers, shop and garage equipment, and costs incurred in arranging innovative financing for eligible projects. Funds are allocated on a discretionary basis.

Program Summary Fact Sheet

Appropriation: Funded under Capital Investment Grants

Description: Grants may be made to assist in financing bus and bus-related capital projects that will benefit the country's transit systems.

Eligible Recipients: Public bodies and agencies (transit authorities and other state and local public bodies and agencies thereof) including states, municipalities, other political subdivisions of states; public agencies and instrumentalities of one or more states; and certain public corporations, boards, and commissions established under state law.

Eligible Purposes: Acquisition of buses for fleet and service expansion, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, acquisition of replacement vehicles, bus rebuilds, bus preventive maintenance, passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs, accessory and miscellaneous equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fareboxes, computers, shop and garage equipment, and costs incurred in arranging innovative financing for eligible projects.

Allocation of Funding: Allocated at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation although Congress fully earmarks all available funding.

Match: 80 percent Federal, 20 percent local

Funding Availability: Year appropriated plus two years (total of three years)

Section 5311 - Rural and Small Urban Areas Transportation Program

Program Description

This program (49 U.S.C. 5311) provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas with populations of less than 50,000. It is apportioned in proportion to each state's non-urbanized population. Funding may be used for capital, operating, state administration, and project administration expenses. Each state prepares an annual program of projects, which must provide for fair and equitable distribution of funds within the states, including Indian reservations, and must provide for maximum feasible coordination with transportation services assisted by other Federal sources. Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, and nonprofit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and operators of public transportation services. The state must use 15 percent of its annual apportionment to support intercity bus service, unless the Governor certifies that these needs of the state are adequately met. Projects to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, may be funded at 90 percent Federal match. The maximum FTA share for operating assistance is 50 percent of the net operating costs.

Program Summary Fact Sheet

Appropriation: Funded under Formula Grants

Description: The goals of the nonurbanized formula program are: 1) to enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation; 2) to assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural and small urban areas; 3) to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal funds used to provide passenger transportation in nonurbanized

areas through the coordination of programs and services; 4) to assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation; and 5) to provide for the participation of private transportation providers in nonurbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible.

Eligible Recipients: State and local governments, non-profit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and public transit operators.

Eligible Purposes: Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative purposes.

Allocation of Funding: Funding is apportioned by a statutory formula that is based on the latest U.S. Census figures of areas with a population less than 50,000. The amount that the state may use for state administration, planning, and technical assistance activities is limited to 15 percent of the annual apportionment. States must spend 15 percent of the apportionment to support rural intercity bus service unless the Governor certifies that the intercity bus needs of the state are adequately met.

Match: The maximum Federal share for capital and project administration is 80 percent (except for projects to meet the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, which may be funded at 90 percent.). The maximum Federal share for operating assistance is 50 percent of the net operating costs. The local share is 50 percent, which shall come from an undistributed cash surplus, a replacement or depreciation cash fund or reserve, or new capital.

Funding Availability: Year appropriated plus two years (total of three years).

Other Federal Funding Considerations

Startup operating expenses for the Flex Route service may be supported by FTA Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316, or JARC) program funds. The JARC program seeks to provide transportation services that improve access to employment and related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals and to transport residents in both urbanized and nonurbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities. All JARC funding is apportioned to the States and to large urbanized areas by formula, based on relative numbers of low-income individuals. GDOT is responsible for allocating JARC funds to small urbanized and rural areas.

Each project funded via the JARC, FTA New Freedom (49 USC Section 5317) or FTA Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (49 USC Section 5310) programs must be derived from needs identified in a locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. Section 5310 funding for capital and mobility management projects is intended to improve mobility for elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The New Freedom program seeks to serve persons with disabilities by reducing barriers to transportation services and expanding mobility options beyond the requirements of the ADA.

Capital and planning for enhanced mobility services to, from, and within Federal public lands may be eligible for funding under the FTA Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands (Section 5320, or ATPPL) program currently authorized in SAFETEA-LU. ATPPL projects can serve any Federally-owned or managed parks, refuge areas and recreational areas, including the Lake Sidney Lanier recreational area operated and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Consent documentation from the Federal managing agency is required for agencies seeking ATPPL funding.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds via the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) can be pursued to support long-range park-and-ride capital needs, allowing for higher percentages of Section 5307 funds to support other transit-related capital and operating needs. STP funds are flexible and may be obtained directly from FHWA, or alternatively transferred to FTA to augment the existing Section 5307 program. Eligibility and matching requirements of the administering Federal agency apply.

The ability to secure Federal funding under any of the above programs depends on coordinated efforts at the regional, county, and city levels to identify and secure reliable sources of local matching funds. Opportunities to leverage other Federal or State program funds as local match should be explored via the agencies administering the proposed source for matching funds, while GDOT and FTA regulations should be reviewed to identify in-kind matching eligibility and other requirements for alternatives to local cash match.

State Funding

The State of Georgia, under the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), has administrative responsibility for the Federal programs related to transit operating and capital for cities with populations under 200,000. Section 5307, 5309 and 5311 programs have administrative guides developed by GDOT that can be accessed from the GDOT website. Contact with GDOT should be made and the program's administrative guides should be reviewed to determine the availability and timing for funding. Typically, the application process begins in April of each year with funds being available in July. The state does provide matching shares for capital grants for the Section 5307, 5309 and 5311 programs. The state provides no funding assistance for operations.

Local Funding

The local share for funding transit capital and operating can come from a variety of sources provided that they did not originate from a federal source. Local share is normally made in the form of cash; however, in some cases the local share can be made in the form of in-kind services or contributions. In-kind services are those services which may be used by the transit operation but paid for from another local source and not directly by the transit operation. For example, shared use of a garage facility may be counted as in-kind contribution because the value of the service provided by the use of the garage could be paid from another source such as the Public Works Department. Typically, local share comes from three main sources, general fund, ad valorem taxes (property taxes), or sales taxes dedicated specifically to transit. For capital, general revenue or capital improvement bonds may be considered as a local share source.

Local funding can also come from public-private partnerships, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funding, local taxes, special benefit assessment districts, and advertising revenues. These funding sources are briefly described below.

Public-Private Partnerships

Large local employers could have a financial interest in the creation of various transit programs in the area.

SPLOST Funding

Georgia law allows local jurisdictions as of July 1, 1985 to use SPLOST proceeds for capital improvement projects that would otherwise be paid for with General Fund and property tax revenues. Athens, Georgia is currently utilizing SPLOST funding to finance a bus shelter program, their Multi-Modal Transportation Center (MMTC), and the expansion and replacement of transit vehicles.

Local Taxes

A property tax designated specifically for transit operations and capital improvements could be assessed. A dedicated millage levy could offset local funding costs and deficits in farebox revenues. Other potential sources could include car rental or lodging taxes or special fees.

Special Benefit Assessment Districts

To capture benefits associated with enhanced real estate development partially attributable to improvements in transportation corridors, many jurisdictions create special assessment districts. Often called a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) or a Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU), a special assessment is charged upon real estate deriving a special benefit from a nearby capital improvement that is used to cover debt service for the improvement.

Advertising Revenues

While transit related advertising revenues are not usually a large revenue generator, they can still be used to help with operating and maintenance cost. Advertising revenues can typically be generated from display signage applied to bus exteriors or interiors and through shelter display programs.

4.4 Additional Considerations

4.4.1 Marketing

Stakeholder surveys conducted during September 2007 indicated a need for more effective promotion of the services offered by Hall Area Transit, specifically the Red Rabbit. As stated in the survey summary, respondents were often unaware of exactly where they could travel on the bus and several mentioned the system needs a “new look”. The majority of responses were positive with regard to support for the system but there was a definite lack of knowledge about the service structure and the system’s potential benefit to the overall community.

Ideally, a comprehensive marketing plan should be developed for the Red Rabbit and other services provided by Hall Area Transit. A marketing plan will provide goals and promotional guidelines to assist HAT in staying focused on the most effective strategies for creating better public awareness of the services offered. A well-designed plan can also help generate a heightened level of support from opinion leaders and stakeholders which could also assist HAT in procuring additional funding.

In lieu of a marketing plan, there are several areas HAT may want to address in the short term to increase community awareness and enhance the system’s image.

New Bus Paint Scheme

HAT has already taken action to respond to questions raised regarding the connection between the previous blue paint scheme and the name Red Rabbit. The new red vehicles will be very effective in attracting the community’s attention and promoting the system.

Promotions

Promotions can be effective in disseminating specific messages that attract public attention. Past efforts have been successful in gaining media attention. Future efforts should continue to focus on educating the public about the services offered and encouraging ridership. Two examples of how to expand on previously used themes are follows:

- The “Dump the Pump” promotion was effective in conveying the message that HAT has potential as an alternative to driving as gas prices continue to increase. Although there is no data to specifically indicate its’ success with regard to ridership figures, the promotion received relatively good media coverage and ridership has increased. Continued use of the APTA printed materials as posters and print ads could further enhance the promotion and give more “shelf-life” to the original message.
- The tag line, “Discover the Red Rabbit” is a very effective marketing tool and should be used on all promotional materials. A cost effective campaign using print ads, inexpensive radio advertising and well-placed posters can be designed around the tagline to “introduce” the new vehicles and bring attention to the services offered.

Distribution of Informational Material

One of the most critical factors in generating interest and encouraging ridership is simply ensuring that information materials are adequately distributed to the public on a continuing basis. If not already in place, a distribution schedule should be developed to ensure the HAT route map and schedule, as well as other informational materials are widely distributed and stocks are replenished on a regular basis.

Route Map & Schedule Brochure

The Hall Area Transit route map and schedule is colorful and easy to read. However, there are several measures that can be taken to update the appearance and enhance the information contained in the brochure to ensure it is even more customer-friendly.

1. Redesign the front of the brochure to include only the following:
 - a. The words “Hall Area Transit Route Map and Schedule”.
 - b. Actual photo(s) of the new bus (and possibly a demand response vehicle) preferably with customers boarding and the tagline “Discover the Red Rabbit – It’s for everyone!”.
 - c. Phone number
2. Rather than using geographical designations such as NE and NW on the time schedule headings, specify a designated stop; i.e. Blue Route to Communications Service Center.
3. Move the information about the free bus transfers from the “Services” section to the “Red Rabbit Travel and Safety Tips” section.
4. Add the following language: “The information contained in this brochure is also available in alternative formats and may be obtained by calling (phone number)”
5. Add web site information.
6. Place small directional arrows on the insert and in strategic areas on the route map:
 - a. The blue route loop around White Sulphur Road, Beverly Road and Limestone Parkway.
 - b. The blue route loop at West Academy Street, Oak Street, Rainey Street, and John W. Morrow Jr., Parkway.
 - c. The yellow route at West Ridge Road and E. E. Butler Parkway.

Bus Stop Signs

One method for creating a more customer-friendly system is to redesign future bus stop signs to match the excellent new paint scheme on the vehicles. Information on the signs should include the Red Rabbit logo, a contact phone number and if possible the route numbers of the buses that stop at each location. An alternative to expensive metal signs is to use inexpensive framed signs such as those produced by Transit Information Products which allow for easy updates to stop information. The signs come in several sizes, colors, are extremely durable and range in cost from \$65 to \$95 depending on quantity and size. An example of this product is attached to this report.

Web Site

In addition to a number of choices that do not apply to the system, an Internet search for Hall Area Transit and Red Rabbit Transit produces the following results:

- City of Gainesville - gainesville.org/citydepartments.communityservicecenter.ridetheredrabbit.asp
- Hall County, Georgia - <http://www.hallcounty.org/transport/redrabbit.asp>
- Hall County, Georgia - http://www.hallcounty.org/transport/redrabbit_info.asp
- Hall County Red Rabbit Transportation - <http://www.accessnorthga.com/access/community/redrabbit.php>
- City of Gainesville - gainesville.org/citydepartments.communityservicecenter.ridetheredrabbit.asp

The Hall County web site is the most thorough, but all of the web sites listed above contain good information about the service. Potential links to HAT information from other web sites should also be explored, for example:

- The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce
- Brenau University
- Lanier Technical College
- Gainesville State College
- NE Georgia Medical Center
- City of Flowery Branch

As previously recommended, a web site address should be included on all printed materials; however, the variety and length of and the web site addresses listed above are not especially customer-friendly. Establishing a dedicated web site for the Red Rabbit or Hall County Transit would be the most beneficial to current and potential customers. A dedicated web site will also create an opportunity for HAT to expand outreach efforts and ensure that updated system information is immediately accessible to the public.

Summary

With the addition of the new red buses and other amenities such as bus shelters, public awareness of the system will continue to improve. However, future marketing efforts should concentrate heavily on continued public outreach and building awareness about the system and the benefits of the services offered.

Immediate priorities should be the development of attractive English and Spanish versions of informational materials such as posters and flyers. These cost effective marketing tools should be widely distributed and will assist HAT in increasing the visibility of the system while providing the public with much needed information about the services offered.

Another priority should be the re-design of bus stops signs to provide rider-friendly information and to coordinate with the new bus paint scheme. The re-design will encourage ridership and increase HAT's visibility in the community.

Finally, a high priority should also be given to developing a dedicated web site, with emphasis on design that makes the site accessible for people with disabilities.

4.4.2 Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Applications

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) is a term commonly used to refer to a collection of technological applications and transportation management concepts designed to move people and goods in an efficient and safe manner. As part of the Transit Development Plan, a comprehensive list of prospective ITS user services/technologies were considered for application to the HAT service (see Appendix B).

A preliminary screening of the services and technologies was conducted to identify their applicability to HAT. Those services/technologies identified as having potential include:

1. Traveler Information/Display Systems
2. Passenger Security Systems
3. Transit Vehicle Monitoring and Maintenance
4. Transit Signal Priority

Traveler Information Systems

Both static and real-time information should be considered for the transit system at stops and onboard.

Real-time bus arrival information should be considered for display at key bus stops. Displays use automatic vehicle location systems (AVL), computer-based vehicle tracking systems capable of providing real-time transit arrival and departure information to transit passengers. The actual real-time position of each transit vehicle is determined and relayed to a control center. Actual position determination and relay techniques vary, depending on the needs of the transit system and the technologies employed.

Complete packages of ITS services, providing AVL capabilities are available to small transit and shuttle operators to:

- Continuously track the position of vehicles throughout the day
- Inform passengers when vehicles will arrive, taking into account delays
- Provide passengers with travel time to a destination
- Monitor drivers and contractors, verifying compliance with work rules
- Replay past events in case of accidents, alleged service failures, or accusations of misconduct.
- Produce a variety of management reports, to help in service monitoring, planning system improvements, and meeting reporting requirements.

A handful of companies have been identified that offer ITS services with AVL capabilities. NextBus, is one such company, headquartered in Alameda, California). NextBus offers an ITS package, which combines Global Positioning System (GPS) data with predictive software, to track buses and streetcars on their routes. A GPS unit onboard the bus communicates its identification number and location information to an information center. Taking into account the actual position of the bus, its intended stop, and the typical traffic patterns of its route, this center estimates arrival times and sends the information to an electronic display at the bus stop. These estimates are updated as the vehicle is tracked. The information from an onboard GPS receiver is relayed to a server so that arrival information can be provided to passengers, not only at stops, but via a variety of wireless devices, such as wireless phones via text messaging or pagers, or personal digital assistants and smart phones, such as a Palm Pilot or Blackberry.

Webwatch/TransitMaster from Siemens VDO, is a similar system being used by the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA). MyBus, a system developed at the University of Washington Intelligent Research Program, is being employed by Seattle Washington's King County Metro.

Passenger Security Systems

As indicated previously, passenger information displays can be located on-board and/or at transit shelters/stops or stations. The primary enabling technologies for these display applications are Light Emitting Diode (LED), Liquid Crystal Display (LCD), fiber optic, Cathode Ray Tube (CRT), and voice recognition/synthesis.

If security systems are needed, then cameras, digital video recorders and monitors should also be considered for use on-board or at stops to provide constant video security presence.

Transit Vehicle Monitoring or Maintenance

ITS technologies can also be used to collect operational and maintenance data from transit vehicles, manage vehicle service histories, and monitor operators and vehicles. Vehicle mileage data can be used to automatically generate preventative maintenance schedules for each vehicle by utilizing vehicle tracking data from a prerequisite vehicle tracking equipment package. Additionally, on-board condition sensors can be employed to monitor system status, transmit critical status information to a transit management subsystem/center, and schedule maintenance and repairs.

Transit Signal Priority

Transit Signal Priority is an ITS operational strategy that facilitates the movement of transit vehicles, either buses or streetcars, through traffic-signal controlled intersections. Objectives of Transit Signal Priority include improved schedule adherence and improved transit travel time efficiency while minimizing impacts to normal traffic operations.

An emitter is installed on transit vehicles and a detector on traffic signals, making it possible for a transit vehicle to "request" a longer green time or a shorter red time when approaching a signalized intersection.

If HAT transit vehicles encounter significant delays at traffic signals, this strategy might be considered. If Transit Signal Priority is needed, the U.S. Department of Transportation's guidance, entitled Transit Signal Priority (TSP): A Planning and Implementation Handbook, published in May 2005, serves as a valuable guide for investigating the process of planning and implementing signal priority, based on a systems engineering approach.

ITS Cost Estimates

Tables 4-3 and 4-4 exhibit typical ITS transit components and estimated unit costs for potential application to transit vehicles and stops. It should be noted that the fare collection system estimates are presented as supplemental information, however, it is

not anticipated that HAT will require fare collection equipment, since it is a significant cost per vehicle.

Table 4-3: Typical ITS Components and Estimated Unit Costs for Vehicles

Component	Average Capital Cost per Bus
Automatic Passenger Counters	\$1,000 to \$10,000 ¹
Automatic Vehicle Locator	\$6,800 to \$30,500 ¹
Mobile Data Terminals & Related Equipment	\$10,000 ³
Fare Collection Systems	\$7,000 to \$12,000 ¹
Video and Audio Installations	
Enunciators	\$7,000 ²
Customer Information Displays	\$7,000 ²

1. Source: http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_90v2.pdf

2. <http://www.nyjournalnews.com/rockland/091200/12talkingbus/>

3. Ann Arbor Transportation Authority

Table 4-4: Typical ITS Components and Estimated Unit Costs for Stops

Component	Average Capital Cost per Stop
Traveler Display	\$20,000 to \$50,000
Fare Collection System	\$10,000 to \$15,000
Website-based Communication System	\$100,000 to \$300,000

The U.S. Department of Transportation's ITS cost database serves as an additional resource for unit cost and system cost data on ITS technologies. For each unit cost element, capital and operating and maintenance (O&M) costs are provided. System costs data consist of summaries that include the costs of the deployment. The ITS Cost Data Base can be accessed using the following U.S. DOT website url <http://www.benefitcost.its.dot.gov/its/benecost.nsf/ByLink/CostHome>.

As indicated in Tables 4-3 and 4-4, cost estimates vary due to the different levels of complexity and integration for various system requirements. For instance, a system that only displays schedule information on-board and at vehicle stops is considerably less complex (and expensive) than a system that displays real time information and has the capability of communicating vehicle locations and estimated arrival times to a laptop or Blackberry device. While deployment of ITS technology can enhance various aspects of transit operations, customer convenience, and security, investment in these components should be given careful consideration due to their significant capital, operational, and maintenance costs. ITS costs are highly dependent on the characteristics of the project area and the existence/status of communication infrastructure. For example, these costs can vary significantly depending right-of-way requirements, and on the availability or capacity of and connectivity with the fiber optic communication infrastructure. These costs cannot be estimated with great accuracy at the planning level, but would be determined as part of an ITS design process.

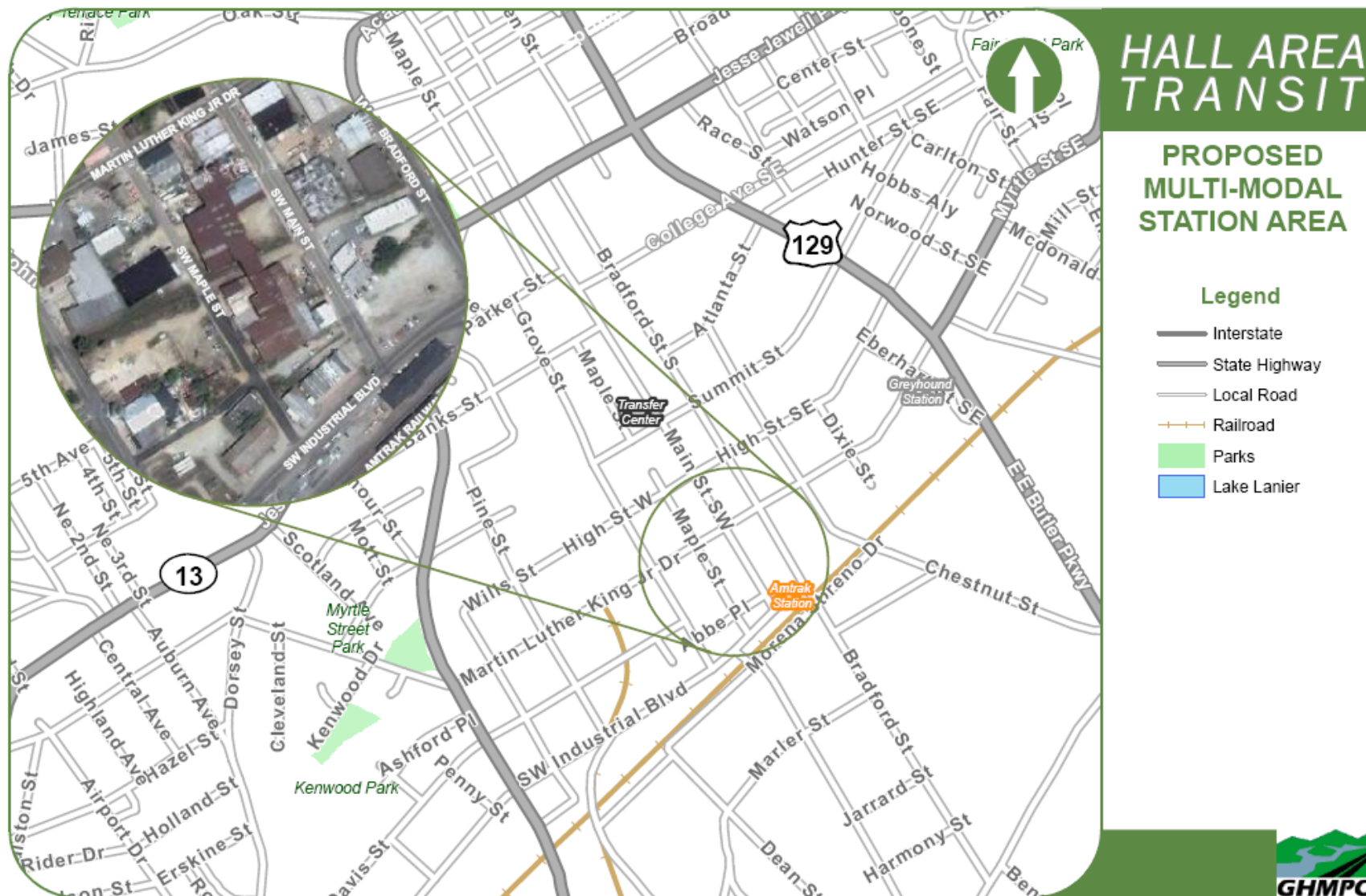
4.4.3 Multimodal Facility

Consideration should be given to developing a multimodal terminal in the vicinity of the existing Amtrak rail station on Industrial Drive in the next five to six years. The terminal could serve as a centralized location where many different modes could operate cooperatively to provide transportation services. The facility could include:

- HAT local bus service
- AmTrak rail service
- Greyhound intercity bus service
- Pedestrian facilities
- Bicycle facilities
- Parking

Figure 4-1 presents the locations of the new HAT Transfer Facility, the Amtrak rail station, and the Greyhound bus terminal. Additionally, an aerial view of the area surrounding the Amtrak station is included.

Figure 4-1: Potential Multimodal Station Area



APPENDIX A: SERVICE STATISTICS

GHMPO TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Year 1 Operating Statistics and Ridership Estimates

Blue Route

	30 Minute Frequency ⁴
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u> ¹	
Peak Vehicles	1.5
Fleet Vehicles	2
Vehicle Revenue Hours	4,400
Vehicle Revenue Miles	14,100
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	13,200
Estimated Moderate Ridership	22,000
Estimated High Ridership	35,200
O&M Cost ²	\$208,076
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Notes:

1. Low ridership assumes approximately 3 passengers per revenue hour;
Moderate ridership assumes 5 passengers per hour (the current average); and
High ridership assumes 8 passengers per revenue hour
2. O&M costs based on FY 2007 actual operating cost per revenue hour

Orange Route

	30 Minute Frequency ⁴
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1.5
Fleet Vehicles	2
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	4,400
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	13,100
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	13,200
Estimated Moderate Ridership	22,000
Estimated High Ridership	35,200
O&M Cost ²	\$208,076
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Gold Route

	60 Minute Frequency ⁴
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,930
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	4,500
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	8,790
Estimated Moderate Ridership	14,650
Estimated High Ridership	23,440
O&M Cost ²	\$138,560
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Pink Route

	60 Minute Frequency ⁴
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,930
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	4,500
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	8,790
Estimated Moderate Ridership	14,650
Estimated High Ridership	23,440
O&M Cost ²	\$138,560
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Red Route

	60 Minute Frequency
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	0.5
Fleet Vehicles	1
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	1,470
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	6,800
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	4,410
Estimated Moderate Ridership	7,350
Estimated High Ridership	11,760
O&M Cost ²	\$69,516
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Green Route

	60 Minute Frequency ²
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	0.5
Fleet Vehicles	1
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	1,470
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	17,600
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	4,410
Estimated Moderate Ridership	7,350
Estimated High Ridership	11,760
O&M Cost ²	\$69,516
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Purple Route

	30 Minute Frequency
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	2
Fleet Vehicles	3
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	5,870
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	38,100
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	17,610
Estimated Moderate Ridership	29,350
Estimated High Ridership	46,960
O&M Cost ²	\$277,592
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Year 2 Operating Statistics and Ridership Estimates

Flex Route

	60 Minute Frequency
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,930
Vehicle Revenue Miles	36,900
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	8,790
Estimated Moderate Ridership	14,650
Estimated High Ridership	20,510
Annual O&M Cost ²	\$138,560
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Notes:

1. Low ridership assumes approximately 3 passengers per revenue hour;
Moderate ridership assumes 5 passengers per hour (the current average); and
High ridership assumes 8 passengers per revenue hour
2. O&M costs based on FY 2007 actual operating cost per revenue hour

Year 3 Operating Statistics and Ridership Estimates

Purple Route

	30 Minute Frequency
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,930
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	35,200
Estimated Low Ridership 1	8,790
Estimated Moderate Ridership	14,650
Estimated High Ridership	20,510
O&M Cost 2	\$138,560
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Notes:

1. Low ridership assumes approximately 3 passengers per revenue hour;
Moderate ridership assumes 5 passengers per hour (the current average); and
High ridership assumes 8 passengers per revenue hour
2. O&M costs based on FY 2007 actual operating cost per revenue hour

Year 4 Operating Statistics and Ridership Estimates

Purple Route

	30 Minute Frequency
<u>Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	2
Fleet Vehicles	3
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	5,870
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	61,600
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	17,610
Estimated Moderate Ridership	29,350
Estimated High Ridership	41,090
O&M Cost ²	\$277,592
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$47.29</i>

Notes:

1. Low ridership assumes approximately 3 passengers per revenue hour;
Moderate ridership assumes 5 passengers per hour (the current average); and
High ridership assumes 8 passengers per revenue hour
2. O&M costs based on FY 2007 actual operating cost per revenue hour

Commuter Service

Daily Bus Trips	Peak Buses	Daily Revenue Hours	Pass Capacity	Daily Riders
4	2	5.7	114.0	57

Annual Hours	Annual Riders	Total Oper	Revenue	Net Cost
1,482	14,820	\$ 166,417	\$ 30,085	\$ 136,333

APPENDIX B: INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

ITS User Services

Travel and Traffic Management

- Pre-trip Travel Information
- En-Route Driver Information
- Route Guidance
- Ride Matching and Reservation
- Traveler Services Information
- Traffic Control
- Incident Management
- Travel Demand Management

Public Transportation Management

- En-route Transit Information
- Personalized Public Transit
- Public Travel Security

Electronic Payment Services

Commercial Vehicle Operations

- Commercial Vehicle Electronic Clearance
- Automated Roadside Safety Inspection
- On-board Safety and Security Monitoring
- Commercial Vehicle Administrative Processes
- Hazardous Materials Security and Incident Response
- Freight Mobility

Emergency Management

- Emergency Notification and Personal Security
- Emergency Vehicle Management
- Disaster Response and Evacuation

Advanced Vehicle Safety Systems

- Longitudinal Collision Avoidance
- Lateral Collision Avoidance
- Intersection Collision Avoidance
- Vision Enhancement for Crash Avoidance
- Safety Readiness
- Pre-crash Restraint Deployment
- Automated Vehicle Operation

Information Management

- Archived Data

Maintenance and Construction Management

- Maintenance and Construction Operations

Source: US DOT, url: <http://www.iteris.com/itsarch/html/urser/userserv.htm>, accessed February 21, 2007

ITS Components

Fleet Management

Advanced Communications For Operations
Automatic Vehicle Location
Fixed Route Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)
Paratransit Computer Aided Dispatch
Vehicle Component Monitoring and Maintenance
Automatic Passenger Counters (APC)
Transit Signal Priority
Archived ITS Data Management and Analysis
Advanced Scheduling and Runcutting Software

Intelligent Vehicle Initiative

Vehicle Collision Warning/Avoidance
Pedestrian & Obstacle Detection/Avoidance
Automated Speed and Headway Control
Other Driver Aids (vision enhancement, alertness)

Transit Security and Safety

On-vehicle Surveillance (CCTV, Covert Microphones, Hazardous Material Sensors, Silent Alarms)
Station/Facility Surveillance
Incident Response Systems
Disaster Response & Management
Transportation Worker Credentialing and Access Control
High Occupancy Vehicle Facility Monitoring & Enforcement

Traveler Information

Advanced Transit Call Center (Automated Telephone System, Itinerary Planning)
511 Traveler Information
Web Site with information on routes, schedules, fares, Itinerary planning, etc.
Traveler Information Kiosks
Next vehicle arrival at stations and stops
Passenger requested itinerary planning (web, or kiosk)
Real time vehicle location, next vehicle arrival (along route, at stations, at stops)
In-vehicle variable message signs and audible enunciators (next stop, announcements)
System status and incident alerts (e-mail, phone, fax)
Mobile personal phone information systems

Electronic Payment

Magnetic Swipe/Credit Cards
Smart Cards/Chip Cards

Transportation Demand Management

Dynamic Ridesharing
Mobility Management & Automated Service Coordination
Parking Management & Guidance

Source: U.S. DOT website url: http://www.its.dot.gov/itsweb/transit/transit_training.htm, accessed February 22, 2007

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

In July 2007, the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) initiated a year long Transit Development Plan (TDP) study to take a fresh look at Hall Area Transit (HAT) to identify and evaluate existing transit services, review travel behavior, and recommend public transportation solutions in our rapidly growing area. One of the key tasks of the study was community and agency coordination. This task involved soliciting input regarding Hall Area Transit (HAT) from key stakeholders, area agencies, and HAT riders, and the general public. This section includes summary reports from the following community and agency coordination task elements:

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Response to Stakeholder Inquiries
- Public Meetings
- Outreach Meetings
- General Surveys
- HAT On-Board Surveys

Stakeholder Interviews

Members from the consultant team, URS, worked with GHMPO and HAT to identify key stakeholders for individual interviews which were conducted in person and via telephone. Relevant questions and discussion points were developed to guide this process and a summary of the responses and common themes are listed in this report.

A total of thirty stakeholders were identified to be interviewed for their input regarding the Transit Development Plan. Four elected officials were selected to be interviewed in person, and twenty-six were selected for interviews via telephone. Of the four anticipated in person interviews, three were conducted. The individual not interviewed was Lamar Scroggs, Mayor of Oakwood. Mayor Scroggs indicated that the responses Oakwood City Manager Stan Brown gave in his telephone interview also represented his views.

Twenty-three of the twenty-six individuals selected for telephone contact were interviewed. The three individuals not interviewed due to their limited availability were: Richard Higgins, Chairman, Hall County School Board; Bobby Banks, Hall County Board of Commissioners; and Dr. Ed Schrader, President, Brenau University. A detailed list of the stakeholders can be found in Table 1.

Main Issues

References were made to almost every question about the need to promote the service more effectively and that more public relations and marketing are needed to increase visibility. Several respondents mentioned they believe the system needs a new look. Blue buses and the name Red Rabbit don't match.

There were many references to a need for transit service in the Hispanic community. Myrtle Figueras stated that the Spanish language brochure is not enough to encourage ridership in the Hispanic community and recommended that HAT hire Spanish speaking bus operators.

Unfortunately, several of the respondents are not very aware of the services HAT provides or where the routes actually go. One seemed confused about the difference in the Red Rabbit and paratransit service.

Table 1 – Key Stakeholders Identified for the TDP Process

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION	MODE OF CONTACT	DATE OF CONTACT	COMMENTS
Wayne Dempsey	Executive VP and CFO	Brenau University	Telephone	9/28/2007	
Ed Schrader	President	Brenau University	N/A	N/A	Mr. Schrader was not available for interview
Lana Fuentes-Krummen	Director	Catholic Social Services	Telephone	9/20/2007	
Diane Hirling	Mayor	City of Flowery Branch	In Person	9/27/2007	
Bill Andrew	City Manager	City of Flowery Branch	Telephone	9/18/2007	
Bob Hamrick	Mayor	City of Gainesville	In Person	9/27/2007	
George Wangemann	Council Member	City of Gainesville	Telephone	9/19/2007	
Danny Dunagan	Council Member	City of Gainesville	Telephone	9/25/2007	
Myrtle Figueras	Council Member	City of Gainesville	Telephone	9/25/2007	
Ruth Bruner	Council Member	City of Gainesville	Telephone	9/27/2007	
Bryan Shuler	City Manager	City of Gainesville	Telephone	9/24/2007	
Lamar Scroggs	Mayor	City of Oakwood	N/A	N/A	Indicated responses of Stan Brown represented Oakwood
Stan Brown	City Manager	City of Oakwood	Telephone	9/18/2007	
Bob McGarry	Executive Director	Disability Resource Center	Telephone	9/19/2007	
Richard Devine	Manager, Transportation Services	GA. Dept. of Human Resources	Telephone	9/18/2007	
Raymond Mensah	District Coordinator	GA. Dept. of Human Resources	Telephone	9/24/2007	
Shirley Whitaker	Asst. to Superintendent for Special Activities	Gainesville School System	Telephone	9/20/2007	
Martha Nesbitt	President	Gainesville State College	Telephone	9/21/2007	
Sam Chapman	Policy Committee Member	Gainesville-Hall MPO	Telephone	9/24/2007	
Kit Dunlap	President/CEO	Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce	Telephone	9/20/2007	
Jim Shuler	Administrator	Hall County	Telephone	9/20/2007	
Billy Powell	Commissioner	Hall County Board of Commissioners	Telephone	9/19/2007	
Bobby Banks	Commissioner	Hall County Board of Commissioners	N/A	N/A	Mr. Banks was not available for interview
Deborah Mack	Commissioner	Hall County Board of Commissioners	Telephone	9/21/2007	
Steve Gailey	Commissioner	Hall County Board of Commissioners	Telephone	9/25/2007	
Tom Oliver	Chairman	Hall County Board of Commissioners	In Person	9/27/2007	
Richard Higgins	Superintendent	Hall County School Board	N/A	N/A	Mr. Higgins was not available for interview
Michael Moye	President	Lanier Technical College	Telephone	9/21/2007	
Chad Bolton	Planning Manager	NE Georgia Medical Center	Telephone	9/28/2007	
Denise Deal	Executive Director	Vision 2030	Telephone	10/7/2007	

Following is a summary of responses received to individual questions:

- 1. On a scale of 1-10 with 1 indicating not important and 10 indicating very important, how would you rank public transportation when compared with other services such as roadways, schools, parks and recreational facilities, recycling services, fire and emergency services?**

Rankings for the entire group averaged 5.9 for transit (ranging from 2 to 10). Two respondents commented without providing a ranking.

Respondents had opinions on the topic covering everything from, the community being tied to their vehicles with no desire to use transit, to the service “is good for people who use it”. One participant actually uses the service, but most respondents felt that the service is poorly utilized overall.

- 2. Do you believe that Hall Area Transit (HAT) should expand operations to include some form of commuter services, i.e. express bus or vanpools?**

The overwhelming response to this question was yes. One person wasn't sure and several felt the issue should be evaluated prior to committing to new service.

- 3. How is HAT perceived in the community? What is your perception of transit's role in the community?**

Most respondents feel the community's perception is that HAT is used by a very small percentage of the population. People in the community cite seeing empty buses or buses with one or two people riding as proof the system is underutilized. Other comments included that the community believes the service is “a waste of taxpayer money”; however, several respondents believe the service is a real necessity for the area. Respondents also stated that many people are not informed about HAT and that more marketing is needed to increase the visibility of the service.

- 4. What are the major strengths and accomplishments of the transit system?**

Overwhelmingly, respondents believe the service does a good job for people who have no other transportation options, especially the disabled. Several mentioned the service is efficiently run and that management is very good at responding to community needs. Other comments included that the service is reasonably priced, the demand response works well and three people responded that the very fact that it has stayed in business is an accomplishment.

- 5. How does (or could) HAT services impact your organization/community?**

Once again, there were many references to the fact that the service is doing a good job for people who need it and it should be promoted more effectively. Several respondents stated the Hispanic community needs the service but doesn't find it very accessible to them. One of two respondents mentioned the need for more buses and weekend service. Respondents from the three colleges believe student ridership will increase if the service is promoted more aggressively to that audience.

One respondent believes HAT can be a “tremendous asset” to the Vision 2030 transportation goals. She mentions there are references to transportation throughout the Vision 2030 document, specifically with regard to school age children.

6. Are there current needs for additional or fewer HAT services? If so what type, where and/or when?

Several respondents felt their answers to question #5 were applicable to this question. Several respondents didn't feel they knew enough about the service to offer suggestions, and one doesn't believe additional service is needed.

Other ideas mentioned were:

- a. Airport service.
- b. Service to the MARTA station.
- c. Park and ride with a connection to the Gwinnett system.
- d. Extend routes further into the county.
- e. Weekend service and/or extended hours.
- f. A route down Atlanta Highway promoting the service to the Hispanic community.
- g. Easier to access schedules and better overall promotion of the service.
- h. Additional buses to help increase frequency.
- i. More frequent service at lunch or peak times to the downtown area, hospital and Brenau University.

7. As public transit service is dependent on subsidies, what is the most appropriate funding source?

Most of the respondents feel the major funding source should be the Federal government with contributions by the city, county and transit ridership. One respondent listed SPLOST or local sales dollars as funding sources. Four respondents didn't really feel they could comment on this question. Two respondents believe the only reason the system is funded at all is due to the requirement for the county to do so in order to get road subsidies.

One respondent mentioned again that the public perception is that the system is a waste of taxpayer money and he feels something should be done to convince the public it's good for the community. Another respondent mentioned he thought the taxpayers should determine the funding source.

8. What is happening in Hall County in terms of residential and commercial development? How much? Where? How can transit best respond to these trends?

Most all agreed that major residential growth is occurring in Gainesville and South Hall County. One respondent guessed that growth could also be as high as 180% in East Hall and North Hall and several mentioned the senior residential area at Deaton Creek off Friendship Road. Growth in the Hispanic population was also mentioned again as having important potential for transit service. One respondent stated that commercial growth is county wide but he is unsure as to how transit can “fit into that picture”. One respondent mentioned the need for park and ride and commuter service to connect to the Gwinnett system and reduce traffic, but another raised the issue that there is some opposition to the idea of taking people outside the county to “spend their money”.

Additional ideas for how transit can respond to these trends: Provide service to senior residential areas, south and east sides of Gainesville, the YMCA in East Hall, apartment complexes and moderately priced housing, the new location of the Social Security office, and to the new hospital under construction in South Hall and the surrounding area.

9. As HAT has been experiencing increased ridership over the past few years, what do you feel is responsible for this growth?

The majority agreed that much of the increase in ridership is directly related to population growth. Four respondents were surprised to hear that ridership has increased. The issue was raised again for the need to do more marketing, but at least three respondents feel that better awareness and education about the service are responsible for the growth in ridership.

Other contributors mentioned were:

- a. The route changes.
- b. Current management.
- c. Word-of-mouth.
- d. Better frequency and more bus stops/shelters.
- e. Cost of gas and operating a vehicle.

10. Do you believe that the current escalating fuel prices will promote additional public interest in using HAT or other transit services?

Opinions were split almost equally on this question, with twelve respondents either saying yes or maybe, and eleven responding no. However, many of the respondents feel that riding the bus cannot compete with the convenience of the personal automobile.

11. If you could pick one thing to change about the transit system, what would it be?

Two respondents were confused as to why the blue buses are called Red Rabbit and five would definitely change the name and image. Six respondents would like more information, marketing and better communication and one mentioned the need to conduct a survey to determine where people want to go. Five either wouldn't change anything or didn't have any ideas for change.

Other ideas for change include:

- a. Additional bus stops.
- b. Extended hours of operation and on weekends.
- c. 30-minute frequency.
- d. Emphasize benefits to businesses and not just employees.
- e. More bus shelters.
- f. Community perception.

12. Is there anything else you would like to comment on regarding local and/or countywide transit?

Most respondents felt their answers to the first eleven questions were sufficient. However several did offer either new information or reiterated responses from earlier questions. Some of the issues mentioned were:

- a. Concentrate on finding out where people want to go.
- b. HAT seems to be well run with a concern about meeting customer needs. Excellent director who knows the community.
- c. It's a waste of taxpayer money but if more people used it the respondent stated he might feel differently.
- d. The service needs to be more accessible to the Hispanic community.
- e. Increased marketing to attract more people and change community perception.
- f. This survey is a good idea.

Response to Stakeholder Inquiries

During the interview process, many Stakeholders indicated there is a need to promote HAT service more effectively and that more public relations and marketing are needed to increase visibility. However, several respondents indicated elements of HAT service are confusing, for example, "Blue buses and the name Red Rabbit don't match". There seemed to be confusion about the difference in the Red Rabbit and Dial A Ride service. In order to clarify these issues, answers are provided to the following frequently asked questions:

1. What kind of services does HAT currently provide?

Hall Area Transit (HAT) has served the City of Gainesville and Hall County since 1983. As the public transit service provider for the County, HAT's mission is to provide efficient, effective, and affordable public transportation allowing riders to access employment, retail shops, recreational facilities, medical offices, social service agencies, government offices, and other key destinations.

Hall Area Transit is the umbrella organization for the following services:

- Dial-A-Ride – County Wide Demand response service
- Red Rabbit – Fixed route service
- Mobility Plus – ADA Paratransit service

HAT provides public transportation to the urban and rural portions of Gainesville and Hall County. Services include scheduled fixed route service (Red Rabbit) and paratransit service (Mobility Plus) within the City of Gainesville and a demand-responsive van service (Dial-A-Ride) in the outlying areas of the County. The urban fixed route service consists of three (3) fixed routes with coverage of major transportation corridors, such as:

- Browns Bridge Road/Jesse Jewell Parkway,
- Limestone Parkway,
- John W. Morrow Jr. Parkway,
- Athens Street/Athens Highway, and
- Dawsonville Highway

HAT also provides convenient access to local community service/civic venues and to a number of other key destinations, including but not limited to:

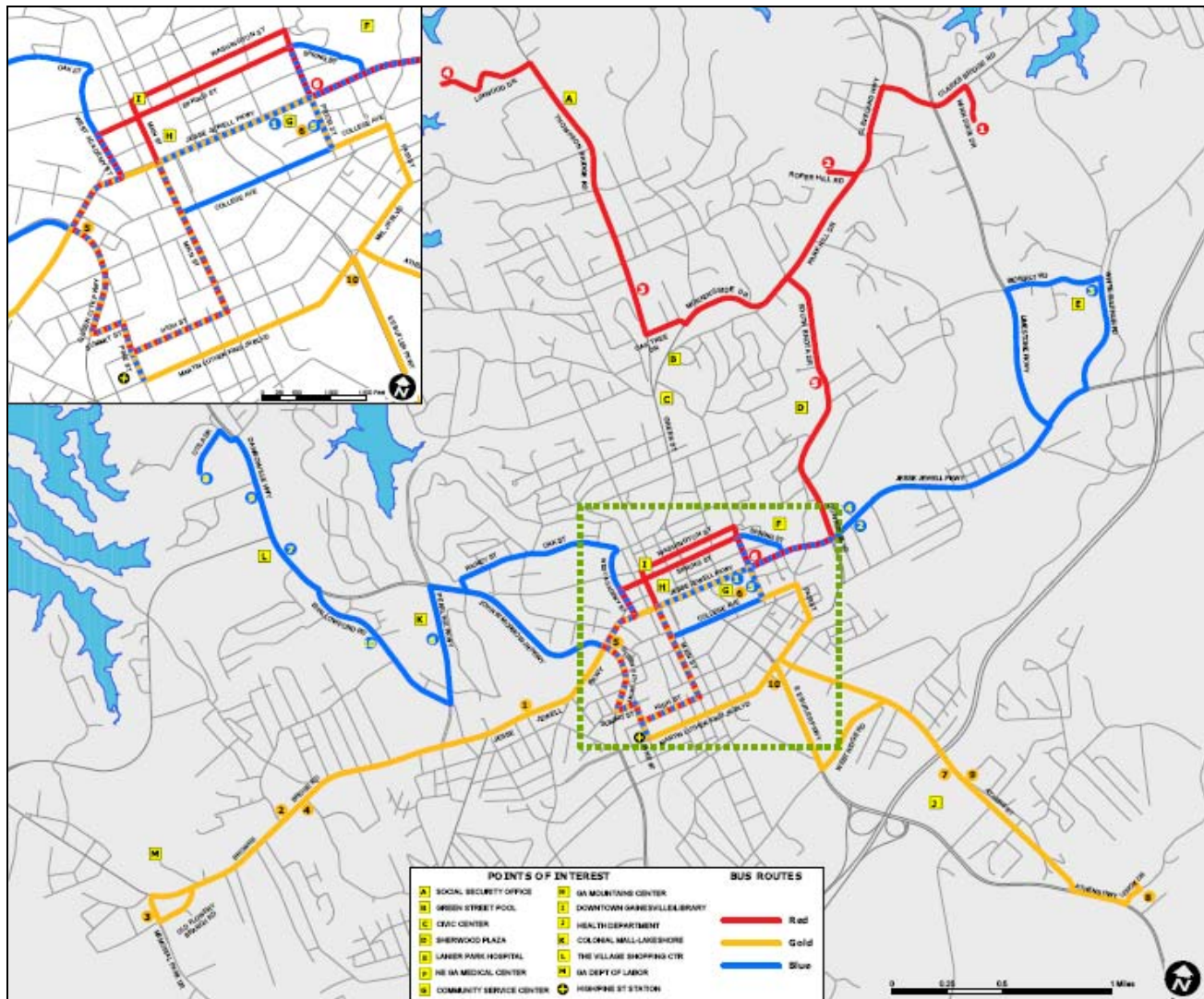
- Downtown Gainesville
- Hall County Library
- Lakeshore Mall
- Hall County Health Department
- The Village Shopping Center
- Georgia Mountains Center
- Gainesville Public Utilities, at Red Rabbit Transfer Station
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC)
- NGMC Lanier Park Hospital
- Sherwood Plaza
- Community Service Center
- Civic Center
- Joint Administration Building
- Court House (Old and New)

Access to HAT's demand-responsive van service can be attained by contacting HAT 48 hours in advance to reserve service. Vans are equipped with special lifts and service is provided on a curb-to-curb, shared-ride basis. Note: Curb-to-curb service is generally understood to mean service from the point of boarding the vehicle to the point of disembarking from the vehicle. Door-to-door service is understood to encompass assistance beyond the vehicle that could include, for example, helping the person into their home or their destination, meeting them in the medical office or business, or providing some other personal assistance beyond actual use of the transit vehicle itself.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, HAT provides complementary paratransit service within a three-fourth mile distance of Red Rabbit fixed routes to eligible persons with disabilities, who by virtue of their disability are unable to access or use the Red Rabbit services.

The HAT System Map illustrates the current coverage area for fixed route service.

HAT System Route Alignment



2. When do the services operate and what is the cost to the rider?

The Red Rabbit fixed routes operate between 6:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays. There is no service on weekends or City of Gainesville holidays. Fares on the Red Rabbit are \$1.00 per one-way trip. A half-fare of \$0.50 is the cost charged to seniors above age 60, children aged 18 and below, persons carrying a Medicaid card, and students. Transfers between routes are free, and remain valid within 50 minutes from the time of issuance.

Service frequencies are every 30 minutes throughout the day on the Blue Route, and every 60 minutes on the Red and Gold Routes. The Blue and Gold Routes' schedules are synchronized for timed transfers at the High Street-Pine Street Red Rabbit Transfer Station. Westbound services arrive and leave at :55 and :00 on the hour, respectively, while the eastbound services arrive and leave at :25 and :30 on the hour.

There are two components to the demand-responsive service offered by HAT. These include the ADA-complementary paratransit service required for the service area within a three-fourth mile distance from Red Rabbit transit stops, and the demand-responsive van service offered by HAT to all persons residing and working in Hall County outside of the Red Rabbit service area. The county wide service provided by HAT is called "Dial-A-Ride" and the ADA-complementary service is called "Mobility Plus".

For Dial a Ride service, HAT maintains a distance-based fare structure: \$2.00 for travel up to two miles, \$3.00 for distances greater than two but less than four miles, and \$4.00 for trips up to seven miles. Dial a Ride and Mobility Plus services are curb-to-curb operations.

3. How is transit funded?

Listed below are the funding sources typically utilized by transit providers in Georgia. Note: A local match for transit projects is not a requirement to receive Federal highway/roadway funding.

Federal Funding

Federal funding typically comes from the following programs:

Section 5307 – Urban Area Formula Program (applies to HAT Red Rabbit service)

This program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Section 5309 – Bus and Bus Related Facilities Program

The transit capital investment program (49 U.S.C. 5309) provides capital assistance for three primary activities:

- New and replacement buses and facilities;
- Modernization of existing rail systems; and
- New fixed guideway systems.

Section 5311 - Rural and Small Urban Areas Transportation Program (applies to HAT Dial-A-Ride service)

This program (49 U.S.C. 5311) provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas with populations of less than 50,000. It is apportioned in proportion to each state's non-urbanized population. Funding may be used for capital, operating, state administration, and project administration expenses. Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, and nonprofit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and operators of public transportation services. The state must use 15 percent of its annual apportionment to support intercity bus service, unless the Governor certifies that these needs of the state are adequately met. Projects to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, may be funded at 90 percent Federal match. The maximum FTA share for operating assistance is 50 percent of the net operating costs.

Additional federal funding:

Section 5316 - Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program

This program (49 U.S.C. 5316) provides formula funding support to states and large urban areas, with allocations based on the number of eligible low-income persons and welfare recipients. The program provides capital and operating assistance for new transit services which provide greater access to employment and related support services, or which transport residents from urbanized or nonurbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities. Up to ten percent of JARC funds may support planning, administration and technical assistance activities. The State of Georgia serves as the designated recipient for JARC funding on behalf of urbanized areas below 200,000 population. Projects seeking JARC funding are competitively selected and must be derived from a locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

Section 5317 - New Freedom Program

This formula program (49 U.S.C. 5317) supports the development of transit and paratransit services and facility improvements addressing the mobility needs of persons with disabilities that exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The State of Georgia serves as the designated recipient for New Freedom funding on behalf of urbanized areas below 200,000 population. Projects seeking New Freedom funding are competitively selected and must be derived from a locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

State Funding

The State of Georgia, under the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), has administrative responsibility for the Federal programs related to transit operating and capital for cities with populations under 200,000. Section 5307, 5309 and 5311 programs have administrative guides developed by GDOT that can be accessed from the GDOT website. Contact with GDOT should be made and the program's administrative guides should be reviewed to determine the availability and timing for funding. Typically, the application process begins in April of each year with funds being available in July. The state does provide matching shares for capital grants for the Section 5307, 5309 and 5311 programs. The state provides no funding assistance for operations.

Local Funding

The local share for funding transit capital and operating can come from a variety of sources provided that they did not originate from a federal source. Typically, local share comes from three main sources, general fund, ad valorem taxes (property taxes), or sales taxes dedicated specifically to transit. For capital, general revenue or capital improvement bonds may be considered as a local share source.

4. Why is the fixed route system called the Red Rabbit?

A Citizen Advisory Committee was formed in 2000 to create a fixed route system. This Committee worked with a designer and selected the Red Rabbit name and design for the new service.

5. How many people use HAT?

Since October 2004, when HAT implemented service adjustments recommended in the Comprehensive Operations Analysis/Strategic Plan, Red Rabbit ridership has increased steadily each year. Annual ridership, which reached a low of 32,393 passenger trips in Fiscal Year FY 2004, rebounded to 58,404 trips for the FY ending in June 2007, eclipsing all-time highs for the service each year. This growth represented an average annual increase of 21.7 percent over

three years. Ridership particularly grew during the second half of FY 2007, rising from 196 average daily passenger trips in January 2007 to 279 in June 2007. The June figure is bolstered slightly by the issuance of fare-free coupons for City of Gainesville and Hall County employees, offered from mid-June through August as part of HAT's participation in the annual "Dump the Pump" promotion by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

6. How are the bus route alignments determined?

HAT has provided fixed route bus service in Hall County since January 2001, following the receipt of competitive Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute program funding. The original route configurations were determined by linking points of interest in large loops, connecting at a transfer center. Following numerous recommendations from the 2004 Comprehensive Operations Analysis and Strategic Plan, HAT modified its fixed route service to improve system efficiency and ridership. Particular changes included reducing the number of routes (from 4 to 3), vehicle miles traveled, and passenger travel times, while transitioning some routes from the loop orientation to a more radial network design.

7. How much money is spent on marketing?

Marketing expenses include, printing, newspaper advertisements, brochures, purchasing bus shelters, part time marketing staff, graphic design consultant and customer appreciation days. Total cost over the last four years is \$200,000.

8. Who is the marketing target audience?

In seeking to build transit awareness and usage, HAT must effectively address a variety of target groups. Some are currently using the system; some have immediate potential to use public transportation, while others are unlikely to do so until a more extensive transit network is established. Additional marketing can target people living, working or playing close to the existing transit lines. Current and potential users are:

- Seniors
- Persons with Disabilities
- Low Income Families
- Workers Commuting Within the County
- College Students
- Visitors

Public Meetings and Community Outreach

The Transit Development Plan included two public meetings and two community outreach meetings to determine the transit needs of Hall County residents. The public meetings were held at the Georgia Mountains Center and were open to the general public. Because the Hispanic community is often under-represented during public involvement activities due to language and cultural barriers, the community outreach meetings were focused primarily on engaging the Hispanic community to elicit participation from this segment of the population. The first community outreach meeting was held at the Community Health and Information Fair at the Georgia Mountains Center. The second outreach meeting centered on working with Hispanic leaders to promote the TDP within their community and encourage the Spanish-speaking population to participate in the study. In addition to the meetings, an interview with the project team was conducted in Spanish on La Que Buena radio station in order to promote the study.

Public Meeting on September 27, 2007

The public meeting was held on Thursday, September 27 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Georgia Mountains Center. The GHMPO staff and members of the URS consultant team helped to facilitate the meeting.

Objective of the Meeting:

The purpose of the public meeting was to inform the community about the TDP development process and to provide citizens an opportunity to share their ideas, thoughts, and recommendations about issues such as:

- Current transit needs and concerns in Hall County
- Major transit routes needed in the County
- Transit strategies to address traffic congestion in Gainesville
- The role of Hall Area Transit in our community
- Regional commuter service

Public Notices and Informational Materials:

The URS project team assisted in the creation of informational material for public notice that announced the meeting date. Meeting notices in English and Spanish were mailed to over 400 members on the GHMPO mailing list, 138 churches and 13 schools. Notices were also sent to the elected officials. Press Releases were sent to the *Gainesville Times Access North Georgia* and *Mexico Lindo*. The project team was interviewed by La Que Buena, a Hispanic radio station, to promote the meeting to the Spanish-speaking community. Additionally, GHMPO advertised the meeting and provided information on the TDP study their website, www.ghmpo.org. Attendees were provided an information package containing a fact sheet, a comment form and survey forms.

Public Meeting Format:

The hour and a half meeting combined a variety of communication methods to provide information to the community to hear their concerns, priorities and reactions. The first thirty minutes of the meeting was designed as an “open house” format with boards and

maps placed all around the room. A Spanish speaking staff member was available to provide information and answer questions in Spanish. Four stations were set up in the meeting room with display boards and participants were asked open-ended questions about the displays with their responses recorded on flip charts.

The displays depicted:

- HAT system maps
- Study area characteristics
- Study area maps
- A dot placement exercise

The dot exercise encouraged participants to place dots under categories for two questions. The results follow:

Question 1: If public transit were available to you, where would you mostly use it to go?
(Participants could select more than one category)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of Dots</u>
Dining	8
Work	6
Recreation	5
Medical	7
School	7
Shopping	7

Question 2: How much would you be willing to pay for a one-way fare?

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of Dots</u>
\$1.00	8
\$1.50	0
\$2.00	0
\$2.50	0

Presentation

Following the initial open session, the participants were asked to be seated for a presentation on the TDP. Randy Knighton of Hall County Government, provided introductory comments and Srikanth Yamala from GHMPO began the presentation. Mr. Yamala gave a background of MPO's in general and of GHMPO in particular, including facts, organizational structure and the planning process. The URS consultant Project Manager Chip Burger presented information on HAT, including history, operational statistics, funding sources, services, and fares. Mr. Burger also presented the study purpose, key tasks, study schedule, and service area characteristics. The presentation concluded with a summary of what the participants had shared during the open session, with Janice Crow of HAT leading the discussion. A question and answer period followed the presentation and the findings are presented below.

Findings

Several comments, concerns, and recommendations were received following the presentation. They are listed in the following six categories:

I. Preferred Destinations

- Atlanta Highway
- Adult Learning Center
- City of Oakwood
- Department of Family and Children Services
- Unemployment Office
- Social Security Office
- Department of Labor
- East Hall Library
- Gainesville Career Center
- Gainesville State College
- YMCA
- Francis Meadows
- Avida Community Partners
- Brenau University (East Campus)
- Create a connection to Oakwood from downtown Gainesville.
- Create connectivity with MARTA
- Connect to Gwinnett Transit at park and ride lot
- Create a connection between North GA College and Gainesville State College.
- HAT Blue Route bus #2 Northeast is currently underutilized.

II. Operational/Infrastructural Changes

- Need for more park and ride lots to support transit
- Relocate stops farther away from curbs
- Increase size of signage
- Route electronic notices
- Extend hours of operations
- Create Saturday operations
- Create a run from 12:30-1am to cover night shifts
- HAT should hire its own mechanics
- Transit should be reliable, dependable, effective

III. Advertising/Promotions

- Raise money through local advertising
- Work with local business to advertise
- Greater emphasis on advertising
- Emphasize the benefits (of bus ridership)
- Need a picture a blue bus with a red rabbit. (Ms. Crow informed the audience new red buses are forthcoming)
- Create "free ride days" (Ms. Crow noted HAT already has "Free Fridays" sometimes).

IV. Fare Policy

- Need to make people aware of the fare before they get on the buses
- Consider a day pass- how much would it cost?
- There is little willingness to pay a higher fare because of seniors and fixed income residents as well as poor students.

V. Suggestions for Future Public Meetings on the TDP

- Change of future meeting locations so that transit riders can attend.

- Avoid Wednesday night meetings because of church services.

VI. Miscellaneous

- Address public perception that much money is being spent on transit for a few people.

Summary:

Several themes and overarching comments were provided by over 30 participants at this meeting. The individual comments generally ranged from new transit routes to increased frequency to better marketing strategies, but the most popular and overall themes from the first public meeting are as follows:

- Many of the participants use transit and would like to see HAT service expanded to other areas/destinations
- Participants stated they currently live outside the HAT service area and would like the option of utilizing transit
- HAT should consider regional commuter services in the future
- HAT should do more advertising and marketing of their services

Public Meeting on February 26, 2008

The public meeting on February 26, 2008 was the second and final meeting to obtain feedback on recommended routes and develop consensus. This report summarizes the purpose, approach, and key findings from the meeting. The public meeting was held on Tuesday, February 26 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Georgia Mountains Center. The GHMPO staff and members of the URS consultant team helped to facilitate the meeting.

Objective of the Meeting:

The purpose of the public meeting was to inform the community about the recommendations to expand and improve transit service and receive feedback.

Public Notices and Informational Materials:

The URS project team assisted in the creation of informational material for public notice that announced the meeting date. Meeting notices in English and Spanish were mailed to over 400 members on the GHMPO mailing list, 138 churches and 13 schools. Notices were also sent to the elected officials. Press releases were sent to the *Gainesville Times Access North Georgia* and *Mexico Lindo*. Additionally, GHMPO advertised the meeting and provided information on the TDP study their website, www.ghmpo.org. Attendees were provided an information package containing a fact sheet and a comment form.

Public Meeting Format:

The hour and a half meeting combined a variety of communication methods to provide information to the community to hear their concerns, priorities and reactions. The first thirty minutes of the meeting was designed as an “open house” format with boards and

maps placed all around the room. A Spanish speaking staff member was available to provide information and answer questions in Spanish. Four stations were set up in the meeting room with display boards and participants were asked open-ended questions about the displays with their responses recorded on flip charts.

The displays depicted:

- Maps of each individual recommended alignment (seven)
- Current Hall Area Transit system maps
- Revised system maps including recommended routes

Presentation

Following the initial open session, the participants were asked to be seated for a presentation on the TDP. Randy Knighton of Hall County Government, provided introductory comments and Srikanth Yamala from GHMPO began the presentation. Mr. Yamala gave a background of MPO's in general and of GHMPO in particular, including facts, organizational structure and the planning process. The URS consultant Project Manager Chip Burger presented information on HAT, including history, operational statistics, funding sources, services, and fares. Mr. Burger also presented the an overview of the TDP, the methodology used in developing the new service options, the study recommendations for the five-year action plan, and the next steps for the TDP. The presentation concluded with a summary of what the participants had shared during the open session, with Janice Crow of HAT leading the discussion. A question and answer period followed the presentation and the findings are presented below.

Findings

Several recommendations regarding potential destinations were received following the presentation.

Preferred Destinations

- Atlanta Highway
- Gainesville State College
- Extend Red Route north to Murrayville
- Provide service to Rabbit town
- Provide service on Spout Springs Road
- Provide service on Harmony Church Road

Additionally, the questions, answers, and comments generated during the discussion following the presentation were recorded. They are listed below:

Question, Answer, and Comment Summary

Q. Why has service to Gainesville State University been put off to Year 3 (of the five-year plan)?

A. Planned service improvements for Year 1 will double the operations of the current system. The plan is to implement new service in phases in light of available funding.

Q. Will proposed pedestrian routes (from another GHMPO initiative) be available on the internet?

A. Yes

Comment: Hall Area Transit is the best compared to most places, including Atlanta.

Q. What has been done to reduce the carbon footprint?

A. That task is outside the scope of this project, but the benefit (of transit) on carbon emissions will be seen in a few years as children learn to utilize transit instead of cars.

Comment: For the Hispanic community, improve marketing and outreach so that this community understands the bus schedules.

Comment: More marketing material needs to be available in Spanish.

Q. How do we get people on the buses? Is it just about marketing?

A. HAT will be marketing more towards meeting a number of priorities:

- Priority 1 - Establish solid/well-utilized routes. Be where the service is needed.
- Priority 2 - Continue to improve service
- Priority 3 – Initiate more aggressive marketing/outreach, including the Hispanic community.

Q. Does HAT have its own mechanics?

A. Hat vehicles are currently serviced by City of Gainesville mechanics. A HAT service worker is available for minor repairs.

Q. Has HAT had instances where Dial-A-Ride requests cannot be accommodated at the requested time?

A. The program is heavily utilized in the peak hours before 9:00 am. An additional vehicle is expected from GDOT, but near term improvements will be difficult given the current staffing and resources.

Q. What does HAT do about safety/security?

A. HAT has a safety program including:

- A safety plan
- Surveillance cameras (internal and external)
- Automatic Vehicle Locators
- Curb to curb service on the Dial-A-Ride service

Q. Are HAT drivers CPR certified?

A. Yes

Q. Can shopping trips be accommodated on HAT vehicles?

A. Yes – especially if the trip is flexible.

Q. Will monthly passes be available?

A. Not at this time, but coupons are available in various amounts. A special pass for high school students will be available this summer (2008).

Summary:

Several themes and overarching comments were provided by over 30 participants at this meeting. The individual comments generally ranged from support of the new transit

routes to quicker new service implementation to better marketing strategies. At the end of the meeting, the participants expressed the following:

- Most participants felt the meeting was helpful
- Most understood what was presented
- The majority of the attendees felt the TDP recommendations should be supported

Community Outreach Meeting on October 13, 2007

Objective of the Meeting:

To inform the Hispanic community about the TDP development process and to receive citizen input on various transit related issues.

Outreach Meeting #1 Format:

A Community Outreach Meeting for the Gainesville-Hall MPO (GHMPO) Transit Development Plan was conducted on October 13th at the Community Health and Information Fair at Georgia Mountains Center. Representatives of the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) and Hall Area Transit (HAT) and their consultants were available to discuss the project at a booth at the health fair to increase awareness and answer questions about HAT service. HAT schedule information and promotional materials were distributed to approximately 500 health fair participants. A Spanish speaking staff member was available to provide information and answer questions in Spanish. Two display boards were set up and participants were to complete survey forms. The displays depicted:

- HAT system map
- County study area map

The survey forms were available in English and Spanish. The completed forms were summarized, along with surveys from other sources, in the Survey Summary report.

Community Outreach Meeting on October 27, 2007

Objective of the Meeting:

To inform the Hispanic community about the TDP development process and to receive citizen input on various transit related issues.

Public Notices, Information and Materials:

A Community Outreach Meeting for the Gainesville-Hall MPO (GHMPO) Transit Development Plan was held on Wednesday October 27, 2007 from 5:30 to at 6:30 p.m. at Los Carrillos Restaurant in Gainesville. Flyers were distributed at the Health Fair on October 13th at the Georgia Mountains Center, mailed to 25 leaders in the Hispanic community that had participated in previous outreach efforts and distributed by key contacts in the Hispanic community. *Mexico Lindo*, a local Hispanic newspaper, published an article on the event. Attendees were provided survey forms.

Public Meeting Format:

The meeting was informal and held at a local restaurant to encourage open, active participation. Representatives of the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) and Hall Area Transit (HAT) and their consultants were available to discuss the project and answer questions in an open format. Light refreshments were served. A Spanish speaking staff member was available to provide information and answer questions in Spanish. Participants were asked to introduce themselves and state where they lived. Two display boards were set up and participants were asked open-ended questions about their transit needs and concerns with their responses recorded on flip charts. The displays depicted:

- HAT system map
- County study area map

A total of 12 participants attended the meeting and six completed survey forms were received.

Findings:

Key findings revealed that:

- None of the participants currently use transit because it does not serve the areas they live or work
- Participants stated they currently live outside the HAT service area and would like the option of utilizing transit as an alternative to the automobile
- Most of the participants live along Highway 129. Others live in the Briarwood/Oakwood and Memorial Park areas
- Many stated a lack of awareness of the schedule as another reason they do not use transit. The schedule should be very simple stating:
 - Origin/destination and time
 - Origin and destination should be landmarks that the community is familiar with
 - Currently too many numbers and too much information, which leads to confusion
 - Color code routes for people who cannot read
- Atlanta Highway was cited as an important corridor for the Hispanic community where there is currently no service. This corridor would be a good location for transit expansion.
- It was suggested that service along Atlanta Highway should at least provide a connection from downtown (Jesse Jewel) to the bridge (Browns Bridge) and eventually all the way to Oakwood/Gainesville State College.
- Other potential corridors suggested for transit expansion include:
 - Highway 60 North to Murrayville
 - Highway 129 South to the Flea Market (south of Pendergrast close to I-85)
- A request was made for transit service from the Boys and Girls Club from Highway 129 near the school to the Club's location on Fair St (behind the Fair St. School). There are about 50 children that need transportation to get to the club after school between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. The request was denied because the seating in the buses was deemed inappropriate for children.

- It was suggested that HAT do more advertising and marketing of their services to the Hispanic community
- Other suggestions for service improvements included:
 - More bus stops and/or shelters
 - Code buses like in Mexico
 - Hire Spanish-speaking drivers
- Several ideas for reaching out to the Hispanic community were mentioned:
 - Build awareness through the churches, particularly St. Michael's which has the largest Hispanic congregation
 - Advertise at the chicken plants
 - Public displays at WalMart and Target
 - Hold another meeting at Carrillos restaurant on a weekend
 - Advertise at parks and recreational areas on weekends during children's athletic activities

Notes for La Que Buena Radio Interview, September 25, 2007

Interviewer from La Que Buena: We have Carlos Azcorra of URS Corporation with us today to discuss Hall Area Transit and the Transit Development Plan currently being conducted by the Gainesville–Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization or GHMPO.

Q. Carlos, what would you like to tell our listeners about transit and the study?

A. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Hall Area Transit and the Transit Development Plan or TDP. Hall Area Transit currently operates scheduled route service, known as the Red Rabbit, on three routes in the Gainesville Area, Dial-A-Ride rural transit service in Hall County, and paratransit service for disabled riders.

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO), on behalf of Hall Area Transit (HAT), has initiated a five-year action plan or Transit Development Plan. The purpose of the TDP is to improve planning, funding, and delivery of the HAT services which reflects the transit program objective to plan for an effective, convenient, and accessible system.

Q. Why is the TDP important?

A. The TDP will provide Hall Area Transit with an action plan and will be used as a strategic guide for public transportation in Hall County for the next five years. The TDP provides an opportunity to evaluate existing transit services, review travel behavior, and identify new transit solutions in our rapidly growing community.

Q. How can the public get involved?

A. There are a number of ways:

First, GHMPO is conducting a public meeting at the Georgia Mountain Center on September 27th, beginning at 5:30 pm. There will be maps and displays for review and discussion and Spanish speaking planning staff will be available to provide information and answer questions. Information will be available on area

characteristics and potential transit service alternatives under consideration. Community involvement is critical to develop a Transit Development Plan that responds to the needs and expectations of the Gainesville and Hall communities.

We hope people will come to this important meeting to share their thoughts and ideas about topics such as:

- Current transit needs and concerns in Hall County
- Major transit routes needed in the County
- Transit strategies to address traffic congestion in Gainesville and
- The role of Hall Area Transit in our community

Second, persons who cannot attend the meeting can participate in an online survey, in Spanish, by visiting the GHMPO website at www.ghmpo.org and clicking on the TDP survey button. The survey contains approximately twenty questions and should only take a few minutes to complete.

Third, surveys are available at the Development Services Building at 440 Pryor Street in Gainesville, on the HAT transit vehicles, and at area libraries, schools, and other public buildings.

Additionally, a Hispanic Outreach meeting will be conducted in the near future to focus on the transit needs of the Hispanic community. Please check the GHMPO website, listen to this station for Public Service Announcements, or contact Srikanth Yamala with GHMPO at 770.531.6809

September 27, 2007 Public Meeting Notice (English)



Gainesville - Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Public Meeting

Transit Development Plan

Thursday, September 27, 2007, 5:30-7:00 P.M.
Georgia Mountains Center
301 Main Street
Gainesville, GA 30501

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) is the federally mandated agency responsible for transportation planning, which gives residents of Hall County a greater say in the development and administration of plans and programs for the transportation systems in our community.

The GHMPO, made up of local citizens, government staff and elected officials, is currently developing a Transit Development Plan (TDP), which provides an opportunity to evaluate existing transit services, review travel behavior, and identify new transit solutions in our rapidly growing community. The TDP will serve as a strategic guide for public transportation in Hall County over the next 5 years.

Please come to this important meeting to share your initial thoughts and ideas about topics such as:

- Current transit needs and concerns in Hall County
- Major transit routes needed in the County
- Transit strategies to address traffic congestion in Gainesville
- The role of Hall Area Transit in our community
- Regional commuter service

For additional information contact Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO Staff at 770-531-6809. More information on the GHMPO's planning activities can be accessed at www.ghmpo.org.

Your Comments Matter!

Phone (770) 531-6809

P.O. Box 1435, Gainesville, GA 30503

Fax (770) 531-3902

September 27, 2007 Public Meeting Advertisement (Spanish)



Gainesville - Hall
Organización de Planificación Metropolitana
GHMPO Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Asamblea Pública

Plan de Desarrollo de Tránsito

Jueves, 27 de septiembre de 2007, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Georgia Mountains Center
301 Main Street
Gainesville, GA 30501

La organización de planificación metropolitana de Gainesville-Hall (La GHMPO por sus siglas en Inglés) es la agencia por mandato del gobierno federal responsable de la planificación de transporte, que proporciona a los residentes del condado de Hall una mayor oportunidad de opinar acerca del desarrollo y la administración de planes y de programas para los sistemas de transporte en nuestra comunidad.

La GHMPO, compuesta de ciudadanos locales, de personal de gobierno y de funcionarios electos, está desarrollando actualmente un Plan de Desarrollo de Tránsito (TDP por sus siglas en inglés), que proporciona una oportunidad de evaluar servicios existentes de tránsito, de revisar hábitos de viaje, y de identificar nuevas soluciones de tránsito en nuestra comunidad de crecimiento rápido. El TDP servirá como guía estratégica para el transporte público en el condado de Hall durante los próximos 5 años.

Venga por favor a esta reunión importante para compartir su opinión inicial e ideas en temas como por ejemplo:

- Necesidades y preocupaciones del tránsito actual en el Condado de Hall.
- Las rutas importantes del tránsito necesitadas en el Condado.
- Estrategias de tránsito para tratar la congestión del tráfico en Gainesville.
- El papel de la organización "Hall Area Transit" en nuestra comunidad
- El servicio regional de conmuta

Para mayor información, contacte a Srikanth Yamala, del Personal de la GHMPO al 770-531-6809. En el portal del Internet www.ghmpo.org puede encontrarse mayor información acerca de las actividades de planeación de la GHMPO.

¡Sus comentarios son importantes!

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February 26, 2008 Public Meeting Notice (English)



***Gainesville - Hall
Metropolitan Planning Organization***

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Public Meeting

Transit Development Plan

Tuesday, February 26, 5:30-7:00 P.M.
Georgia Mountains Center
301 Main Street
Gainesville, GA 30501

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) is the federally mandated agency responsible for transportation planning, which gives residents of Hall County a greater say in the development and administration of plans and programs for the transportation systems in our community.

The GHMPO in coordination with Hall Area Transit (HAT) is currently developing a Transit Development Plan (TDP) that will serve as a strategic guide for public transportation in Hall County over the next 5 years. An essential part of this planning process is involving the public from the early stages through completion.

At our previous public meeting in September 2007, citizens were asked to comment on existing transit services and identify new transit routes. Subsequently, input was gathered from stakeholders, surveys, and outreach meetings, as a way to address transit needs in our county. Based on these inputs and later inputs from the GHMPO committee members, recommendations have been developed to expand and improve transit service.

Please come to this important meeting as we want to hear your thoughts and opinions on the proposed improvements.

For additional information contact Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO Staff at 770-531-6809. More information on activities surrounding this study can be accessed at www.ghmpo.org.

Tell Us What You Think!

Phone (770) 531-6809

440 Prior St SE, Gainesville, GA 30503
www.ghmpo.org

Fax (770) 531-3902

February 26, 2008 Public Meeting Notice (Spanish)



Gainesville - Hall ***Organización de Planeación Metropolitana***

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Asamblea Pública

Plan de Desarrollo de Tránsito

Martes, 26 de Febrero , 5:30-7:00 P.M.
"Georgia Mountains Center"
301 Main Street
Gainesville, GA 30501

La organización de planeación metropolitana de Gainesville-Hall (La GHMPO por sus siglas en Inglés) es la agencia por mandato del gobierno federal responsable de la planeación de transporte, que proporciona a los residentes del condado de Hall una mayor oportunidad de opinar acerca del desarrollo y la administración de planes y de programas para los sistemas de transporte en nuestra comunidad.

La GHMPO en coordinación con Hall Area Transit (HAT) está desarrollando actualmente un Plan de Desarrollo de Tránsito (TDP por sus siglas en inglés), que servirá como guía estratégica para el transporte público en el condado de Hall durante los próximos 5 años. Una parte esencial en este proceso de planeación es involucrar al público desde fases iniciales hasta su culminación.

En nuestra asamblea previa de Septiembre de 2007, a los ciudadanos se les pidió comentaran acerca de los servicios de transporte existentes e identificaran nuevas rutas de transporte. Seguidamente, los datos de las partes interesadas, de las encuestas, y de las asambleas de divulgación fueron recabados, como una forma de resolver necesidades de transporte en nuestro condado. Basados en estos datos y en datos futuros de los miembros del comité de la GHMPO, se han desarrollado recomendaciones para expandir y mejorar el servicio de transporte.

Por favor venga a esta importante asamblea ya que quisiéramos escuchar sus ideas y opiniones acerca de las mejoras propuestas.

Para mayor información, contacte a Srikanth Yamala, del Personal de la GHMPO al 770-531-6809. En el portal del Internet www.ghmpo.org puede encontrarse mayor información acerca de las actividades de planeación de la GHMPO.

¡Díganos lo que piensa!

Tel (770) 531-6809

440 Prior St SE, Gainesville, GA 30503
www.ghmpo.org

Fax (770) 531-3902

October 13, 2007 Community Outreach Notice (English)



***Gainesville - Hall
Metropolitan Planning Organization***

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Community Health & Information Fair

Saturday, October 13, 2007

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Georgia Mountains Center

Gainesville, Georgia

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO), on behalf of Hall Area Transit, is conducting a five-year action plan or Transit Development Plan (TDP). One of the tasks of the TDP is to discuss the transit needs of the Gainesville-Hall community.

We would like you to share your thoughts and ideas about topics such as:

- Current transit needs in Hall County
- Major transit routes needed in the County
- Regional commuter service

Your input will be used to help improve existing transit services and determine where additional transit services are needed. Please take a moment to complete our survey so HAT can better serve you and your community.

For additional information contact Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO Staff at 770-531-6809. More information on the GHMPO's planning activities can be accessed at www.ghmpo.org. A link to the survey is also available online at the GHMPO website.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Phone (770) 531-6809

P.O. Box 1435, Gainesville, GA 30503

Fax (770) 531-3902

October 13, 2007 Community Outreach Notice (Spanish)



GHMPO

Gainesville - Hall

Organización de Planificación Metropolitana

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Condado de Hall - Oakwood

Feria Comunitaria de Salud e Información

Sábado, 13 de octubre, 2007

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Georgia Mountains Center

Gainesville, Georgia

La organización de planificación metropolitana de Gainesville-Hall (la **GHMPO** por sus siglas en inglés), en nombre de la organización Hall Area Transit (la **HAT** por sus siglas en inglés), está realizando un plan de acción de cinco años o un **Plan de Desarrollo de Transporte** (el **TDP** por sus siglas en inglés). Una de las tareas del **TDP** es tratar las necesidades de transporte de la comunidad de Gainesville-Hall.

Nos gustaría que nos comparta sus ideas y pensamientos sobre temas como por ejemplo:

- Las necesidades y preocupaciones del transporte actual en el Condado de Hall.
- Las rutas importantes del transporte necesitadas en el Condado.
- El servicio regional de conmuta

Sus contribuciones servirán para ayudar el mejoramiento de los servicios de transporte existente y para determinar donde se necesitan servicios de transporte adicionales. Por favor, tome un momento para llenar nuestra encuesta para que la **HAT** pueda servir mejor a usted y a su comunidad.

Para mayor información, contacte a Srikanth Yamala, del Personal de la **GHMPO** al 770-531-6809. En el portal del Internet www.ghmpo.org puede encontrarse mayor información acerca de las actividades de planificación de la **GHMPO**. En el portal del Internet de la **GHMPO** se puede encontrar un enlace en línea a una encuesta *En Español*.

¡QUEREMOS SABER DE TI! ¡PARTICIPA!

Teléfono: (770) 531-6809

P.O. Box 1435, Gainesville, GA 30503

Fax (770) 531-3902

October 17, 2007 Community Outreach Notice (English)



***Gainesville - Hall
Metropolitan Planning Organization***

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

Community Outreach Meeting

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

5:30-6:30 PM

Los Carrillos Restaurant

503 Atlanta Highway

Gainesville, GA 30501

The Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) is hosting a community outreach meeting to discuss the transit needs of the Hispanic community in the Gainesville-Hall area.

Please come to this important meeting to share your thoughts and ideas about current transit needs and concerns in Hall County and major transit routes needed in the County. Light refreshments will be served.

For additional information contact Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO Staff at 770-531-6809. More information on the GHMPO's planning activities can be accessed at www.ghmpo.org. A link to an online survey in Spanish is also available on the GHMPO website.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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October 17, 2007 Community Outreach Notice (Spanish)



GHMPO

Gainesville - Hall

Organización de Planificación Metropolitana

Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Condado de Hall - Oakwood

Asamblea Comunitaria

Community Outreach Meeting

Miércoles, 17 de Octubre, 2007

5:30-6:30 PM

Restaurante "Los Carrillos"

503 Atlanta Highway

Gainesville, GA 30501

La organización de planificación metropolitana de Gainesville-Hall (La GHMPO por sus siglas en Inglés) esta realizando una Asamblea Comunitaria para tratar las necesidades de transporte de la comunidad Hispana en el área de Gainesville-Hall.

Por favor, asista a esta asamblea importante para compartir sus ideas y pensamientos sobre las necesidades actuales y las preocupaciones del transporte público en el condado de Hall y las rutas principales de transporte necesitadas en el condado. **Se servirá un refrigerio ligero.**

Para mayor información, contacte a Srikanth Yamala, del Personal de la GHMPO al 770-531-6809. En el portal del Internet www.ghmpo.org puede encontrarse mayor información acerca de las actividades de planificación de la GHMPO. En el portal del Internet de la GHMPO se puede encontrar un enlace en línea a una encuesta *En Español*.

¡QUEREMOS SABER DE TI!

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Fax (770) 531-3902

Surveys

In addition to the public meetings and community outreach meetings, two different surveys were administered during the initial phase of the TDP. One survey was for the general public, and the other was focused on existing Hall Area Transit riders. The surveys were available in English and in Spanish. Printed copies of the surveys were distributed throughout Hall County and the survey could also be completed online through the GHMPO website.

General Survey

From September to November 2007 a *General Survey* was given in Hall County to ascertain attitudes about public transit. Surveys were distributed at public meetings, schools, libraries, churches, major employers, social service organizations and online via link on GHMPO website. In all 306 members of the community responded. 105 of those surveyed responded to the survey in Spanish and 201 responded in English. Of those responding 207 were female and 99 male. The majority of respondents were between the age of 18 and 54 with almost equal numbers coming from the age groups 18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44 and 45 to 54.

Of the respondents seventy one percent said that they do not take transit. Forty six percent said that they did not use transit because it is not available in their area. Eighteen percent stated that transit does not take riders where they need to go. This illuminates a need that could be met by rearranging or expanding the current transit system so that it reaches more riders. Of the respondents, 88 percent stated that if transit were available to them they would use it. This shows a significant group that is underserved by the current transit services as well as an area of the service that has great potential if expanded. The majority of respondents, 66 percent, said that if transit were available they would take it to work. Moving the workforce is an important part of transit since it contributes to the local economy. Forty one percent of respondents who answered the question stated that they work in the Gainesville-Hall area. This data shows that need for workforce mobility specifically within Hall County.

Additional information was gathered to address underserved areas in the Gainesville-Hall study area. The most popular answers were the City of Oakwood, Atlanta, Atlanta Highway, and the Mall of Georgia. Questions were also asked as to how the service could be improved. Respondents stated that service should include more buses and more routes, that service should run for longer hours including Saturday and Sunday service and cover more areas. These suggestions mirror the answers given above addressing why certain respondents do not ride transit.

On-Board Survey

From September to November, 2007 an additional survey was given in Hall County specifically to people riding the Red Rabbit. This *On-Board Survey* was given in Spanish and English and completed by 104 people. Of the respondents, 62 percent were female and 38 percent male. The age range of respondents was spread out almost evenly between all ranges 18 to 54.

Of the respondents 38 percent said they were using the bus to get to work. This is the most important reason for transit-getting people to and from work. Increasing access

between the workforce and their jobs boosts the local and regional economy. A significant portion of respondents, 51 percent, stated that they use transit five days a week, which shows that those who use the service use it often. It also shows that people are using it for a Monday through Friday work or school schedule. The second most popular use for the bus was for a Doctor's appointment, at 18 percent. This is also a necessary use of transit. Promoting and increasing access to public health benefits the entire community. Respondents also said that they were taking transit to look for jobs, visit family, go to the grocery store, and to the bank.

When asked if there were areas that are not currently served but that need to be, 68 percent of respondents said yes. Some of the most popular suggestions for areas of expanded service include Oakwood, the Department of Family and Child Services (DFACS), the Department of Labor, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and Flowery Branch. When asked in what ways could transit service be improved respondents stated that more buses should be utilized, that service should run on weekends, that busses run more often and that hours should be extended earlier for a.m. routes, and later for p.m. routes.

Cost is also an important consideration when operating transit. Deciding upon a fare that is equitable yet contributes enough the cost of operations is key. Respondents were asked whether they would be willing to pay more for transit. Of the respondents who answered, 68 percent stated that they would be willing to pay more. Of those 85 percent said they would be willing to pay between 25 cents and one dollar more. If transit were expanded either by routes or by running time this could be a potential source of revenue.